

Henryk Litwin

CATHOLICIZATION AMONG THE RUTHENIAN NOBILITY
AND ASSIMILATION PROCESSES IN THE UKRAINE
DURING THE YEARS 1569 - 1648

The question of assimilation of Ruthenians within the Polish Commonwealth of the Gentry has been raised by Polish and Ukrainian historians on many occasions. For many years analysis was outweighed by interpretation in such discussions. On the one hand Karol Szajnocha, in a style characteristic both of his own approach and of the epoch in which he was writing, maintained that "with mutual attraction and mutual goodwill Ruthenia Polonized. Like two fraternal roots of the same tree, the Ruthenian and Lach (Polish) elements tended towards each other and intertwined, combining forces to give birth to one enormous tree, one powerful nation".¹ While on the other hand Wiaczesław Lipiński announced despondently that "religious union dressed in Polish garb, and politico-cultural assimilation of even the most recalcitrant members of the Ruthenian nobility, gradually led to the ultimate annihilation of Ruthenia as it then was".² Such categorical verdicts concerning the consequences of a process, the course of which has never been studied in its entirety, also escaped the pens of other historians from the two nations — even the most eminent of them, such as M. Hrushevsky or A. Jabłonowski. At the same time, however, monographs and other contributions emerged, whose findings added to, and are still adding to, our knowledge concerning "how Ruthenia Polonized". The systemizing of such information relating to political consciousness, social structure, education,

¹ *Z dziejów Ukrainy* [From the History of the Ukraine], ed. W. Lipiński, Kijów 1912, p. 65.

² *Ibidem*, p. 146.

literary output and so on, as well as the role played by these factors in the progress of assimilation processes, will enable a proper evaluation of the significance of changes in denominational structure, to which changes the current article will primarily be devoted. The author has concentrated his attention on the Ruthenian nobility from the territory of the Ukraine, which is to say (in accordance with the 17th-century meaning of the term) from the Kiev and Bratslav voivodeships. From time to time it will also be necessary to refer to information concerning Volhynia. The reason for this is the lack of suitable analyses.

It is a truism to state that for outside nobility the most attractive component of Polish culture and civilization was the political system and the ideology of liberty. However, it is something which has to be repeated, since there is no doubt that it was precisely in this sphere that a sense of community with the other lands of the Polish Kingdom most readily materialized in Ruthenian consciousness. Only 5 years after the Union of Lublin, the nobility of the incorporated lands used the word "we" (in Ruthenian) to denote the "well born" throughout the Commonwealth.³ It would seem therefore that the Ruthenian magnates and gentry became members of the Polish political nation about which S. Kot and J. Tazbir have written,⁴ at a point when they still represented an entirely Orthodox community speaking exclusively Ukrainian. However, this was not synonymous with losing their sense of individual identity. Thanks to the work of T. Chynczewska-Hennel, we possess a multitude of facts which demonstrate that the nobility of the Ukrainian voivodeships identified themselves with "the Ruthenian nation", and emphasized the existence of special privileges, guaranteed by the incorporation act.⁵ In resolutions (*lauda*) and instructions

³ Arhiv Jugo-Zapadnoj Rosii [hereafter — AJZR], Pt. 2, vol. 1-2/1, p. 20, Kiev 1861.

⁴ S. Kot, *Świadomość narodowa w Polsce XV - XVII w.* [*National Consciousness in Poland, 15th - 17th Centuries*], "Kwartalnik Historyczny", vol. LII, 1938, pp. 13-15; J. Tazbir, *Świadomość narodowa* [*National Consciousness*], in: idem, *Rzeczpospolita i świat. Studia z dziejów kultury XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1971, p. 29.

⁵ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *Świadomość narodowa szlachty ukraińskiej i kozaczyzny od schyłku XVI do połowy XVII w.* [*National Consciousness among the Ukrainian Nobility and the Cossacks, from the Close of the 16th Century to the Mid 17th Century*], Warszawa 1985.

such formulas as the following are repeated — “our Ruthenian (*ukrainne*) voivodeships” (1632), “the voivodeships which have their laws written in Ruthenian script” (1638), or differentiations of the type, “our voivodeships together with the Polish voivodeships” (1618, 1641).⁶

The sense of legal distinctness was, on the one hand, weakened by the unification of political structures in progress, but on the other hand, reinforced through the existence of consciousness of separate historical traditions, concerning which the material gathered in the aforementioned book by Chynczewska-Hennel leaves no room for doubt. Ruthenia’s former statehood was recalled, the traditional role of Kiev — “the head of Ruthenia” — was emphasized, and — albeit in what was already a very Polish style — the antiquity of special privileges and liberties was referred to.⁷

The provincialism, or even particularism, of the Polish Commonwealth of the 17th century perpetuated this dual sense of political affinity. At that time in Poland, as we know, alongside participation in state life as a whole, each *sejmik* realized its own objectives. As A. Zajączkowski stated more than 20 years ago now, social and society life was carried on within the setting of larger and smaller neighbourhoods.⁸ In these circumstances the self-restricting separatism of the Ruthenian nobility was something normal, understandable and acceptable. But on the other hand, under such conditions the distinctness of the Ukrainian voivodeships lost its high standing as a union of two free nations, and gradually degenerated into provincialism. In 1645 the Volhynian nobility put forward a project concerning the election of the Marshal of the Tribunal. It was proposed that the office should fall in rotation “every three years to those voivodeships who carry out judicial proceedings using Ruthenian statutes and script”.⁹ This example perfectly

⁶ AJZR 2/1, pp. 119, 191, 203, 238, 271.

⁷ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–82.

⁸ A. Zajączkowski, *Główne elementy kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce. Ideologia a struktury społeczne [The Principal Elements of the Culture of the Nobility in Poland. Ideology and Social Structures]*, Wrocław 1961, pp. 68–71.

⁹ AJZR 2/1, p. 295.

illustrates the above reasoning. What was basically a "national" postulate became — in consequence of adapting it to Polish conditions — a particularist postulate, placing the Ukrainian voivodeships in the position of aspiring to the status of a third Polish province, alongside Little Poland and Great Poland.

Although political Polonization was most of all in the interests of the Ruthenian gentry, and of the boyars to a somewhat lesser degree, it made most headway among the Ukrainian magnates from princely families. This group was absorbed by the Polish magnate class, and after about 1620 had ceased to exist as an independent political force. Whereas the dual consciousness about which we wrote earlier chiefly characterized the middle nobility — the gentry, while political Polonization among the boyars and lesser nobility made little headway in the face of the limited participation of these groups in the life of the *sejmiki*.

The process by which the Polish language was taken over by the Ukrainian nobility could be characterized in a similar manner. Ruthenian was ousted by Polish most swiftly in correspondence and everyday conversation among the magnates. Among the boyars, on the other hand, Polish speech — not to mention Polish writing — was most likely used rarely.

The expansion of Polish into the territories of the Ukraine is a question on which we have a fair amount of accurate information, through the researches of A. Martel and A. Jabłonowski.¹⁰ The Polish language was in general usage in political life and in public life altogether in the Ruthenian voivodeships at the turn of the 17th century. Among surviving *sejmik* material from these territories, the last document written in Ruthenian comes from 1601, and the first in Polish — from 1607.¹¹ During the same time, in court records only the introductory remarks are recorded in Cyrillic. The only official secular documents written in Ukrainian are proclamations and royal papers.

