Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:

A table of contents for *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* can be found here:

'Greek Catholic'–'Orthodox'–'Soviet': a Symbiosis or a Conflict of Identitites?*

NATALIA SHLIKHTA

The Church in Hostile Surroundings: a Problem of Identity

At a recent World Council of Churches consultation it was stated that at a fundamental theological level the identity of the Christian church is 'based on Christ' (Thompson, 2002, p. 1). Few will doubt, however, that the church's identity goes beyond this basic theological definition. The reason for this is suggested by the influential nineteenth-century Catholic theologian John Henry Newman, when he stresses that a church is not 'placed in a void, but in the crowded world' and that its outlook must correspond to 'persons and circumstances, and must be thrown into new shapes according to the form of society' in which it functions (Newman, 1974, pp. 131–50). This suggests that the church always faces the necessity of reconciling its religious identity with inescapable 'this-worldly' identities (political, national and social), adopting an attitude towards the secular authorities (political loyalty) and towards national identity and achieving an understanding of its place and role in a society (social identity). The strain amongst these identities becomes especially acute in unfavourable surroundings when the church's religious self is jeopardised, as, for instance, under a regime professing atheist ideas. For a religious person, who becomes the primary locus of tension, the problem reflects itself in a contradiction between one's private and public identities (Cochran, 1990). A significance that attaining a sense of non-controversial identity has for the psychological comfort of an individual as well as for group regulation and functioning implies that choices of certain identities become essential to the preservation of a religious community and institution under such circumstances.

The quest for identity on the part of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic (Byzantine-rite) Churches in Soviet Ukraine in the period from the late 1940s to the 1980s was quite complicated. Each faced the difficulty of combining political and social loyalties with its religious identity, given the inherent atheist character of Marxist–Leninist ideology upon which the regime based its legitimacy, coupled with its commitment to reform Soviet society according to the Marxist vision of communism that 'abolishes eternal truths ... abolishes all religion ... instead of constituting them on a new basis' (Marx and Engels, 1957, p. 88). The regime's aspiration for total control, involving the blurring of boundaries between the 'private' and the 'public' and thereby virtually depriving Soviet citizens of the former, made the problem even more intense. The faithful of the *Ukrainian*

Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) also had to answer additional challenges. They were required to alter their religious self through submitting themselves to the *Russian* Orthodox Church (ROC) and to accept a regime that was not simply hostile to their religious identity but also alien nationally.

The ROC was ideologically unacceptable to the communist authorities and had to find a place for itself within a society that apparently reserved no room for it. The UGCC also had to cope with forcible religious conversion and defend its identity as a church that 'has always been and will always remain a national church, [the embodiment] of the true faith of our Ukrainian people' (AIIT, 1993b, p. 37).[1] A solution found by the former was unconditionally to accept a 'Soviet' identity. The latter sought either to reject completely any linkage to both 'Orthodox' and 'Soviet' identities or to adopt both of them partially while constructing a new or, to apply David Thompson's notion, 'lived' identity (Thompson, 2002). There were nevertheless close parallels between these seemingly opposite solutions. They aimed primarily at securing a religious identity in order to ensure the survival of these churches in the Soviet state. Although the churches seemed to achieve this objective and in different ways survived the period of official antireligious persecutions, on a deeper level neither managed to attain the comfort of a clear sense of identity.

The Orthodox Dilemma: To Accept or To Be Excluded?

The 'declaration of loyalty' (*Poslaniye mitropolita Sergiya k pastyryam i pastve*) issued by Metropolitan Sergi (Stragorodsky) in 1927 helps us to assess the stand of the ROC after the Second World War. The head of the church instructed his flock that 'We must show, not in words, but in deeds, that not only people indifferent to Orthodoxy, or those who reject it, can be faithful citizens of the Soviet Union, loyal to the Soviet government, but also the most fervent adherents of Orthodoxy' (Fletcher, 1965, p. 29). He then professed a 'creed of loyalty': 'We wish to be Orthodox and at the same time to claim the Soviet Union as our civil motherland.' (Fletcher, 1965, p. 29) This notion was rejected by many of Sergi's contemporaries, albeit not because of the pronounced declaration of loyalty to the regime, but because of the idea of the approximation of the interests of church and state implicit in it.[2] In scholarly literature this declaration is usually interpreted as the 'unreserved profession of [the church's] Soviet patriotism', aimed at a 'total identification' of the Orthodox Church with the Soviet state (Kolarz, 1961, p. 42).

