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**STATE AND RELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN AUTOCRATIC GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN VOLYNIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE XIXth – THE BEGINNING OF THE XXth CENTURIES**

*Abstract. The Purpose.* Based on archival sources the article analyzes the interfaith processes in Volynia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, specifies the nature of ethno-confessional

transformations carried out by the Orthodox clergy and the Russian autocracy in the South-Western region. **The Methodology of the Research.** The research objectives have been solved on the principles of historicism, systematics, objectivity, verification, narrative constructivism, on historical and genetic, historical and typological, historiographical and biographical methods, as well as on general scientific methods of analysis, synthesis and generalization. **The Scientific Novelty.** The article, based on previously unknown archival sources and scholarly research, found out that Volyn accession into the Russian Empire was accompanied by significant transformations of the region's religious and ecclesiastical complex. The mechanism of the state-Orthodox mission was aimed primarily at neutralizing Catholic proselytism through large-scale propaganda work and means of force regulation. **The Conclusions.** The state and religious policy of the Russian autocracy in Volhynia in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries was aimed at instilment of Orthodoxy and extirpation of Catholicism, elimination of the activity of the Roman Catholic Church. This policy was pursued in close alliance between the state and the Russian Orthodox Church, since the mission of the "militant" Catholic confession was perceived as the danger for strengthening of national, in particular Polish, separatism. The Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, resisted political pressure, mostly for patriotic reasons. The Roman Catholic mission in the Ukrainian lands was not imbued with a spirit of widespread hostility to the Orthodox. The prevailing opinion in the society was that the intolerance of Orthodoxy came from the Roman Catholic clergy, and not from the folk lower classes of the Roman Catholic faith, that were characterized by a friendly attitude to both Orthodox parishioners and the clergy. The analysis of interfaith relations in the South-Western region at the beginning of the twentieth century suggests that, despite the elimination of economic independence of the Roman Catholic Church, this denomination maintained a tendency to increase the number of followers.

**Key words:** Volynia, confession, clergy, Roman Catholic Church, Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Orthodox proselytism.

## ДЕРЖАВНО-РЕЛІГІЙНА ПОЛІТИКА РОСІЙСЬКОГО САМОДЕРЖАВСТВА ЩОДО РИМО-КАТОЛИЦЬКОЇ ЦЕРКВИ НА ВОЛИНІ В ДРУГІЙ ПОЛОВИНІ ХІХ – ПОЧАТКУ ХХ СТ.

**Анотація. Мета дослідження** – на основі архівних джерел проаналізувати міжконфесійні процеси на Волині в другій половині ХІХ – початку ХХ ст., з'ясувати характер етноконфесійних трансформацій, які здійснювались російським самодержавством і православним духовенством у Південно-Західному краї. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах історизму, системності, об'єктивності, верифікації, нарративного конструктивізму, на історико-генетичному, історико-типологічному, історіографічному і біографічному методах, а також на загальнонаукових методах аналізу та синтезу, узагальнення. **Наукова новизна.** У статті, яка базується на невідомих раніше архівних джерелах і дослідженнях науковців, встановлено, що входження Волині до складу Російської імперії супроводжувалося значними трансформаціями релігійно-церковного комплексу регіону. Механізм державно-православної місії був спрямований насамперед на нейтралізацію католицького прозелітизму шляхом великомасштабної пропагандистської роботи і засобами силової регламентації. **Висновки.** Державно-релігійна політика російського самодержавства на Волині в другій половині ХІХ – початку ХХ ст. спрямовувалась на насадження православ'я та викорінення католицизму, ліквідацію діяльності Римо-католицької церкви. Ця політика здійснювалася у тісному союзі держави з РПЦ, оскільки в місії "войовничої" католицької конфесії вбачалася небезпека посилення національного, зокрема польського, сепаратизму. Римо-католицька церква, навпаки, чинила опір політичному тиску, переважно з патріотичних мотивів. Римо-католицька місія на українських землях не була пройнята духом всеохопної ворожнечі до православних. У суспільстві панувала думка, згідно з якою непримиренність до православ'я йшла від римо-католицького духовенства, а не від народних низів римо-католицького віросповідання, які вирізнялися доброзичливим ставленням як до православних парафіян, так і до священнослужителів. Аналіз міжконфесійних відносин у Південно-Західному краї на початку ХХ ст. дає підстави стверджувати, що, незважаючи на ліквідацію економічної самостійності Римо-католицької церкви, ця конфесія зберігала тенденцію до кількісного збільшення віруючих.