¹⁰ A. Martel, *La langue polonaise dans les pays ruthenes Ukraine et Russie Blanche 1569 - 1667*, Lille 1938; A. Jabłonowski, *Akademia Kijowska-Mohylańska. Zarys historyczny na tle rozwoju ogólnego cywilizacji zachodniej* [*The Kiev Academy. An Historical Outline Against the Background of the General Growth of Western Civilization*], Kraków 1900.

¹¹ AJZR 2/1, pp. 37 - 39, 66 - 81.

In the sphere of literary activity Polish first broke into politico-religious publicism. Even the polemics relating to the Union of Brest were written in Polish — and by both sides, too — by defenders and opponents of unification of the Churches.¹² The Ruthenian language, not yet fully shaped, and the hermetic liturgical language gave way under the pressure of Polish speech, in the history of which the stormy epoch of Renaissance florescence was just coming to an end. In the 17th century Polish dominated practically the entire range of Ruthenian literary output, including poetry. As R. Łużny states in his book on authors from the circle of the Kiev Academy, this influence was so strong that in some territories it lasted longer than Commonwealth administration.¹³

Polish made equally rapid advances in the everyday life of both Catholic and non-Uniat and Dissident Ukrainian elements. The last signatures of nobles appended to *sejmik* documents in Cyrillic are from the year 1607.¹⁴ In the 1620s even the record-books of the Orthodox brotherhoods were written in Polish, and the same language was used by the vast majority of their members from the nobility, as witnessed by the signatures beneath brotherhood resolutions. The document on the election of Kossov as non-Uniat Metropolitan in 1647, shows several dozen Polish signatures of the Orthodox nobility, and half the ecclesiastics, too, certified their presence in Latin script.¹⁵

However, there was no lack of defenders of the Ruthenian language. The Ukrainian nobility constantly reiterated its demands for the rights of the language to be respected in public affairs, inserting appropriate clauses in instructions to envoys. Precisely such documents have survived from the years 1571, 1576, 1606, 1632, and 1638.¹⁶ At the same time, Orthodox clergy

¹² T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

¹³ R. Łużny, *Pisarze kręgu Akademii Kijowsko-Mohylańskiej a literatura polska* [Writers from the Circle of the Kiev Academy and Polish Literature], "Zeszyty Naukowe UJ", 1966, Prace Historyczno-Literackie, No. 11, *passim*.

¹⁴ AJZR 2/1, p. 81.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 35 - 36.

¹⁶ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, pp. 60 - 61.

circles conducted controlled propaganda activity in a similar fashion.¹⁷

Owing to this resistance, knowledge of written and spoken Ruthenian survived among the nobility in spite of the advances made by the Polish language. The non-Uniat clergy were tenacious in keeping up their native tongue. It would also appear that the influence of Polish on women was more gradual than on the male representatives of the Ruthenian noble population. Evidence of this is provided by testaments entered in court documents, and often written in Ruthenian.¹⁸ It is possible, then, that Ruthenian remained the language used at home, and the corollary of this is that the Ruthenian nobility, or at least that section of it which remained faithful to the Orthodox Church, was bilingual. This thesis can be supported by several well-known examples (Adam Kisiel, Joachim Jerlicz, Jerzy Niemierycz). Analysis of the signatures of members of the nobility on several documents we possess affords similar conclusions. For among "autographs" of the Niewmierzycki, Trypolski, Paszyński and Wyhowski families, closely dated to each other or even dated the same day, we find examples of the use of both Latin and Cyrillic script.¹⁹

Denominational structure within the educational system in the Ukraine had a great influence on the shaping of linguistic relations, and cultural relations generally. Directly after the Union of Lublin the Orthodox Church, sinking into inertia, brought the Orthodox schools to a state of decline. Such being the case, the Jesuits came to monopolize the sphere of education in the Ruthenian territories. Even the most ardent Orthodox believers sent their children to Jesuit institutions.²⁰ Although the Order of St Ignatius introduced the local language into its Ruthenian schools, for the most part such schools were suffused with Polish in the sphere of language and culture generally, the

¹⁷ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

¹⁸ *Pamjatniki izadavajemyje kommissjeju dla rozboru drevnih aktov*, vols. 1-4, Kiev 1846-1859 [hereafter — *Pamjatniki*], vol. 1, sect. 1, pp. 67, 71, 81; AJZR 1/6, p. 405.

¹⁹ S. Golubev, *Kievskij Mitropolit Petr Mogila i ego spodvižniki*, Kiev 1883, vol. 1, pp. 365-367 (Priloženija); AJZR 2/1, pp. 341-342, 347-348.

²⁰ D. Dorošenko, *Narys istorii Ukrainy*, Varšava 1932, vol. 1, p. 171.

themes of Western culture thus being transmitted to the East. The latter trend was reinforced by the travels of Ukrainian magnates in Italy, France and Germany.²¹ The spreading of Reformation ideas in the eastern voivodeships of the Commonwealth played a similar role. Ruthenian Calvinists and Arians were the first to break up the unity of the Orthodox bloc.²² The subsequent attempts they made to introduce the native tongue into certain Dissident schools, such as those in Nowogródek and Sluck, does not alter the fact that it was the dissenters who opened the floodgate for the inundation of the Ukraine with the Polish language and Polish culture.

It was only with the Union of Brest and resistance to it that the inert Orthodox were aroused. The cultural regeneration of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church bore fruit in the shape of the arising of many non-Uniat schools, organized above all through the initiative and efforts of the Orthodox brotherhoods. Ukrainian education, in which the basic languages, apart from the native one, were Old Church Slavonic and Greek, was revived in Ostrog, Lutsk, Kiev, and Goszcza. Eastern culture acquired an intellectual base. The more effectively that similar institutions also existed in Vilna, Lvov, Pinsk, Brest and other towns in Lithuania and Red Russia. However, linguistic and cultural Polonization was so far advanced in the 17th century that even Orthodox educational centres were not able to decline from organizing Polish and Latin language departments.²³ The majority of Orthodox clergy regarded this as a bitter necessity, but the author of the project for the first Ukrainian academy, Peter Mogila, considered that contact with Western culture gained through political union with Poland would make possible the resurgence of the power and glory of the Orthodox Church.²⁴

Uniat education had little influence on the cultural and social life of the Ruthenian lands, in consequence of the lack of popularity of the Uniat Church among the nobility. We shall there-

²¹ A. Dembińska, *Wpływ kultury polskiej na Wołyń [The Influence of Polish Culture on Volhynia]*, Poznań 1930, p. 21.

²² A. Martel, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

²³ K. W. Chałamowicz, *Polski wpływ na szkolnictwo ruskie w XVI i XVII stuleciu [The Polish Influence on Ruthenian Education in the 16th and 17th Centuries]*, Lwów 1924, pp. 20-24.

²⁴ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

fore confine ourselves to noting its existence and to recalling the fact that it was precisely the Uniats who most persistently kept up the Ruthenian language.