This reading of the declaration is nevertheless one-dimensional. One cannot doubt William Fletcher's thesis that it 'determined the church's political position in a Soviet state' for the entire communist period (Fletcher, 1965, p. 27). The required political identity was gradually accepted by all its members, even those who dared to protest against official antireligious policy.[3] At the same time, scholars tend to overlook the fact that Sergi's declaration also suggested the possibility of combining seemingly incompatible Soviet and Christian identities, and pointed the way to the elaboration of a 'dual identity' (Young, 1997) or a 'double faith' (*dvoyeveriye*) (Siegelbaum, 1992) by its adherents during the subsequent decades. Far from rejecting the religious self in favour of one that was antireligious, Sergi required church members to remain devout Orthodox, because 'A change has taken place only in our relation to the regime, while the faith and the Orthodox Christian life remain unchanged' (Fletcher, 1965, p. 30). For long-term survival this definition of a 'dual identity' was no less important than a pronounced readiness for political collaboration, though the latter undoubtedly contributed to preserving the church through the persecutions of the 1930s.

In its most fundamental sense, the concept of a 'Soviet' identity consisted of four elements: political loyalty, the acceptance of official Marxist–Leninist ideology, commit-

ment to the communist project of social reform and Russianness. The latter appears as a surprise in this list, given that it hardly fits into the Marxist internationalist ideal, which was behind the formation of the union of 'equal' socialist republics. Since this question has received considerable scholarly attention elsewhere, it is sufficient here to recall Bohdan Bociurkiw's notion of the inner struggle within the Soviet ruling elite between the proponents of the 'Soviet' and 'Russian' models of the communist future (Bociurkiw, 1990, p. 149).[4] Stalin's turn to the imperial heritage in the late 1930s and Nazi occupation policy together preconditioned the ultimate triumph of the 'Russian' model.[5] Only Khrushchev's short-lived drive attempted to revive the 'Soviet' model, purging it of then dominant Russian component. His dedication to the internationalist ideal explains both official religious policy and the troubles that the ROC experienced with its Soviet identity under his rule.

This understanding of a Soviet identity presumed that only one of its elements (albeit a crucial one, especially in view of the regime's totalitarian aspirations) was fundamentally incompatible with the religious self of the Orthodox Church, while the others were considered appropriate by its members. For a church with a legacy over many centuries of a relationship with the state based on the caesaro-papist model it was only natural to justify the 'god-fighting' aspirations of secular authorities by reference to 'God's Providence' and to draw its civil posture from the apostolic teaching concerning 'unconditional obedience' to state power (Nikolai (Yarushevich) et al., 1942, p. 130; TDAVO, 4648/5/69, p. 112; TDAVO, 4648/5/115, p. 49).[6] A common Russianness made the task of reconciling identities much easier. Not only did the episcopate regard the identities of 'Orthodox' and 'Russian' as inseparable, but the same equation was also taken for granted by the Orthodox faithful including those who lived in the Ukrainian Republic. Strong evidence for this is found in the letters of Orthodox believers from Western Ukraine to Patriarch Aleksi (Simansky). They stressed that when closing their churches the local Soviet authorities, who in their view supported the Ukrainian Greek Catholics, 'completely humiliate the Great Russian nation' (TDAVO, 4648/1/459, p. 56).