**Ключові слова:** Волинь, віросповідання, священнослужителі, Римо-католицька церква, католицизм, православ'я, православний прозелітизм.

**The Problem Statement.** Historically, Catholicism played an important role in the cultural and civilizational chore of the South-Western region for several centuries. With the entry of Right-Bank Ukraine, in particular Volhynia into the Russian Empire, the autocracy took a course towards strengthening of state control over local church life and weakening of the pro-Polish Catholic influence. The tsarist government strove to control tightly both the Orthodox and Catholic and Uniate clergy in the annexed lands. Thus, the entry of Volhynia into the Russian Empire was accompanied by important transformations of the religious and ecclesiastical complex of the region.

Emphasizing this fact, it should be noted that the scientific understanding of the Orthodox-Catholic relations, the study of the peculiarities of ethno-confessional transformations carried out by the tsarist authorities in Volhynia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is an important task of modern Ukrainian historical science.

**The Analysis of Recent Researches.** The dynamics and nature of transformation processes in the life of the Christian denominations of Volhynia province in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> are traced in the thesis of B. Boyko (Boyko, 2009). The thesis of V. Denisyuk analyzes the main changes in confessional life in Volhynia in 1795 – 1862, their impact on the Ukrainian-Polish relations (Denisyuk, 2012). N. Stokolos made a significant contribution to the study of the history of interfaith relations of this period (Stokolos, 2012). G. Nadтока analyzed the causes and consequences of the struggle of the Roman Catholic clergy with the Russian autocracy on the Right Bank, the tension of interfaith relations between Orthodoxy and Catholicism in the region at the intersection of the 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Nadtoka, 1998). A. Coretskaya studied the problem of polyconfessionalism of the Volhynia province at the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> centuries (Horets'ka, 2011).

Various aspects of the history of the Roman Catholic Church in the Russian Empire were also covered by contemporary Russian scientists. Thus, D. Bilunov examined the situation of the Roman Catholic Church after 1863, pointed out its close connection with the Polish national liberation movement, and characterized the features of the policy of the Russian government towards the Roman Catholic clergy (Bilunov, 1996). A. Kopylov's thesis provides a retrospective review of the life activity of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The author tried to analyze objectively the policy of the autocracy towards the Roman Catholic Church, the means of its subordination to the Russian government, to point out the reasons for the conversion of the Russian nobility to Catholicism (Kopylov, 2012). At the same time, issues related to interfaith processes in Volhynia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have not been sufficiently studied.

**The purpose** of the research is to analyze interfaith processes in Volhynia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, features of the state and religious policy of the Russian autocracy during this period.

**The Main Material Statement.** In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the issue of the Russian-Polish confrontation in confessional relations became acute in Right-Bank Ukraine. In Volhynia province more than 90% of the Roman Catholics were ethnic Poles and belonged to the nobility. After the suppression of the rebellion in 1863 and the breach with the Vatican, the Russian government in Volhynia began to actively implement anti-Polish measures, the success of which in many cases depended on the ethnic and confessional scope of the population.

The Roman Catholic Church had mostly the Poles among its followers. The share of the Poles among the Catholics in Volhynia province was 97.03%, the Ukrainians, the Russians and the Belarusians – 2.96% (Bilunov, 1996, p. 24). Therefore, the main content of the Catholic

issue in Russia was the clash of Polonism with the Russian national idea, and the arena of this confrontation was the territory of the Right Bank of Ukraine, in particular Volhynia.