The spreading of Polish cultural models in the Ukraine is most clearly seen and best researched in the field of political and legal culture. The process of Polonization of social and legal relations within the noble estate in Volhynia, which is to say the gaining of equal rights by the dependent nobility and the breaking of the hold of the Ruthenian magnates, was described by A. Dembińska²⁵ more than fifty years ago. The Ukrainian noble population also took over Polish forms in political life. The development of the *sejmik* institution is an obvious case in point, but it is worth turning attention to the fact that typically Ruthenian manifestations of social activity developed along identical lines as well. The synods of the clergy and Orthodox nobility simulated pre-Sejm *sejmiki*, while assemblies held for the purpose of electing church dignitaries were similar to elective *sejmiki*.²⁶ The phraseology of *sejmik lauda* and instructions also testifies to the dissemination of the Polish ideology of liberty among the Ukrainian magnates and gentry. Appeals to "the laws and liberty" occur in these documents as often as in Cracow or Great Poland *lauda* and play a similar role.²⁷

On the other hand, the question of the influence of Polish customs on the everyday life of the borderland nobility is still in far sight of an explanation. Neither Łoziński nor Bystron explains this problem, while the few comments they make concerning it are based on material from the 18th century. However, we do know that family relations among "the Orthodox lords" differed considerably from Polish practices. The position of women in the family was different, and divorces were fairly frequent.²⁸ Orthodoxy, deeply-rooted as it was in the Ukraine,

²⁵ A. Dembińska, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-50.

²⁶ Cf. *Materialy dlja istorii kievskago i l'vovskago soborov 1629 goda*, ed. P. Žukovič, "Zapiski Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk", vol. 8, No. 15, 1911, *passim*.

²⁷ Cf. AJZR 2/1, *passim*.

²⁸ O. Levickij, *O semejnyh otnošenijah v Jugozapadnoj Rusi v XVI i XVII v.*, "Russkaja Starina", Year 11, vol. XXIX, No. 11, *passim*; *idem*, *Nevincani sljubi na Ukraini v XVI-XVII st.*, "Zapysky Ukrainskoho, Naukovoho Tovarystva v Kyivi", vol. 3, 1909, *passim*.

remained a source for a non-Polish model of customs. A similar role was played by the Zaporozhian Sich, officially scorned, but nevertheless imitated by the nobility, which came under Cossack influence.

Łużny²⁹ has written about the influence of Polish culture on Ruthenian literary activity. This trend also embraced works written in Ruthenian. For that matter the work of Polish writers, such as Strykowski or Gwagnin, was utilized not only by Ukrainian literature, but also by Muscovite literature.³⁰ Such models also affected the Ruthenian language itself, which took on Polish characteristics.³¹ As demonstrated by S. Hrabec, however, a reverse trend in influences also existed.³² And what is more interesting, this author has discovered data which refute the generally accepted view among historians concerning the neglect, or even contempt, with which the "peasant" Ruthenian language is meant to have met. It also transpires that Ukrainian loan-words in 17th-century Polish have an emotionally positive, sentimental colouring.³³

The political and linguistic Polonization of the Ruthenian nobility was, as the writer has attempted to demonstrate, a widespread phenomenon in the first half of the 17th century. Considerable progress in the development of this process can also be noted in the sphere of culture, in the broad sense of the term. As we have seen, however, in none of the above-mentioned areas of social life was there a complete ousting of Ruthenian traditions. But the most important stronghold of the distinctness of the Ukrainian nobility was the Orthodox faith. Nevertheless, there is a widely-held belief among historians that in this area, too, the progress of Polonization — in other words of Catholicism first and foremost — was so considerable that the non-

²⁹ R. Łużny, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³⁰ A. Rogov, *Russko-pol'skie kul'turnye svjazi v epohu vozroźdenija*, Moskva 1966, *passim*.

³¹ A. Brückner, *Dzieje języka polskiego [A History of the Polish Language]*, Lwów 1914, pp. 255-258.

³² S. Hrabec, *Elementy kresowe w języku niektórych pisarzy polskich XVI i XVII w. [Borderland Elements in the Language of Some Polish Writers of the 16th and 17th Centuries]*, "Prace Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu", vol. III, No. 2, Wyd. Filol.-Filoz., p. 138.

³³ S. Hrabec, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

Uniats constituted a decided minority even before the Khmel-nitsky rebellion. The second part of the present article will be devoted to research aimed at verifying the reliability of this view. The author's investigations did not embrace the question of religious persuasion within the social stratum consisting of the boyars and the lesser nobility. This section of the privileged classes in the Ukraine undoubtedly remained faithful to Orthodoxy.³⁴ What will be of interest on the other hand, is a reconstruction of the denominational structure of the politically active group, which is to say the middle nobility and the magnate class of Ruthenia.

On the basis of surviving tax registers and the findings of Jabłonowski,³⁵ a group of families of Ruthenian descent was isolated, the representatives of which, at any given time during the period under study (1569 - 1648), possessed at least one entire village within the Kiev or Bratslav territories. This population numbers 207 families, and embraces practically all of the politically important section of the social hierarchy in the Ukraine, with the exception of the Volhynian nobility (and of course foreign elements). Of the total number of 207 eligible families, it was possible to establish the religious denomination of 153, which is to say almost 74% (73.96%).³⁶ And in fact it was this compilation which became the basis of the study described below.

The establishing of denomination was carried out on the basis of various types of document. Among these, a prominent place is held by surviving testaments and donations to ecclesiastical institutions. A good deal of material was also provided by the letters of signatories to various protestations and declarations of a religious nature, as well as by the signatures of electors of dignitaries of the non-Uniat Church. Many surnames of

³⁴ V. Antonovič, introduction to AJZR 4/1, *passim*.

³⁵ *Polska XVI wieku pod względem geograficznym i statystycznym, ziemie ruskie — Ukraina Poland in the 16th Century from a Geographical and Statistical Point of View: the Ruthenian Lands — the Ukraine*, ed. A. Jabłonowski, Warszawa 1894, 1897, "Źródła Dziejowe", vols. 20, 22.

³⁶ In the case of large families clearly divided into non-Ukrainian and Ukrainian lines, only the latter branch has been taken into account (e.g. the Zbaraski and Chreptowicz families).

the Orthodox nobility can also be found in the Zaporozhian army register of 1649, published (in fragments, but precisely those fragments are of interest to us) by Lipiński.³⁷ Also utilized was information scattered through armorials and works of various kinds (e.g. the Polish Biographical Dictionary). Particularly valuable are the compilation by Józefowicz in the fourth part of the *Arhiv Jugo-Zapadnoj Rossii*³⁸ and P. Viktorovsky's study.³⁹ Both these researchers collected a considerable amount of information concerning cases of conversion to Catholicism on the part of representatives of the Ruthenian gentry and magnate classes. The material collected was drawn up in such a way as to present calculations relating to three sub-periods — 1569 - 1596, 1596 - 1620, and 1620 - 1648. The two internal dividing points are related to decisive moments in the history of the Ukrainian lands of the Commonwealth — the Union of Brest, and reactivation of the non-Uniat hierarchy. They have the additional advantage of dividing the period under study into almost equal sections.

During the years 1569 - 1596, the Reformation movement was expanding in the Ukraine, though reanimated Tridentine Catholicism was also gaining its first adherents here. Calvin's teachings were particularly popular. These were adopted by the Łukomski, Dorohostajski, and Iwaszeńcewicz-Makarewicz families (probably without exception).⁴⁰ During a visit to Rome, Aleksander Proński made a Catholic avowal of faith, but on returning home he, too "fell into heresy", where his family remained until the close of their history (1638).⁴¹ While in several other families religious divisions occurred. The Drucki-Horski,

³⁷ *Aneks. Rejestr Wojska Zaporoskiego z 1649 r.* [Appendix. Zaporozhian Army Register, 1649], in: *Z dziejów Ukrainy...* (hereafter — Rejestr).