The ability of the church to find a place for itself within a society dedicated to the 'building of communism' was less self-evident. The solution was found through further development of the concept of 'Christian Communism' or 'Christian Socialism' that significantly enough was fiercely attacked by the founders of the communist project in their programme document (Marx and Engels, 1957, p. 88). The charge of popularising 'Christian Socialism (the "worst kind of socialism", according to Lenin)' topped the list of the 'gravest sins' of the editorial board of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* (*JMP*) – in other words, of the leadership of the ROC – drawn up by the director of the Museum of the History of Religion, Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich, in his review of 1947 (RGASPI, 17/125/506, p. 74). The communists' irritation becomes easily understandable when we look more closely at the concept. The Orthodox hierarchy and clergy defined Christian principles as being identical to the communist ideals of democracy and collectivism, and the impossibility of opposing Christianity to communist democracy followed from the statement that they were 'synonymous' (RGANI, 5/16/669, pp. 89–90). Christian ideas were furthermore presented as the primary sources of all progressive ideas that penetrated deeply into the social and individual conscience and found their best realisation in a communist programme (Luka, 2001, pp. 75–78, 89, 95–100; AIIT, 1998, p. 39; RGANI, 5/16/669, p. 92). Numerous articles in *JMP* implied or even overtly maintained that 'the building of socialism in our country [the Soviet Union] implements principles that were proclaimed by the Christian Church 2000 years ago' (RGASPI, 17/125/506, p. 70).

Atheist propagandists on various occasions affirmed that this concept was an effective

form of the 'self-defence of religion', its way of 'disarming' their attacks and strengthening the 'ideological impact' of religion upon the population (RGASPI, 606/4/86, p. 38; RGANI, 5/16/669, p. 106). They considered 'Christian Communism' as the 'most harmful' of the ways in which the ROC sought to achieve adaptation (*prisposoblenchestvo*[7]) to the current social and political context, which 'considerably complicates our struggle with religious ideology' (RGASPI, 606/4/86, p. 38). These estimates reveal both the effectiveness of this approach to linking the church and Soviet society and the highly negative attitude of the Soviet authorities towards such an attempt.

If Bryan Wilson is correct to argue that the basis of Christian logic was 'that one could not believe simultaneously in "A" and "non-A", [which] made compartmentalism impossible', the entire undertaking by the church was doomed to failure from the outset, because of the impossibility of resolving the tensions between a Christian identity and the arguably most important Marxist–Leninist element of a Soviet identity (Wilson, 1982, p. 54). Either drawing from the same premises or simply having a superficial view of Soviet society, western researchers used to clearly distinguish between the 'Soviet people' and those who claimed the primacy of their religious self (Prulovich, 1964, p. 8). If such an oversimplified picture were true, communist leaders would have had far less difficulty in achieving their ideal of a completely secularised society. Glennys Young's insight concerning the nature of the Orthodox 'church' identity assists in explaining church members' approach to the atheist component of a Soviet identity. Differentiating between 'sectarian' and 'church' claims on the individual, she points to the all-encompassing character of a sectarian identity. In contrast, the Orthodox emphasis on ritual makes a greater claim on behaviour than on inner life. Therefore 'It was much easier to compartmentalize one's attachment to Russian Orthodoxy ... than one's attachment to sectarian belief' (Young, 1997, p. 91). Young therefore warns against theoretical generalisations such as Wilson's, and suggests that those Orthodox believers who had to reconcile their religious identity within a changed ideological climate regarded various elements of a newly constructed identity as far less incompatible than researchers usually assume. This explains, for example, why participation by communists and Komsomol members in the Orthodox liturgy and sacraments was less 'unnatural' than it might seem, or why believers' decisions to join the Communist Party were not perceived by them as 'apostasy' and should not be qualified in such terms.

An additional means of reconciling identities was through making the atheist (or generally ideological) component of a Soviet identity irrelevant and claiming that it was possible to adopt the latter without accepting the former. Stressing that the Orthodox faithful are 'completely alien to materialism, which forms the ideological basis of communism', Archbishop Luka (Voino-Yasenetsky) still described them as loyal citizens and 'Soviet people ... who appreciate ... the great social truth of our ... socialist system' (Luka, 1948, p. 62). The official description of Archbishop Luka as one of the 'most reactionary bishops' of the ROC and a 'religious zealot' who 'strives to unleash popular religiosity ... [and] preaches intensively in the defence of religion' is a telling manifestation of the state authorities' view of any attempts by the ROC to link itself to society (RGASPI, 17/132/109, p. 36). In a letter of July 1954 to Karpov, chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC),[8] Metropolitan Grigori (Chukov) of Leningrad and Novgorod went still further than Archbishop Luka. He suggested that atheism was irrelevant not only to the concept of a Soviet identity, but also to Marxist ideology, on which the regime based its legitimacy. Considering Marxism to be 'a highly appealing socio-economic teaching', he asserted that Marx made a 'logical mistake' when established atheism as the philosophical premise of his teaching. He explained: 'Religion is the sphere of psychology where only emotions and conscience