As of January 1, 1896, there were 266 046 Catholics living in Volhynia province. Their religious interests were served by 99 Roman Catholic priests. It should be noted that 243 Roman Catholic churches were concentrated in Lutsk-Zhytomyr eparchy, including: Volhynia – 95; 52 branches (Volhynia – 25); 349 chapels (Volhynia – 186) (Estimated by: SAZR, f. 178, d. 1, c. 30, pp. 8, 13).

According to statistics, Volhynia province had the largest number of the Roman Catholics followers and the Roman Catholic priests, as well as church institutions. This was primarily due to the fact that this region was dominated by large Polish landowners who were the most active defenders of Catholicism.

At the end of the 19th century, 6.16% of the Poles lived in Volyn, mainly in the western counties (Rivne, Lutsk, Volodymyr-Volynsky, Zaslavsky, Dubensky and Ostroh). At the beginning of the 20th century, they accounted for almost 1/10 of the total population. Among them, the Poles (98%) and the Czechs (28.6%) predominated. Taking into consideration the development of the migration movement of the Czech colonists in Volhynia province in the second half of the 20th century, representatives of the tsarist government were the most significantly interested in religious issues. In principle, the government tried to limit the influence of the Roman Catholic Church on the Czechs due to the existence of the Hussite religious movement. However, the problem remained complicated, as evidenced by the propaganda of Orthodoxy and Catholicism among the Czech population. The upper class among the Czech colonists was predominantly Roman Catholic, and the lower class often converted to the Orthodox faith (Horets'ka, 2011, pp. 14–15).

The analysis of the reports of the right-bank governors in 1898 suggests that they implemented the Russification policy of tsarism actively, zealously fought for the instilment of Orthodoxy and the eradication of Catholicism in the South-Western territory. Thus, the governor of Volhynia noted that a large number of solid Roman Catholic churches built at the expense of the Polish nobility, compared to the Orthodox, mostly poor churches, which did not have enough space for parishioners, forced the latter to pray in the Roman Catholic churches (CSHAUK, f. 442, d. 626, c. 20, pp. 22, 39).

Archive documents reveal new facts about the persecution of the Roman Catholic priests in Volhynia, who were deported to remote provinces for converting the Orthodox to the Catholic faith. This was done with the rector of Kosteliensky parish church, the Roman Catholic priest Tochyt'sky, who was accused of converting 40 Orthodox people to Catholicism. Therefore, recognizing Tochyt'sky's stay in Volhynia province as harmful, the governor ordered his deportation (SAZR, f. 178, d. 7, c. 2398, p. 390).

The local administration in Volhynia prevented representatives of the Roman Catholic faith from occupying positions in state administration. For example, as of 1860 in Novohrad-Volynsky, Ovruch, Rovensky, Ostrozhsky, Krem'yanetsky, Kovel counties, all police officials were the Orthodox. In other counties there were only four Catholics (Denisyuk, 2012, p. 131).

The Orthodox priests often acted as agents for local police departments: reported to the local authorities about the anti-government actions of the Roman Catholic clergy, Catholic religious people and the others. For example, on January 31, 1864, a priest from Volodymyr-Volyn reported to the county police board: "in 1860, A. Gidzynski, a bourgeois, was Orthodox, but when the Polish uprisings began (the January Uprising of 1863 – note of the Authors), under the influence of the Roman Catholic priest Piotrowski, he renounced of Orthodoxy and

forbade his wife to attend the Orthodox Church ask the police board to deal with Gidzinski in accordance with the law, taking into account that by his betrayal he clearly proved to be involved in the uprising". On May 18, 1864, Volodymyr-Volyn County Police Board informed the judicial investigative district that, under the law of June 8, 1860, Gidzynsky, a bourgeois, was imprisoned for betrayal of Orthodoxy (SAVR, f. 359, d. 1, c. 860, pp. 5, 7).