³⁸ Tables in *AJZR* 4/1 (hereafter — Józef.).

³⁹ P. Viktorovskij, *Zapadniorusskija familii otpavšija ot pravoslavlja v konce XVI i XVII v.*, "Trudy Kievskoj Duhovnoj Akademii", 1908 - 1911 (hereafter — Viktorovskij, 1908, No. 11 (1908/11)).

⁴⁰ Information on this in the *Polski słownik biograficzny* [The Polish Biographical Dictionary], as well as A. Jabłonowski, *op. cit.*, p. 24; E. Rulikowski, *Opis powiatu kijowskiego* [A Description of the District of Kiev], Kijów 1913, pp. 152 - 155.

⁴¹ O. Levickij, *Socinianstwo v Pol'she i jugozapadnoj Rusi*, "Kievskaja Starina", Year 1, vol. 2, No. 4 - 6, 1882, p. 14: (Nies.).

Czaplic-Szpanowski and Bokij families,⁴² previously purely Orthodox, partly came under the influence of the Calvinists and Arians. One important success achieved by the Reformation movement in the Ruthenian lands was to gain the support of a representative of the powerful Wiśniowiecki family — Prince Andrzej, Bratslav and Volhynia voivode.⁴³ However, as the prince did not live to see any male issue, the Calvinist tradition was not maintained by succeeding generations of the family.

The Wiśniowiecki family was also to be found among the first representatives of Catholicism within the borderland area. This trend was initiated (around 1595) by the founder of the so-called princely line — Konstanty (died 1641). Naturally his progeny followed in his footsteps, as did Prince Alexander (without issue) of the royal line, the other representatives of which remained Orthodox. A serious blow to the Orthodox community was the defection (around 1575) of Prince Janusz Ostrogski — son of one of the Orthodox old guard, Konstantin Ostrogski, Kiev voivode. Konstantin the younger soon followed in his brother's wake. But the youngest of the brothers, Alexander, stuck to Orthodoxy along with his father. A similar situation pertained in other families. There were cases of conversion where some of the family did not break off with the faith of their forebears. An exception here, perhaps, was the Chalecki family. For we have no information concerning the family's Orthodox representatives. We do know, on the other hand, that the most "prominent" of the Chaleckis — Dyniur, Lithuanian Treasurer — was converted to Catholicism in the year 1591. The list of Ukrainian "popish" families is completed by the Czartoryskis and the Siemaszkos.⁴⁴

Catholicism, then, was still a marginal issue in the borderlands. All the more so that the influence of the younger

⁴² O. Levickij, *Socinianstwo...*, p. 10; A. Jabłonowski, *op. cit.*, p. 24; A. Kossowski, *Zarys dziejów protestantyzmu na Wołyniu* [*An Outline History of Protestantism in Volhynia*], "Rocznik Wołyński", vol. III, 1934, pp. 236, 244, 246.

⁴³ W. Dworzaczek, *Oblicze wyznaniowe senatu Rzplitej w dobie kontrreformacji* [*Denominational Aspects of the Senate of the Polish Commonwealth during the Counter-Reformation Era*], in: *Munera Litteraria*, Poznań 1962, p. 44.

⁴⁴ Viktorovskij, 1909/6, 1911/7; AJZR 2/1, pp. 37 - 38.

generation of Ostrogskis was insignificant in comparison with the power and authority of the old prince and Kiev voivode, while the Chaleckis' chief area of activity was the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It is also worth drawing attention to the fact that "the Ruthenian faith" was nurtured by the powerful Sanguszki and Zasławski families, and by the Ukrainian line of the Zbaraskis, while Prince Andrei Kurbsky also enjoyed tremendous authority. During the years 1569 - 1596 it was rather the Reformation movement which caused serious unrest among the Orthodox.⁴⁵

Before the Union of Brest we note a total of 6 cases of conversion to Catholicism (3.9% of the families under study), in addition to which "the Roman faith" became permanently rooted in 5 families (3.3%). Only one of these completely renounced Orthodoxy. 8 Calvinist and Arian families constitute 5.3% of our statistical population. 4 of these (2.6%) crossed over to the Reformation movement completely. The numerical superiority of believers of the "Greek Church" is overwhelming. It is assured by the fact that 140 families (92.1%) consisted of "pure" Orthodox, while 147 (96.7%) were at least partly of "Greek" faith during the 1569 - 1596 period under study.

During the period initiating the history of the Ukraine within the Polish Kingdom, cases of conversion to Catholicism only occurred within magnate/Senator circles. The middle nobility remained faithful to Orthodoxy, apart from a few Arian and Calvinist exceptions — the Czaplic, Horski, Bokij and Iwaszeńciewicz-Makarewicz families. This state of affairs must have reinforced the resistance of this social group as a whole to Catholic propaganda. The emancipation aspirations of the Ruthenian gentry, heightening the conflict with the princely élite, might have brought about a situation where conversions by the magnates did not for the time being constitute an effective advertisement for Catholicism.

The 24 years during which the non-Uniat hierarchy did not exist (1596 - 1620) were undoubtedly a period of considerable decline for Orthodoxy. The latter sustained many losses through

⁴⁵ A. Kossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

the Union of Brest. But not so much in consequence of the popularity of the Unia among the nobility — as from the point of view of the administrative chaos within the non-united Ruthenian Church which Brest gave rise to. While it is true that initially the Unia had many supporters, a decided majority quickly withdrew their backing. Up to now it has mostly been thought that acceptance of the supremacy of the Pope was usually the first step towards conversion to Catholicism. And such cases did indeed occur — we should mention here the Zasławski, Tyszkiewicz, Zbaraski and Czartoryski families. However, the middle nobility mostly returned to Orthodoxy.

The well-known Uniat protestations of 1598 and 1603⁴⁵ were signed by 15 of the families of interest to us. Four of them, in whose case a quick conversion to the Latin rite followed, have been mentioned already. Faithful to the Unia were the Myszka-Warkowski family — up to what was their very swift demise (1604) — and the Bokij and Tryzno families,⁴⁷ among whom we also find adherents of the non-united Orthodox Church.⁴⁸ Ivan Hulewicz, Jan Horain, Zachariasz Jełowicki and Prince Gregory Czetwertyński rapidly returned to the non-Uniat fold.⁴¹ The same thing must have happened in the case of the remaining families, since the following generations of the Woronicz, Koszka and Szyszko-Stawecki houses were fully Orthodox.⁵⁰ The further course of events respecting the Kozik and Woroniecki families, on the other hand, is not clear. These were mixed Catholic-Orthodox houses, and their little-known and involved genealogies prevent us from solving the question of which of their lines the signatories of the Uniat protestation came from. It would seem that the above-cited facts allow us to draw the conclusion that in so far as the Unia was indeed

⁴⁵ *Z dziejów Ukrainy...*, p. 119.

⁴⁷ Józef.; T. Stecki, *Wołyń pod względem historycznym, statystycznym i archeologicznym* [Volhynia from a Historical, Statistical and Archeological Point of View], Lwów 1871, vol. I, pp. 428 - 430.

⁴⁸ A. Kossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 244; *AJZR* 2/1, p. 349.