matter, while economics is exclusively the sphere of physical nature' (TDAHO, 1/23/3532, p. 141). Metropolitan Grigori concluded with a claim on the possibility of the complete integration of the church into Soviet society: 'If this atheist prerequisite is exempted from Marxist economic teaching, both atheists and believers in God would sincerely embrace this teaching' (TDAHO, 1/23/3532, p. 141).

The Soviet identity of the ROC revealed itself in a number of ways. The linkage of religious ceremonies and feasts with the major holidays of the Soviet calendar (primarily 7 November, the date of the Great October Socialist Revolution, and International Labour Day on 1 May) was the most visible. During revolutionary holidays the number of baptisms and religious weddings significantly increased. As the plenipotentiary of the CAROC in Stalins'ka *oblast'* correctly observed, 'Believers time these ceremonies on such dates in order to attach a more solemn character to them' (TDAVO, 4648/1/298, p. 25). When Easter coincided with the May Day festivities, the liturgy, contrary to all expectations, was usually attended by a larger number of people. Stressing this coincidence, priests demanded that their flock celebrate the greatest Orthodox holiday 'more solemnly and majestically'. They further interpreted it as a sign of unity between their church and the Soviet people; 'This close unity of two popular holidays is blessed by God and professes our [the church's] inseparable link with our people'(TDAVO, 4648/5/42, pp. 125, 118).

These words point to the significance that the adoption of a Soviet identity had for securing the existence of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet state. It was essential for the church's survival, because it prevented its isolation from society, which was *the* aim of official religious policy. Political loyalty was demanded from the church, but the expectation was that it would remain a 'traditionalist' church in an institutional and a social sense, which would necessarily weaken its ties with a 'modernised' society. After the reaching of a *modus vivendi* between the regime and the ROC hierarchy in 1943, the political loyalty of the Orthodox was seldom openly questioned.[9] However, the communist authorities did not fully accept the church's 'dual identity' either, estimating it as a merely tactical means of *prisposoblenchestvo*. While the compartmentalisation of conflicting private and public identities was regarded as possible by church members, it was rejected by the regime that made an all-embracing claim on its subjects.

Official distrust of these aspirations on the part of the ROC best revealed itself in the official attitude towards the so-called 'Soviet' clergy. These were priests of a younger generation who declared the primacy of their Soviet identity and expressed their active support of the official plan of reforming society on a communist basis. As such, they maintained stronger ties with the Soviet people and were more acceptable to local party and soviet leaders, and they did not fail to make use of these advantages to strengthen their own position and the church's influence. The demand found in CAROC documents to 'restrict in every way' the activity of these 'Soviet' priests (TDAHO, 1/24/5028, p. 119) becomes understandable in the light of Lenin's warning that

> A corrupted traditionalist priest is much less dangerous for 'democracy' than a priest ... who rejects traditionalism, is loyal to the state, and is democratically minded. It is easy to unmask the former ... while it is much more difficult to expel the latter, it is a thousand times harder to unmask him. (TDAVO, 4648/1/176, p. 80)[10]

The stand of Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), exarch of Ukraine from 1966, illustrates how the Soviet identity of the episcopate helped them to guard their church against official restricting policies by the state. A representative of the hierarchy 'well socialised into the Soviet system, enjoying the confidence of authorities and demonstrating ... complete

loyalty to the Soviet system' (Bociurkiw, 1972, p. 208), Filaret, despite or rather because of his identity, was characterised as one of the 'most harmful priests' by the CAROC plenipotentiary in Kiev *oblast'*, Bibik (TDAHO, 1/31/1671, p. 160). To explain this estimation the Soviet functionary proceeded to describing various means employed by the metropolitan to strengthen the position of the Orthodox Church in the Ukrainian Exarchate.