On September 11, 1865, Archbishop Anthony of Volhynia and Zhytomyr sent a letter to Isidore Metelsky, a benefactor of Lutsk district, in which he warned of the influence of Catholicism on the Orthodox in the diocese: "During a visit to the diocese, I learned that many Orthodox often visit the Roman Catholic churches during worship. This fact shows how deeply rooted Catholicism is and how it is necessary for priests to convince the Orthodox people that the true faith is only Orthodox, that it is necessary to follow it entirely in order to save one's soul, otherwise backslide is inevitable" (SAVR, f. 359, d. 1, c. 860, p. 301).

Some of the best ways to distract Orthodox from visiting the Roman Catholic churches were: improvement of the parish church, worthy worship, proclamation of sermons understandable to the common people. On October 13, 1865, the consistory listened to the order of the Volhynia governor of June 30, 1865 under № 6835, where he noted that before and during the Polish uprising, Latin priests, as reported by a judicial investigator of Zhytomyr County, converted some Orthodox people to the Roman Catholic faith, and that in Volhynia Province almost all officials were the Roman Catholics (SAVR, f. 359, d. 1, c. 860, p. 302).

The Consistory considered it necessary to collect information about people converted from Orthodoxy to Latin to inform the Governor of Volhynia; to entrust all parish priests to gather information about all followers of their parishes, converted to Catholicism, explaining when, for what reasons each person converted to the Roman Catholic faith, who was the initiator of the conversion; to instruct the police of Volhynia province to administer strict supervision over people of the Roman Catholic faith who tried to convert people of the Orthodox faith to Latin, as well as those Orthodox who visited Roman Catholic churches. It was necessary to report on such individuals to the authorities, and to punish them in accordance with the law, to oblige parish priests to tail such people; in case of conversion of any of the parishioners to inform the diocesan authorities, as well as the local police official (SAVR, f. 35, d. 1, c. 14, p. 303).

The Russian authorities meticulously monitored the steady growth of the Orthodoxy gravitas and prevented the conversion of religious devotees from Orthodoxy to any other denomination. For example, on July 4, 1852, the governor of Volhynia sent a secret circular to Kovel city magistrate, which stated that apostasy from Orthodoxy in heresy (in other religions – note of the authors) was punished by deprivation to penal battalions (SAVR, f. 229, d. 1, c. 289, p. 3).

On September 22, 1866, Volhynia governor informed the Minister in charge of interior affairs that Volhynia Chamber of the Criminal Court sent him a case concerning the Guardian of the Ushomir Roman Catholic Church in Zhytomyr District of Volhynia Province, the Roman Catholic priest Yancharsky, and Vicar Nesterovych, convicted of baptism according to the Catholic rite of children born to Orthodox parents. The court found the Vicar of Ushomir Roman Catholic Church, Geronim Nesterovich, guilty of the baptism of Grigory Vygovsky and, according to Art. 146, he was deprived of his post for six months, and the Guardian of the Roman Catholic Church, a priest Eduard Yancharsky, was warned strictly (RSHA, f. 821, d. 125, c. 1164, pp. 1–4).

On June 30, 1867, Volhynia Chamber of the Criminal Court sent a message to the Minister of the Interior stating that the archpriest of Kremenets Orthodox Church, a priest Klyukovsky,

accused the Roman Catholic priest Shchepanovsky of converting Kremenets resident Martin Koltunov from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. (RSHA, f. 821, d. 125, c. 1165, p. 3).

In the report of Rivne district governor to Volhynia governor from April 29, 1869 it was reported that a parish priest of the village of Gorodka Matviy Berestovsky stated that, economic clerk – a peasant Kozyarsky of Orthodox faith, attended the Roman Catholic church, did not go to the Orthodox church, did not confess, used peasants at work on holidays, did not allow them to perform the sacrament of confession, proclaimed among the peasants the idea of restoring Poland. The conducted investigation established that Kozyarsky showed indifference to the Orthodox faith, as a result of which he was summoned several times by the archpriest of Rovno to catechesis (SARR, f. 379, d. 1, c. 17, p. 4).