⁴⁹ *Materialy dlja istorii zapadnorusskoj cerkvi*, ed. S. Golubev, Issue No. 1, Kiev 1891, pp. 18, 19; *Pamjatniki* 1-1/81; S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, p. 272; *AJZR* 2/1, pp. 37 - 38.

⁵⁰ *AJZR* 2/1, pp. 341 - 342; S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, pp. 272, 528; Rejestr.

a stepping-stone towards Catholicism for the Ruthenian magnate class, the middle nobility to a man rejected it in favour of Orthodoxy.

For the Ruthenian princes the years 1596 - 1620 were a period of the Orthodox Ostrozhsyks died in 1608. Among the Wiśnio-personal contacts, numerous mixed marriages, and the great ambitions of "the borderland lords" created an atmosphere inclining them to more and more numerous conversions, from the Zbaraskis and Zaslawskis, through the Rużyńskis, to the Sanguszkos and Koreckis. The most wealthy of the princely houses of the Ukraine expanded the ranks of the culturally and religiously Polonized sections of the local community. The last of the Orthodox Ostrozhsyks died in 1608. Among the Wiśnio-wieckis, only Prince Michał still belonged to the non-Uniat Church, while his son Jeremi was the great hope of the Orthodox. Indeed, with this exception, by 1620 the richest and most powerful of the leading magnate families were already entirely Catholic. The Tyszkiewicz family, whose Ukrainian estates were rapidly expanding, also abandoned Orthodoxy. The family's leaders at this time were the Uniat Fryderyk and the Catholic Eustachy.

The Catholic Church also registered gains at a somewhat lower social level. In its favour, at the beginning of the 17th century, the Łukomskis abandoned Calvinism. While in several families religious loyalties became divided. The genealogical trees of the Massalski,⁵¹ Zahorowski⁵² and Woroniecki families developed into Catholic and non-Uniat branches. The Tryznos also went over to "the Roman faith". In this family, however, we encounter Orthodox members right up until Khmelnytsky's times.⁵³

During the years following the Union of Brest, the Reformation movement was still expanding, except that it now took a purely Arian form. Added to the ranks of subscribers to this religion were the Babiński, Hornostaj, Myszka-Chołoniewski, Niemirycz, Obodeński, Peresecki, Rohoziński and Wojnarowski

⁵¹ Viktorovskij, 1911/16; AJZR 2/1, pp. 347 - 348.

⁵² Józef.; AJZR 1/6, p. 799.

⁵³ AJZR 2/1, p. 349.

families,⁵⁴ in each of which we can also find non-Uniats.⁵⁵ Clearly, then, the Counter-Reformation did not find very amenable conditions in the Ukraine, for during an era of decisive gains within the Polish lands, Arianism was winning over a great number of followers between Vinnitsa and Ovruch. Of the Ruthenian houses, only the Łukomski and Bokij families⁵⁶ abandoned Calvinism at the beginning of the 17th century.

The reason for such a state of affairs lay in the steadfast numerical superiority of the non-Uniats, who ceased to struggle against the Reformation after Brest, and even endeavoured to establish a political alliance.⁵⁷ Here the unhampered growth of Arianism and the strength of Orthodoxy corroborate and explain each other. Let us turn to the figures once more. During the years 1596 - 1620, we find Orthodox advocates in 137 (91.90%),⁵⁸ of the families with identified religions. 116 (77.90%) of these are still pure non-Uniats. Meanwhile, 16 Catholic families (10.70%) can be counted up, only 7 (4.70%) of which are "purely" popish. To these statistics we should also add the number of families totally or partially connected with the Reformation movement — 13 (8.70%). We ought also to mention those advocates of the Unia who were faithful to it throughout the period at present under analysis. Besides the previously-mentioned Boki, Tryzno and Myszka-Warkowski families, we should not forget the Kisiel, Tyszkiewicz and Wielhorski houses.⁵¹ A total of 6 families (40%), only 2 (1.30%) of which were probably "purely" Uniat.

We are dealing, then, in the Ukraine with a Catholic, fabulously rich, but not very numerous Ruthenian magnate class,

⁵⁴ A. Jabłonowski, *op. cit.*, p. 24; A. Kossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 245; O. Levickij, *Socinianstwo...*, pp. 15, 22; *Polski słownik biograficzny* (the Hornostaj and Niemiryż families).

⁵⁵ Józef.; Rejestr; *Pamiętniki* 1 - 1/12, 19, 3 - 1/91; *AJZR* 2/1, pp. 37, 339, 347 - 348; S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, pp. 272, 365 - 367.

⁵⁶ A. Kossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 244; Józef..

⁵⁷ K. Chodynicki, *Kościół prawosławny a Rzeczpospolita Polska 1370 - 1632* [*The Orthodox Church and the Polish Commonwealth, 1370 - 1632*], Warszawa 1934, pp. 348 - 353.

⁵⁸ The statistics do not include the Kmita or Kapusta families (who had died out), nor the Żyżemskis (no information). Number of families — 150.

⁵⁹ *Polski słownik biograficzny*; Viktorovskij 1911/2; T. J. Stecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 428 - 430.

and an abundant Orthodox population of middle (and also lesser) nobility, linked by family ties and also political co-operation with an energetic, though numerically limited Dissident group. In any case the magnate element regarded the borderlands first and foremost as an economic hinterland, concentrating its public activity on the central political arena.⁶⁰ Such being the case, local centres were perforce controlled by the non-Uniat middle nobility and the ever active advocates of the Reformation.⁶¹ Among other things the political alliance between these two forces was aimed at waging a joint struggle against the Unia, and in defence of Orthodoxy, officially non-existent. This stubbornly and ably conducted battle, ending in victory in 1632, has often been undervalued by the historians, Ukrainian especially. Its course is well known, since it was described by P. Żukowicz as early as last century.⁶² Despite this, how very often has the entire credit for the defence of "the Ruthenian faith" been attributed to the Cossacks and the township Orthodox brotherhoods (and after all, the latter operated under the guardianship of the nobility). The Catholicized magnates lent their support to the non-Uniats, and did not refrain either, from protecting their clergy.⁶⁴ The reasons for such behaviour were doubtless two-fold — firstly the desire to secure support at the Ukrainian *sejmiki*, and secondly the need to gain a good negotiating position in dealings with the court and other magnate factions.

After 1620 and the secret reactivation of the non-Uniat hierarchy, the position of the Orthodox Church improved. Ladislaus IV's official recognition of the hierarchy must be regarded as a total defeat for the Unia, and as a painful set-back for those Catholics leaning towards expansion. However, the progress of cultural and linguistic Polonization entailed further conversions. The list of these begins with Stefan Czerlenkowski, Bratslav *stolnik* (*dapifer*) and founder of a Dominican monastery

⁶⁰ Cf. e.g. W. Tomkiewicz, *Jeremi Wiśniowiecki*, Warszawa 1933, Ch. 3.

⁶¹ Cf. AJZR 2/1, pp. 269 - 271.

⁶² P. Żukowicz, *Sejmowaja bor'ba zapadno-russkago dworjanstva s cerkownoj uniej*, vols. 1-3, St. Petersburg 1901-1904.