The attitude of the state authorities suggests that the desire of believers and Orthodox priests to call themselves 'Soviet citizens' was hard to realise. In innumerable appeals, the Orthodox faithful had to defend their right to be treated as Soviet people against the latent tendency to 'degrade' them to 'second-rate citizens' or even a to 'pariah class' (TDAVO, 4648/5/277, pp. 10, 80; TDAVO, 4648/5/313, p. 16). Typical is a remark by an Orthodox priest from Rivne *oblast'* who emphasised the political loyalty and 'correct' civil posture of clergy who did not deserve a 'scornful and humiliating attitude that insults their dignity as Soviet citizens' (RGANI, 5/16/669, p. 209).

The confusion was especially felt by the ROC during Khrushchev's antireligious campaign. The church, virtually deprived of the possibility of claiming its loyalty on the basis of its Russianness, faced additional difficulties when defining and defending its identity. In their letter to Khrushchev of 5 May 1959 Patriarch Aleksi and Metropolitan Nikolai (Yarushevich) of Krutitsy and Kolomna dared to ask for a revision of official policy. Otherwise, they cautioned, it would have serious social implications and religious people would find themselves separated from Soviet society (RGANI, 5/33/126, p. 158). Some Orthodox faithful indeed found that the rejection of a Soviet identity was the only option available for them in that situation.[11] A solution of this kind, as sources confirm, was, however, extreme and exceptional, and ROC members in their overwhelming majority maintained their 'dual identity' through all difficulties that they faced.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Dilemma: to Accept or to Survive?

The regime's treatment of the Soviet identity of the ROC provides good evidence for Vasyl Markus' statement that Soviet religious policy was conditioned by specific circumstances rather than drawing directly from communist ideology with a universal application (Markus, 1976, p. 119). In no other case was the 'Orthodox'–'Soviet' link so readily accepted by state authorities (even under Khrushchev's rule) than in Western Ukraine where the transfer of the adherents of the Ukrainian national church to Orthodoxy was simultaneously meant to 'indoctrinate [them] in Soviet patriotism' (Bociurkiw, 1972, p. 193) or to 'integrate [them] into the Soviet Russian Body' (Markus, 1976, p. 121). In Western Ukraine, annexed just at the beginning of the Second World War, the Soviet authorities had to deal with a church that primarily defined itself as *national* and also constituted a part of the universal church, and with a population who questioned even less the identification of 'Greek Catholic' as 'Ukrainian' than the traditional link between 'Orthodox' and 'Russian' identities.

The self-perception of Ukrainian Greek Catholics falls within Pedro Ramet's notion of 'ecclesiastical nationalism', which draws on the assumption that a nation cannot survive without a national church. From this identification it follows that 'the nation becomes infused with transcendent value and conversion becomes tantamount to assimilation' (Ramet, 1988, p. 8). Undoubtedly the awareness of this strong nationality–religion symbiosis forced the communist authorities to view the ROC as an ally in dealing with the Western Ukrainian population. Hence they had to accept claims, such as Metropolitan Filaret's, that the Greek Catholics' 'conversion' to Orthodoxy *per se* turned them into loyal subjects of the socialist Motherland and friends of the Russian nation (TDAVO,

4648/5/351, p. 69). The Orthodox hierarchy and clergy were usually scornfully called 'progressive' within the official critique of church *prisposoblenchestvo*. However, when used in contrast to 'reactionary antisoviet Uniate'[12] priests, the definition of Orthodox clergy as 'progressive' acquired a rather different, more positive meaning. For instance, the CAROC plenipotentiary in Drohobych *oblast'*, Sherstiuk, described all measures aimed at the 'Orthodoxisation' of the population as progressive and even criticised the Orthodox episcopate for their 'insufficient missionary zeal' (GARF, 6991/1s/222, p. 32). Despite all the advantages in employing the ROC for their own ends, civil authorities nevertheless still preserved a restrained attitude towards the Soviet identity of the Orthodox. The CAROC leadership repeatedly cautioned its plenipotentiaries in the region against the 'danger' of becoming the apologists of Orthodoxy (GARF, 6991/1s/222, p. 34).