Clashes arose between the police and the Roman Catholic clergy in terms of the education of the Roman Catholic people. The Roman Catholic clergy often allowed the Orthodox people to studying process and taught subjects (the Polish – authors' note) that were not allowed by the government. On March 11, 1866, the governor of Volyn ordered that people of the Orthodox faith should not be allowed to studying process in the schools at the parish churches of Volhynia province (SAZR, f. 178, d. 52, c. 14, p. 34).

It should also be noted that in the 90s of the XIXth century the Russian authorities fought actively against the remnants of cultural heritage of the Greco-Uniate Church as well. In particular, the decrees of Volhynia ecclesiastical consistory of 1890 – 1891 contained requirements for the priests to change crosses and crucifixes of the Catholic type to the Orthodox ones, to remove the remnants of the Union and Catholicism from the Orthodox Churches. (Stokolos, 2012, p. 102).

New life for the Roman Catholics in Russia began at the beginning of the 20th century. The Decree of Nicholas II “On religious tolerance” of April 17, 1905 stated:

1) to recognize that apostasy from the Orthodox faith in another Christian religion or doctrine is not the subject to persecution and should not cause any adverse personal or civil consequences, and besides, people, that have fallen away from Orthodoxy after reaching the age of majority, are recognized as belonging to the religion or creed that they have chosen for themselves;

2) to recognize that during the conversion of one of the spouses who profess the same Christian faith to another religion, all children who have not reached the age of majority remain in the former faith professed by another spouse, and at the same conversion of both spouses their children under 14 years adhere to faith of parents, and till this age remain in the former religion;

3) to appoint that people who are Orthodox, but in fact profess a non-Christian faith, to which they or their ancestors belonged before joining Orthodoxy, may, if they wish, leave the Orthodox;

4) to allow the Christians of all denominations, if they adopt unbaptized children or children of unknown parents, to baptize them according to the rite of their faith (Polnoye sobraniye zakonov Rossiyskoy imperii, 1908, pp. 257–258).

After this Law, that resolved the right of citizens of the Russian Empire to convert to any confession, entered into force it was found out that most of all there were people who sought to convert from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. Thus, according to official statistics, 233 000 people converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism between 1905 and 1909. However, the “decree on religious tolerance” did not provide the desired equality to the Roman Catholic Church because of the domination of the Orthodox Church in the Empire. Authorities continued to oppress the civil rights and freedoms of the Roman Catholics (Kopylov, 2012, pp. 218–221).

Trials of the Catholic Pastors became commonplace in interchurch relations. For example, the trial of Volhynia priest Vikentiy Moravych was turned into a demonstration: the Roman Catholic priest confessed Orthodox parishioners for 5 years, “provoking” numerous cases of the latter leaving the ruling church (History of religion in Ukraine, 2001, p. 111).

Volhynia Archbishop Anthony demanded to bring the Roman Catholic priest of the Novohrad-Volyn Roman Catholic Church Vladislav Lyakhovych to court, accusing him of spreading Catholic propaganda among the Orthodox population (Boyko, 2009, pp. 82–83).

On the basis of official reports and articles in local diocesan publications, Archpriest F. Titov from the perspective of the Russian Orthodox Church acknowledged, that in Volhynia diocese from the time of the Imperial Decree from April 17, 1905 to 1907 almost 900 people were converted to Catholicism. F. Titov explained this dynamics by the intensification of the Catholic propaganda and the confusion of the Orthodox priests. During the propaganda, the Roman Catholic priests focused on mixed marriages, aiming at attracting the Orthodox to their churches through listening to the organ, good singing and solemn worship. Assistants to the Roman Catholic priests in the promotion of Catholicism were members of various Catholic fraternities – rosary, scapular, sobriety, etc. (Titov, 1908, pp. 5, 6, 33, 35).