⁶⁴ A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae, Romae* 1863, vol. 3, p. 385.

at Vinnitsa.⁶⁴ The other representatives of this old Ruthenian house stayed with Orthodoxy.⁶⁵ In a similar position were the Piaseczyńskis, of whom only Alexander, Kiev castellan, turned Catholic.⁶⁶ The information we have on the Aksaks is somewhat less clear. In all probability Jan Aksak, Kiev district judge, "revoked" before he died, since we know that his testament contained numerous donations to Catholic church institutions.⁶⁷ On the other hand we possess an account concerning his son Stefan, which states that "[...] *ortodoxus* after his father, he is a protector of the Church".⁶⁸ Placing these two pieces of information side by side, one is inclined to conclude that the old judge took the decision to change his faith practically on his death-bed, or around the year 1627. For another account of Ukrainian Catholics, we are indebted to Jerlicz. He mentions Teodor Tysza-Bykowski as being someone who was generally disliked on all sides, and who led a stormy and frivolous life. Master Teodor died in 1644 and was buried in a Dominican church, in Gorodok in the Ukraine.⁶⁹ We do not know if he was the only Catholic in his family, but evidence of this might be provided by the social isolation mentioned by Jerlicz. In any event we do know of non-Uniat representatives of the Tysza family.⁷⁰

The church of the Dominicans in which Bykowski's bodily remains lay, was situated in Gorodok which at that time was the property of the Korczowskis.⁷¹ However, we do not know how long this family had been Catholic, nor to what degree. It is known, on the other hand, that five of its Orthodox members took part in Khmelnitsky's rebellion. Who knows if they did

⁶⁴ L. Królik, *Organizacja diecezji luckiej i brzeskiej od XVI do XVIII wieku* [*The Organization of the Lutsk and Brest Dioceses from the 16th to the 18th Centuries*], Lublin 1983, p. 362.

⁶⁵ *Pamiętniki* 2 - 1/174.

⁶⁶ In 1636 (*Polski słownik biograficzny*).

⁶⁷ Z. Lasocki, *Sienkiewiczowskie "łwie pachole"* Aksak i ród jego [*Sienkiewicz' "Young Lion" Aksak and His Family*], "Miesięcznik Heraldyczny", vol. 15, 1936, p. 4.

⁶⁸ S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

⁶⁹ J. Jerlicz, *Latopisiec albo Kroniczka* [*A Record of the Years or Chronicle*], Warszawa 1853, p. 47.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 60; *AJZR* 2/1, pp. 341, 342.

⁷¹ J. Jerlicz, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

not belong to the band which in 1648 attacked the property of Fedor Jelec, the aged custodian of the Kiev district standard — plundering the estate and killing its master, the senior member of and old, Orthodox family.⁷² Its only Catholic representative was Fedor's nephew, Alexander, who joined the Order of St. Ignatius, adopting his patron's name. A similar isolated case of Catholic conversion took place within the Hulewicz family. Its subject, Dymitr Andrejewicz, donned a monk's habit like Alexander Jelec, and died as Father Hipolit. This fact would no doubt have gone unnoticed in the decidedly non-Uniat/Arian family environment, if it were not for the reduction of the family fortune to which the convert's gift to various church institutions led.⁷³

The list of new "recruits" to Catholicism in the Ukraine is completed by the Kozika, Służka, Wielhorski and Wyszpolski families.⁷⁴ The first two probably became purely Catholic, whereas among the representatives of the latter two we find non-Uniats.⁷⁵ The last reference concerning adherents of "the Roman faith" of Ukrainian origin can be found in Niesiecki's armorial under the year 1648, and relates to Mikołaj Łosiatyński. The latter represented a family from Volhynia which also possessed property in the Kievan lands, and even held office there.⁷⁶

For the religions of the Reformed Church, the years 1620-1648 were a period of stagnation. The numbers of adherents neither shrank nor expanded in the Ruthenian borderlands. Instigator of the one exception to this was Katarzyna Iwaszeńciewicz, widow of Mikołaj, who died in 1620. Following her husband's death, and along with her children Jerzy, Helena and Krystyna, she turned Catholic, while her stepson Krzysztof remained in the religion of his father.⁷⁷ Despite the halt in the numerical growth of the Arian community in the Ukraine, these

⁷² Dr Antoni J. [A. J. Rolle], *Dzieje szlachty okolicznej w owruckim powiecie* [A History of the Local Nobility of the District of Ovruc], in: *Z przeszłości Polesia kijowskiego*, 1882, p. 22.

⁷³ *Materiały dla historii...*, p. 19.

⁷⁴ A. Kossowski, *op. cit.*, p. 248; AJZR 1/6, p. 778.

⁷⁵ Józef.

⁷⁶ *Opis aktowej knigi Kiewskago Central'nago Arhiva*, ed. E. P. Diakovskij, Kiev 1911, No. 13, p. 36.

⁷⁷ E. Rulikowski, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

were not barren years. Considerable expansion in the economic power of the Niemirydz family (especially the line at Czerniachów and Noryńsk — which was precisely Arian) reinforced the position of the religion which they represented. Spurred on by this, the leading figures of Socinianism — Wiszowaty, Stoiński and Przyrkowski⁷⁸ — converged on the Kievan lands. The last mentioned even held the office of Marshal at the Kiev *sejmiki*.⁷⁹ Counteraction by the Catholics, organized under the command of Janusz Tyszkiewicz, Kiev voivode, and aimed at preventing “the blasphemous sect” from getting out of hand, did not secure *sejmik* support. Doubtless in consequence of the lack of interest on the part of the non-Uniats. Tyszkiewicz therefore appealed to the Lublin tribunal.⁸⁰ An anti-Arian phobia then spread throughout the entire Commonwealth (after 1638). However, in spite of many unfavourable court sentences, the Socinians kept to their positions in the Ukraine up until the outbreak of the Cossack unrest in 1648.

The Unia, on the other hand, from Kiev to Bratslav, became less and less significant. After 1620 we encounter Uniats in only 3 families — among the Bokijs, Tryznos and Wielhorskis.⁸¹

In the statistics described, the total number of Catholic families during the years 1620-1648 reaches 28 (19.4⁰/o),⁸² and not counting incidental cases (the Hulewicz and Jelec families) — 26 (18.1⁰/o). However, the number of pure “Latin” families is less — 12 (8.3⁰/o). This number has been increased by the Aksak, Kozika, Służka, Tyszkiewicz and above all Wiśniowiecki families, Jeremi Wiśniowiecki — as the last of the great Ruthenian princes — making an avowal of Roman faith in 1634.⁸³ The Reformation movement kept to its positions. Still 13 families (9⁰/o), of which 2 (1.4⁰/o) were purely Calvinist. 128 names

⁷⁸ L. Chmaj *Samuel Przyrkowski na tle prądów religijnych XVII wieku* [*Samuel Przyrkowski against the Background of Religious Trends in the 17th Century*], Kraków 1927, p. 36.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

⁸⁰ J. Jerlicz, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁸¹ T. J. Stecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-430; Józef.

⁸² The statistics do not include the Ostrozhky, Warkowski, or Słupicz families (who had died out), nor the Horski, Raj or Rużyński families (no information). Number of families — 144.

⁸³ *Z dziejów Ukrainy...*, pp. 121-123.

(88.9%) of Orthodox nobility appear in the list for the period. 105 (72.9%) of these families remain "pure" non-Uniats. The statistics are completed by 3 families (2.1%) in which we encounter Uniats.