Given the close link assumed between religious and political conversion and national assimilation, it is not surprising that 'Orthodox', 'Russian' and 'Soviet' identities were equal in the eyes of Western Ukrainians. The adoption of a Soviet identity was possible for Ukrainian Greek Catholics only through betraying their religious and national self, which suggests that their search for identity was much more complicated than in the Orthodox case. On the one hand, an imposed Orthodox identity was opposed as being 'Russian' and 'Soviet'. On the other hand, the obstacles to accepting a Soviet identity additionally stemmed not only from its Russianness but also, paradoxically, from its 'Orthodox' character. Western Ukrainians' ecclesiastical nationalism, especially strengthened when they were deprived of any other autonomous institutions, explains why the conversion to Orthodoxy demanded by the regime, was never regarded exclusively or even primarily as a matter of the faith but always in the light of religio-national considerations.

The ROC was mainly rejected as a Muscovite church, a willing promoter of russification and thereby a 'natural enemy of all people oppressed [by Moscow]' (AIIT, 1997c, p. 35). The UGCC, which never identified itself with the state, also opposed the ROC as a 'bureaucratic' church that was subordinate to the atheist regime, just as it had previously been subordinate to the autocratic regime. The two churches were commonly differentiated from each other on the grounds that 'The Orthodox Church has the distinguishing feature of submitting itself to all [powers], while the Catholic Church has its own head' (AIIT, 1994, p. 49). Because of this tendency to submission the ROC was seen as a 'Bolshevik' church willing to collaborate with a 'godless' regime; and this explained why it was 'completely compromised ... in the eyes of the [Ukrainian] people' (AIIT, 1997a, pp. 21–22).

Their ecclesiastical and historical legacy in many respects conditioned the particular attitude of Western Ukrainians towards an official Soviet identity. As a part of the universal church, the UGCC never perceived its relationship with the state in terms of necessary cooperation and identification, as the established Russian Orthodox Church did. Rather it adhered to the idea of a separation of church and state. The viability of this approach was confirmed by its history, for the UGCC had functioned within different political contexts facing a more or less hostile policy on the part of the secular authorities. It was therefore used to perceiving itself as the embodiment of an identity distinct from that which was dominant. As a result of this legacy its claim on the inner lives of believers was much more powerful and comprehensive than that of the Orthodox Church. All this suggests that resolving the tension between their Christian identity and that of an antireligious kind was a much more difficult task for Ukrainian Greek Catholics than for the Orthodox. A Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest observed that despite all the obstacles mentioned, there was still a chance for a Soviet identity to be genuinely accepted because of the powerful appeal that the communist social project had; but this would be possible

only if 'it emptied itself of a negative attitude towards religion ... the antireligious ideology' (AIIT, 1996, p. 47). In a clear contrast to the Orthodox perception, a combination of Christian and communist identities was commonly regarded as impossible, just as it was 'impossible to serve two Gods', especially since each demanded complete and unconditional loyalty (AIIT, 2000, p. 20).[13]

One option available for Ukrainian Greek Catholics was to preserve their religio-national identity through rejecting imposed identities, thereby deliberately choosing exclusion from socialist society and suffering persecution for 'antisoviet activity': a clear sense of identity and an aura of 'martyrdom' for the faith would provide compensation. Some Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests together with a small number of believers pursued this option, creating a few illegal communities. It was not to have been expected, however, that the entire population of Western Ukraine would go into the 'catacombs'. The vast majority of Ukrainian Greek Catholics opted for another solution. This was a solution that, on the one hand, offered them a less threatened existence and some possibility for the legal exercise of their faith. On the other hand (as did the clandestine activities of the 'catacomb' church, albeit in a quite different way) it also contributed to ensuring conditions for the revival of the UGCC after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