Residents of the town of Gorodok, Kremenets County, in particular retired Field Marshal Lukyan and his wife Maria Marcyniuk, complained about the vicar of the city’s Roman Catholic parish, Father Boleslaw Sawicki, who persuaded their daughter Anna to convert from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. He also promoted the Catholic faith among the Orthodox population; with his sermons he turned Catholics with hostility against Orthodox. For this he was later dismissed from his post (SAZR, f. 178, d. 13, c. 1312, p. 1).

It should be noted that the epicenter of the struggle against the Roman Catholics was in Volhynia. Thus, Bishop Anthony of Volhynia urged to beware of communication with the “Latin heresy” and, in particular, with the Roman Catholic priests, who “with their theatrical procession and music performances in churches attract the simple-minded, and with mixed marriages complete their tricks”. However, the people of Volhynia still remembered the former metropolitan of Kyiv and Halych, Platon, who during the tours of the diocese entered the Roman Catholic churches and publicly prayed in them (History of religion in Ukraine, 2001, pp. 111, 115).

After the decree was issued on April 17, 1905, Archbishop Anthony of Volhynia worked out and distributed messages and appeals among his obedience through parish priests, where he described the essence of Latin as a false doctrine. In addition to messages and appeals, together with the vicars, he made trips to settlements with active Catholicism propaganda. They held ceremonial services, during which speeches against the Catholic propaganda were proclaimed. On April 27, 1907, the archbishop convened a meeting of the clergy of Volhynia diocese, at which measures to counteract Catholicism were determined, among which special emphasis was placed on the conduct of a solemn liturgy.

Missionary and preaching activities organized by the ministers of the Pochaiv Lavra were of great importance in the fight against the Catholic propaganda in the region. Missionary teachings were proclaimed on the days when many worshipers gathered here to come to worship the local shrines. According to the ideologist of Orthodoxy, Archpriest F. Titov, the Pochaiv leaflets revealed to the common people the falsity of the speeches of local Roman Catholic priests and Catholic missionaries who came to Volhynia (Titov, 1908, p. 35).

State support for Orthodox proselytism found expression primarily in the financial sphere. The missionaries received a salary (780 rubles a year) and travel expenses (500 rubles a year).

In the case of fulfilling the duties of a county observer, the salary was increased (up to 1000 rubles). Missionaries also received relatively high pensions.

In 1905, Volhynia assembly, headed by Archbishop Antoni Khrapovytsky, was engaged in the development of the anti-Catholic tactics under the conditions of religious freedom.

A special role in the system of the anti-Catholic measures in Ukraine was assigned to national missionary courses. In Ukraine there was one pastoral and missionary seminary for the professional training of the clergy. The mission was inextricably linked with the construction of new Orthodox churches. For example, the priests of Volhynia, on the initiative of Pastor Viktor Kashubsky, even managed to begin construction of a memorial church "Victory of Orthodoxy over Catholicism" in Zhytomyr County (Nadtoka, 1998, pp. 94–95).

The changes that took place in the empire forced Pope Pius X to issue a decree in 1907, according to which Russian was recognized as the second church language after Latin in Russia. Numerous Ukrainian Catholic communities demanded that the Roman Catholic priests use the native language of the majority of parishioners during worship. The Kyiv Society of Roman Catholics reached out the people, urging their fellow believers to strive for inclusion the Ukrainian language, history and literature in the curriculum of Zhytomyr Catholic Seminary (History of religion in Ukraine, 2001, p. 114).