The list presented is not — for it cannot be — exhaustive. We cannot exclude the possibility that there are other cases of Catholic conversion, which remain outside the author's field of vision. However, the essential thing is that the possible discovery of such cases could only expand the number of families of mixed religion, without altering the fact that close on 90% of the families under study remained at least partially Orthodox up until 1648.

The comparatively weak position of Catholicism in the Ukrainian lands is confirmed for that matter by descriptive sources from various periods. The views of Catholics themselves are characteristic in this respect. During the 1590s Józef Wereszczyński, Bishop of Kiev, describes the situation in his diocese as he found it during the first years of his pastoral activity, as follows: "[...] being, for more than a hundred years, without its own bishops [Kiev did not have any], without a single priest, church or altar, apart from one small chapel at the castle, where the castle officials keep their jades as a sign of contempt, and another small Dominican church, with one monk only. And in fact the responsibility for such desolation lies not only with the Tartars, but indeed with the people themselves of Greek religion and *citizens* (my italics — H. L.) of Kiev, who have purposely destroyed the Catholic faith as well as they could."⁸⁴ An account by Adam Lipski, Bishop of Lutsk, written twenty or so years later, is not much different: "*Ad catholicos duplici in tractu (quorum alter Ucrainensis alter Pinscensis nominatur) comperi neccearias omnimo missiones esse, qui inter medios schismaticos habitant sparsim extra parochias catholicorum, a templis nostris et sacerdotibus magno locorum intervallo seiuncti*" (1622).⁸⁵

⁸⁴ J. Wereszczyński, *Pisma polityczne* [Political Writings], Kraków 1858, p. 37.

⁸⁵ *Monumenta Ucrainae Historica*, ed. J. Slipyj, Romae 1964, vol. 1, p. 328.

and the weak position of the Catholics and the Unia in the Ukraine is also reflected in the accounts of nuncios. "There are a great number of schismatics [...]", states Cardinal de Torres in 1621 — "[...] they dislike it immensely when, from time to time, one of them changes to the Catholic rite [and one encounters] greater difficulties in converting them than in converting Lutherans and Calvinists".⁸⁶ These words were repeated a year later in the instructions to the Bishop of Nola: "Ruthenia [...] is full of Ruthenian schismatics. [...] Having few followers, the Uniats are afraid of being left on their own after some have left them, while others refrain from converting on account of increased resistance from the Schism".⁸⁷ For that matter these are not the only accounts drawn up in this fashion.⁸⁸

The specific atmosphere created in the Ukraine after the Cossacks declared themselves in favour of the non-Uniats was described by Jerzy Zbaraski in a letter to the King (from 1623): "It is not simply that the Cossack might is so powerful within this roguish assembly itself, but over and above this [...] the open and covert favour of almost the whole of the Ukraine and White Russia, and also Your Majesty's towns, and the private houses of the nobility, [my italics — *H. L.*] some openly, others *oculte propter mecum, favent et votis prosequuntur*".⁸⁹ The contents of this letter go well alongside the "supplication" of Father Obornicki, contained in an account from the borderlands written in 1620: "God preserve the local Catholics, few and weak as they are".⁹⁰ Seven years later, the Bishop of Płock, S. Lubieński, urging support for Stefan Aksak — a Catholic — for

⁸¹ *Relacje nuncjuszów apostolskich i innych osób o Polsce, od r. 1548 do 1690* [Reports on Poland by Apostolic Nuncios and Other Persons, from the Year 1548 to 1690], ed. E. Rykaczewski, Poznań 1864, vol. 2, pp. 150 - 155.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 164 - 166.

⁸⁶ T. Długosz, *Niedoszły synod unicko-prawosławny we Lwowie w 1629* [The Unrealized Uniat-Orthodox Synod in Lvov 1629], "Collectanea Theologica", vol. XIX, 1939, No. 4, p. 497; E. Smurlo, *Le saint siège et l'orient orthodoxe Russe 1609 - 1654*, Prague 1928, p. 45 (appendices).

⁸⁹ P. A. Kulis, *Materialy dlja istorii vozsoedinenija Rusi*, Moskva 1877, vol. 1, pp. 101, 102.

⁹⁰ W. A. Serczyk, *Na dalekiej Ukrainie. Dzieje kozaczyzny do 1648 roku* [In Far-Off Ukraine. The History of the Cossacks up to 1648], Kraków 1984, p. 234.

the post of Kiev district judge, described the situation in an equally distinct and unambiguous fashion: "[...] we do not have many Catholics in those parts".⁹¹

Accounts from the 1630s and 1640s are written in a similar tone. The nuncio Visconti in 1636, and the author of the instructions to Giovanni de Torres in 1645, emphasized the importance of efforts to disseminate the Unia, in view of the resistance to Catholicism put up by the Ruthenian nobility, united with the Dissidents in an alliance.⁹²

In literature on the subject, however, accounts were quoted which gave a completely different picture of the situation. E. Likowski quoted after the *Annales Ecclesiae Ruthenae* a letter by the Uniat Metropolitan Veliamin Rutsky, containing information to the effect that a hundred noble families were converted to Catholicism each year.⁹³ This assertion must surely be dismissed out of hand, as belonging to the realm of fiction. If it were correct, the entire non-Uniat Orthodox problem within the Commonwealth would have ceased to exist within the space of a few years. Sometimes reference was also made to the account by Beauplan, who maintained that the Ruthenian nobility was ashamed to be of any other religion than Roman Catholic, and was expanding the ranks of the latter's believers day by day.⁹⁴ This straightforward recorder of the customs of the Ukrainian people, nevertheless lost his powers of observation when it came to analysing social and political life and legal and organisational relations within the Commonwealth.⁹⁵ Certain situations overstretched his ability to understand a foreign culture, witness the Beauplan exposition on the genesis of the *neminem captivabimus* privilege, where he asserted that the magnates had forced the King to take an oath to the effect that no nobleman would be imprisoned, for whatever crime, if 24

⁹¹ S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

⁹² *Relacje nuncjusów...*, pp. 265, 286 - 288.

⁹³ E. Likowski, *Unia brzeska (1596)* [*The Union of Brest (1596)*], Warszawa 1907, p. 212.

⁹⁴ *Eryka Lassoty i Wilhelma Beauplana opisy Ukrainy* [*Eryk Lassota and Wilhelm Beauplan's Descriptions of the Ukraine*], ed. Z. Wójcik. Warszawa 1972, pp. 110 - 111.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 194 - 195 (notes).

hours were to pass following its commission. Beauplan added that the idea must have been to show respect for those who could run fast.⁹⁶ On top of this, Master Wilhelm wrote that the Ruthenian nobles themselves were descended from the Poles!⁹⁷

However, Melety Smotrisky's *Threnos...* generally made the greatest impression on historians. In this work, which appeared in 1610 and occupied a prominent place in post-Union polemical literature, the author lists 47 families which had abandoned Orthodoxy.⁹⁸ However, a dozen or so of these are Lithuanian — e.g. the Kiszka, Hlebowicz, Wojno and Wołłowicz families — and even Polish names occur, such as the Kalinowskis. A fair proportion of the list drawn up by Smotrisky consists of Volhynian families, e.g. the Jarmolińskis, Puzyrnas and Czołhańskis. For that matter, a few of these were being mourned prematurely by the lamenting Orthodox Church in the work described.⁹⁹ The same applies in the case of the majority of Kiev families mentioned, for the Massalski, Tryzno, Hornostaj, Myszko, Siemaszko, Hulewicz and Zahorowski families also had Orthodox representatives up until the year 1648, about which I have already written. Not all of the cases to which Smotrisky refers relate to Catholic conversions. Indeed, the Pronsky, Horski, Łukomski, Dorohostajski, Hornostaj and Hulewicz families belong to the Reformation movement (see above). In all, in 1610 11 of the 21 Kiev families mentioned in the *Lamentation...* were partially non-Uniat and only 7 purely Catholic.