While externally accepting Orthodoxy and through it, paradoxically, also a Soviet identity, the converted Greek Catholics constructed a lived identity that allowed them to preserve their religious and national distinctiveness and thus form a certain 'community of the formally converted'. This identity was understood as standing over against the imposed identities and drew on a clear 'us' vs 'them' opposition. 'They' were 'Orthodox', with all the meaning with which that concept was linked. 'We' consisted of those priests who signed reunification pledges and their parishioners who continued to attend their *own* churches, even though they were declared Orthodox. The manner of referring to these priests is revealing in itself. The CAROC (CRA) never called them 'Orthodox' in their internal documentation, always clearly distinguishing between 'Orthodox' proper and those who had 'reunited' with Orthodoxy. The CAROC plenipotentiary in Stanislav *oblast'*, Kislyakov, acknowledged that the differences between these two categories were very visible: 'I have never seen a single priest from the former Uniates in a cassock, with long hair and beard, with a cross on his chest and other attributes of a *pop* ... . The majority of them ... preserve the external appearance of a Greek Catholic priest – *parokh* (GARF, 6991/1s/538, p. 13).[14] Referring to themselves as '*pidpysni*' ('signed'), these priests implied a minimal degree of attachment to Orthodoxy, an attachment of a strictly formal kind.

The self-identity of this community, defined by scholars as the 'church within the church' (Markus, 1976, pp. 122–23), a 'crypto-uniate community' (Bociurkiw, 1977a, p. 5; Bociurkiw, 1977b, p. 84; Kolarz, 1961, pp. 241–43), 'involuntary converts' (Bociurkiw, 1977c, p. 433) or 'uniate congregations in disguise' (Chadwick, 1993, p. 51), was based on several notions that stemmed from an emphasis on the strictly formal character of their conversion. They claimed to remain 'Greek Catholics in spirit', 'Greek Catholics at heart' or *actually* Greek Catholics. Desperately opposing the regime's claim to the entire life of its citizens, they guarded their identity through maintaining a distinction between their private and public lives and asserting that 'it is of no one's concern' whom they consider themselves to be 'at heart' (GARF, 6991/1s/540, p. 30). Inseparably linked was the idea that they 'remained the same', managed to preserve 'all that is ours' and hence prevented the destruction of their *own* church by atheist authorities and its absorption by the Moscow Patriarchate (AIIT, 1993a, p. 6). The sense of a distinct community was both a self-perception and the view of the authorities in Moscow, who had to admit their failure to integrate this population.

The community manifested its distinctiveness in a number of ways, ranging from the rather visible (such as the preservation of the outward appearance of priests and churches and local traditions in administering the sacraments and celebrating Orthodox feasts) to the subtler but symbolically very powerful. These latter were defined as 'political' and 'oppositional' by the CAROC (CRA), and consisted primarily of the clergy's refusal to pray properly for the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' or to use the required formula 'all Orthodox Christians' during the liturgy, and the practice of the 'converted' believers and 'signed' clergy to confess with 'catacomb' priests. The maintenance of this distinct identity during the postwar period forced the Moscow Patriarchate to emphasise repeatedly the need for further promotion of the 'Orthodoxisation' of the Western Ukrainian 'reunited dioceses', and the communist authorities openly to express their mistrust not only of the Soviet identity of the 'converted' but also of their basically required political loyalty.

This identity, as has been already implied, was essential to the revival of the UGCC in the 1990s. It also, unexpectedly at first glance, contributed to the 'ukrainisation' of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC, because the 'community of the formally converted' formed 'a strong lobby which viewed the proper role of the Orthodox Church as similar to that of traditionally patriotic and activist Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church' (Sysyn, 1987, p. 15). At the same time, this solution had significant shortcomings and inner uneasiness was felt much more sharply by these believers than it ever was by the Orthodox. Their loyalty was constantly questioned by the Soviet authorities, but this was far from reflecting their actual stand, for it is a gross oversimplification to argue that the entire population of Western Ukraine was in opposition to the regime. Their attempts to protect their private beliefs against official expectations could not be viable in view of the regime's totalitarian aspirations. Furthermore they took rather painfully the accusations of 'apostasy' and 'corruption' from the Catholics and many catacomb priests.