On September 26, 1907, Archbishop Anthony of Volhynia and Zhytomyr sent a letter to the Minister of the Interior P. Stolypin accusing the ministry of conniving at foreign Catholic missionaries in their attempt to promote Catholicism in the province. "The ministry entrusted to you, the archbishop wrote, has already twice allowed Catholic monks from Galicia to come to Volhynia (the first time to Lutsk and the second – to Ostroh) allegedly for resistive action against agrarian disorders. In Volhynia province, the Catholic peasants did not arrange any agrarian riots. The choice of places for the Catholic preaching there was determined not by agrarian, but by religious propaganda conditions, because namely Lutsk, Ostroh and Novohrad-Volynsk are the main centers of Latin propaganda in Volhynia. Therefore, with the departure from Lutsk of priests, who in their sermons had to condemn the agrarian disorders, and not only focus on family life, soon the governor of Volyn received a great number of petitions to convert the Orthodox women who were married to the Catholics to Catholicism. On behalf of the entire Orthodox Volhynia, I strongly urge you not to allow foreign Catholic monks to visit Volhynia anymore" (RSHA, f. 821, d. 125, c. 3304, vol. 1, pp. 109–110).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian government officials closely monitored the fall from Orthodoxy to Catholicism of the inhabitants of the Right Bank in order to return them to their previous faith. The governor of Volhynia demanded that the abbots of the Roman Catholic parishes inform on a monthly basis about people who had converted from Orthodoxy to the Roman Catholic religion. In a letter to the Lutsk-Zhytomyr Roman Catholic Spiritual Consistory, he emphasized, that by the circular of the Minister of Internal Affairs of April 24, 1909, it was ordered annually (until January 1) to submit to the Department of Spiritual Affairs of Foreign Confessions statistical information on the number of people who fell away from Orthodoxy. However, almost all the abbots of the Roman Catholic churches of Volhynia province did not send such information.

On November 17, 1910, the consistory decided: to oblige the deans of Volhynia province to monitor strictly the implementation of the governor's order by the abbots of the parishes: to submit to the Office of the Governor-General of Kyiv, Podolsk and Volhynia the lists of persons who converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism last year (SAZR, f. 178, d. 10, c. 1483, pp. 1–12).



In 1905 – 1907, more than 170 000 people converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. This figure could have been even higher, but was restrained by the onerous rules of conversion from Orthodoxy to another confession, issued on June 25, 1905. According to them, those who wanted to leave the Orthodox had to write a petition to the name of the governor, and the latter should inform the bishop. For a month, the case was under consideration of secular authorities and the consistory. The “abjurors” were forced to repent several times, after which the local clergy declared them anathema publicly. Only then did the governor issue certificates of the right to convert to another religion. In the event of mass transitions, a special commission of inquiry was created, which included a rural dean, a missionary assistant and a police official. For example, such a commission conducted an investigation when 60 residents of Novohrad-Volynskyi district simultaneously wrote statements about the conversion from the Orthodox faith to the Catholic (Boyko, 2009, p. 82).

Thus, the missionary and preaching activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in the fight against the Catholic propaganda in the region could succeed only with the help of the police and administrative pressure.

In 1908 there were 346 375 Roman Catholics in Volhynia province (see Table 1).

Statistics gives grounds to assert that in the areas of compact residence of the representatives of the two Christian denominations in Volhynia, the missionary advantage belonged to the Roman Catholic clergy. In 1911, there were 384 162 Roman Catholics in the region so far. Representatives of this faith visited 104 churches, where the liturgy was conducted by 163 priests (SAZR, f. 178, d. 2, c. 6, pp. 4, 6, 13–14).

On July 14, 1914, the governor of Kholm informed the vicar of Volhynia province that Korolina Loshak, a resident of Pulmiv volost of Volodymyr-Volyn district, had converted to Catholicism (SAVR, f. 416, d. 1, c. 72, p. 222). Thus, from 1905 to 1914 there was a significant replenishment of the Roman Catholic Church funded with the Orthodox.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the presence of Catholicism in Volhynia was quite noticeable. The Roman Catholic churches were built and maintained mainly at the expense of the neighbourhood landowners.

On December 27, 1912, Lutsk-Zhytomyr Ecclesiastical Consistory accepted a donation (a plot of land of 50 50 square fathoms) from the nobleman R. Verzhbytsky. (SAZR, f. 178, d. 2, c. 79, pp. 3–4). In the same year, the last will and testament were issued from the bourgeois Adam Yasynetsky (100 rubles) for the needs of Pulyn Church of the Novohrad-Volynsky District of Volhynia Province (SAZR, f. 178, d. 2, c. 16, p. 3; c. 71, pp. 1–2).