In any event Smotrisky changed his opinion on the religious situation in the Ukraine, following his own conversion twenty years later. Just as formerly he had bewailed the loss of pearls from the Orthodox crown, so now, in a letter to the Pope, he sounded the alarm in describing the situation in which Catholicism and the Unia found themselves (in 1630).¹⁰⁰ Writing about the Ruthenian nobility, he made no secret either of the fact

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 146.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

⁹⁸ *Z dziejów Ukrainy...*, p. 124.

⁹⁹ Eg. the Puzyrna, Bohowityn, and Kierdej families, cf. *Pamjatniki*, 1-1/12, AJZR 1/6, p. 690, 2/1, p. 348.

¹⁰⁰ A. Theiner, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

that “[...] *quod execralibus, plerique eorum [proch Deum immortalem] toti sedulo in id incumbunt, ne subditi eorum ad agnitionem veritatis perveniant et salventur, dum eos in schismate blasphemis haereticis erroribus scatente non modo permanere patiantur, verum etiam ut maneant [pertinaciam istam illorum constanciam vocitantes] hortentur [...]*”.¹⁰¹ The freshly qualified titular bishop’s Latin is still somewhat suspect from a grammatical point of view, but his commitment leaves no room for doubt as to the consistency of the account with the facts, although the non-Uniats would doubtless have disagreed with the interpretation. It transpired, then, that the *Lamentation...* of 1610 was premature.

The Orthodox Church not only lost believers to Catholicism, but also deprived it of followers. Jabłonowski wrote of four such cases — the Brzozowski, Zaleski, Lasota and Dzik families.¹⁰² In so far as the last two leave no room for doubt, it is difficult to agree that the Brzozowskis and Zaleskis were of Polish origin and descended from Catholic forebears. The former were a Ruthenian family from Polesie, whence they spread into neighbouring territories, including the Kievan lands.¹⁰³ Whereas the Zaleskis came from Volhynia, and before the Union of Brest appeared in the Bratslav region, where we encounter them during the period in question.¹⁰⁴ Indubitably, then, these were not assimilated Polish families. On the other hand, to the Dziks and Lasotas, we can probably add one more Russified Polish family — the Drzewieckis.¹⁰⁵ At all events, the Polish and Catholic element in the Ukraine sustained certainly minimal, but nevertheless significant losses.

These serve as further evidence of the vitality and strength of Orthodoxy in the Ruthenian borderlands. While the state of religious relations within these lands has great significance. As Chynczewska-Hennel and F. Sysyn have recently demonstrated, the non-Uniat Orthodox Church was the mainstay of the Ru-

¹⁰¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰² *Polska XVI wieku...*, vol. XXII, p. 546.

¹⁰³ Boniecki’s armorial; *Polski słownik biograficzny*.

¹⁰⁴ *Polska XVI wieku...*, vol. XX, p. 102.

¹⁰⁵ S. Golubev, *op. cit.*, p. 172; see also *Pamjatniki*, 1 - 1/12.

thenian sense of national identity.¹⁰⁶ In this respect the author of the current article shares Martel's¹⁰⁷ view, that the adoption of Catholicism was not the cause, but the ultimate consequence of Polonization, tantamount to the complete assimilation of a given individual. After all, without this element full identification with Polish culture was not possible, especially in the area of customs, which was already firmly tied to Catholicism and its rites towards the close of the 17th century. So that Orthodoxy acted as a dam against the ultimate triumph of Polonization, for the political and linguistic combination had not yet levelled the distinctness of the Ruthenians.

Comparing the above assertions with the statistical findings, it should be stated that Catholicization, and thus full assimilation too, only took place in the case of the Ruthenian magnates. Religious causes undoubtedly played a certain role here, but political ones also had their significance. In view of its economic power the borderland aristocracy was predestined to play a leading role within the state — to occupy high positions within the Senate, and to hold ministerial office. Such careers were splendidly facilitated by the adoption of Catholicism, especially during the reign of Sigismund III, when after all the majority of conversions among the Ruthenian magnates took place. Also of vital importance was the environmental situation of the class under discussion — contacts with the Catholic court and the ever more “Roman” Senate, mixed marriages, travels in west-European countries.

The mostly Orthodox, as we have learnt, middle nobility operated within a different environment. Its proper field of activity was the *sejmik*, and here it predominated. Political causes, then, had an opposite effect to that in the case of the magnate class. In this case the organizational structure of the Commonwealth, within which local assemblies constituted the centre

¹⁰⁶ T. Chynczewska-Hennel, *op. cit.*, p. 115; F. Sysyn, *Stosunki ukraińsko-polskie w XVII w. Rola świadomości narodowej i konfliktu narcdowościowego w powstaniu Chmielnickiego* [Ukrainian-Polish Relations in the 17th Century. The Role of National Consciousness and Nationality Conflicts in the Khmelniatsky Rebellion], “Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce”, vol. XXVII, 1982, pp. 84 - 88.

¹⁰⁷ A. Martel, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

of gravity, operated to the advantage of the non-Uniat Church. In the case of the middle nobility, then, potential conversion might have been influenced by religious causes above all. However, this was counterbalanced by social pressure and deep-rooted tradition. The facts cited above serve to prove that in general the latter considerations prevailed. A decided majority of the middle nobility remained true to "the Ruthenian faith", in consequence of which the Polonization of this social stratum was basically something superficial.

These conclusions are confirmed by the fate of the Ruthenian nobility during the Khmelnitsky rebellion. The Catholic magnates, all the Wiśniowiecki, Tyszkiewicz, Korecki families, stood in arms by the Commonwealth, calling for a bloody settlement with "the rebellious peasantry". The Orthodox who were loyal to the Polish Kingdom — such as the Kisiels or Brzozowskis — worked on the creation of an understanding between the opposing sides. Others — the Stetkiewicz, Wereszczaka and Suryń families, or the Niemiryż family, former Arians now returning to the Orthodox fold — attempted to exploit the situation so as to fulfil their nationalistic aspirations through the Gadyach compact — on the basis of free union with the Polish Kingdom and Lithuania. On the other hand a considerable portion of the Ruthenian nobility stood among the ranks of the insurgents from the beginning of the rebellion. In the midst of this "fighting Ruthenia", among representatives of the Bajbuz, Krasnosielski, Proskur, Neczaj and many other families, one can also find those of wealthy gentry families from official spheres. Lipiński — somewhat over-generously — counted up several thousand insurgents from the nobility.

During the first half of the 17th century, then, Ukraine's middle and lesser nobility did not lose their distinctness. Despite the undoubted progress made by Polonization, these groups preserved their Ruthenian character. It was only the upheaval of the Khmelnitsky movement which brought about great changes, isolating considerable sections from Polish influence. The weakened remainder succumbed to complete Polonization during the 18th century.

(Translated by Phillip G. Smith)