The analysis of interfaith relations in Volhynia province at the beginning of the twentieth century suggests that, despite the elimination of the economic independence

Table 1

**The Number of the Roman Catholic Parishioners of Volhynia Province in 1908**

Counties	Number of Roman Catholics
Zhytomyr	66126
Lutsk	29033
Dubno	16767
Volodarsk-Volynsky	32783
Kovel	10531
Rivne	34067
Novograd-Volynsky	54276
Ostroh	17474
Zaslav	22243
Starokostiantyniv	29009
Kremenets	21017
Ovruch	13058
Total in the province	346375

(Compiled by the authors: SAZR, f. 178, d. 1, c. 557, pp. 18–21).

of the Roman Catholic Church, this denomination maintained a tendency to increase the number of followers. Although with the entry of Right-Bank Ukraine into the Russian Empire, the tsarist government sought to control tightly both the Orthodox and the Catholic and Uniate clergy in the annexed lands, and pursued a policy to weaken the pro-Polish Catholic influences.

During the period under study, the Orthodox clergy supported the policy of the autocracy, for which the tsarist government provided them with material and legal assistance. Despite its humiliating dependence on the Russian state mechanism, the Ukrainian Orthodox clergy for the most part fulfilled the ideological claims of the autocracy, supported government policy, and was hostile to the patriotic movement of the local nobility.

The Roman Catholic Church, on the contrary, resisted political pressure, mostly for patriotic reasons. However, the resistance was weakened significantly by the fact that a smoothly running imperial police and bureaucratic mechanism protected the social interests of the clergy more effectively than the governmental structures of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth disrupted by political anarchy.

Any attempt to convert to the Roman Catholic Church was persecuted as a betrayal. The Russian authorities consistently fought against the Catholic proselytism. Each such case was investigated carefully, and punishment awaited not only the initiator but also the priest.

The Roman Catholic mission in the Ukrainian lands was not laced with the spirit of wide-reaching hostility to the Orthodox. The prevailing opinion in the society was that intolerance of Orthodoxy came from the Roman Catholic clergy and not from the lower classes of the Roman Catholic faith, who were friendly to both the Orthodox parishioners and the clergy.

**The Conclusions.** The inclusion process of Volhynia into the Russian Empire was accompanied by significant transformations of the religious and ecclesiastical complex of the region. The main direction of the state and religious policy of the Russian autocracy in the South-western Territory in the second half of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth centuries was aimed, primarily, at the complete neutralization of the Catholic proselytism through large-scale propaganda work and means of force regulation. This is explained not only by anti-clerical policy, but also the ethno-national one, since the region was characterized by a compact settlement of the Poles, the vast majority of whom were followers of the Roman Catholic Church. The Russian government understood the mission of the “bellicose” Catholic denomination as a danger of increasing national, in particular the Polish, separatism. The Orthodox clergy also took an active part in the Russification policy of tsarism; they zealously fought for the instilment of Orthodoxy and the eradication of Catholicism in Volhynia. At the same time, the Russian authorities fought actively against the remnants of the cultural heritage of the Greco-Uniate Church as well.

Although the Russian autocracy and the Orthodox clergy tried to limit the activities of the Roman Catholic Church through a system of anti-Catholic measures, the effectiveness of the tsarist government’s anti-religious practices and their implementation in Volhynia region had contradictory consequences. On the one hand, we cannot say that they did not affect the functioning of the Roman Catholic Church in any way, and on the other hand, their result was not such as expected.

The research of interfaith processes in Volhynia in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries gives grounds to claim that, despite all the drama surrounding the abolition of the economic independence of the Roman Catholic Church and the closure of the monastic orders, the extensive system of the Roman Catholic communities maintained a tendency to increase the number of followers. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the social base of the Roman Catholic Church became different qualitatively. A feature of its

national assets was the high proportion of ethnic Ukrainians, who along with the religious of the Polish origin, determined the ethno-religious map of Catholicism in Ukraine.

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