Though the accounts of those who belonged to the converted community cast doubt on Serge Keleher's statement that the definition of 'signed' had a cynical connotation in their own eyes, they similarly reveal that these members of the UGCC failed to achieve the conditional safety of a 'dual' or in their case 'triple' identity (Keleher, 1993, p. 73). Instead, they often admitted to a 'split in personality' that stemmed from the impossibility of combining double religious allegiances and reconciling a religious identity with one which was hostile to it (AIIT, 1992, p. 4; AIIT, 1993c, p. 91; AIIT, 1997b, p. 57).

Conclusions

The Soviet-period experiences of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches indicate that the problem of church collaboration or opposition in the communist state is much more complex than it is usually regarded by scholars. It would be a mistake to accuse the Orthodox of collaborating with the regime on the grounds that they appropriated a Soviet identity; it would equally be a mistake to see only the political implications of the Greek Catholics' complete or partial rejection of the same identity. Both cases provide important evidence for scholarly debate on the linkage between religion and national identity and the significance of the strengthening of this link under unfavourable circumstances. Both cases demonstrate that the 'adaptive nature of identification' (in Talcott Parsons' phrase) can become crucial for securing the church's survival. For the Orthodox, the complete identification of 'us' (the Orthodox faithful) with 'them' (the Soviet people) was the only means of preventing their isolation from Soviet society. The adoption of a Soviet identity was one of the most potent elements of the 'practical adaptability' that, in the words of William Fletcher, 'was a boon to the church in its struggle for survival' (Fletcher, 1965,

p. 4). For Western Ukrainians, the contrasting of 'us' (formally converted but actually Greek Catholics) to 'them' ('Orthodox' in the religious sense, 'Russian' in the national sense and 'Soviet' in the ideological sense) was an effective approach in preserving their distinctiveness in the face of Moscow's hegemonic ambitions.

In neither case, however, was a clear sense of identity attained. Despite all the tactics employed by the churches, resolving the tension between identities that were theoretically irreconcilable (that is, conflicting world views and/or different religious loyalties) was a task they could hardly hope to fulfil successfully. The complicated search for identity by the adherents of religion in the Soviet state sheds light on the more general problem of balancing individuals' private and public life, which especially intensifies when secular authorities permit no deviations from their ideal vision of a society.

Notes

1. Translations from Russian and Ukrainian in this article are mine.
2. The response to Sergi's declaration that is perhaps the best known in the scholarly literature is *Poslaniye solovetskikh arkhiyereyev*, written by the imprisoned Orthodox bishops. It is noteworthy for clearly distinguishing Metropolitan Sergi's demand for loyalty, which it supported, from his idea of a 'complete combination of church and state', which it rejected (Odintsov, 1992, pp. 134–35).
3. It is significant that almost all appeals from members of the religious opposition during the Soviet period contained a declaration of loyalty to 'the existing social system' and the political authorities; the aim was no doubt to pre-empt the interpretation of their protests as 'antisoviet'. One of the best-known manifestations of Orthodox dissent, an open letter from the Moscow priest Nikolai Eshliman and the Dmitrov priest Gleb Yakunin to Patriarch Aleksi (Simansky) in 1965, begins with the authors' self-identification as 'loyal citizens of the USSR' (TDAHO, 1/31/2976, pp. 3–49).
4. For further information see: Kolarz, 1961; Stark, 1966 and Bociurkiw, 1996.
5. Walter Kolarz stresses the major importance of the wartime experiences: 'Communist regime and Russian nation were of course not *a priori* identical, but they were made identical by the policy of Adolf Hitler' (Kolarz, 1961, p. 49).
6. References to documents from Ukrainian and Russian archives follow a standard form: Name of the archive (abbreviation), *fond/opis'*/file, page numbers.
7. The term *prisposoblenchestvo*, used in official Soviet rhetoric to designate the church's attempts to accommodate to Soviet reality, had a vividly pejorative meaning.
8. The CAROC (*Sovet po delam Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi*) was established in 1943 and was a visible sign of the fact that a *modus vivendi* had been reached between the state authorities and the leadership of the ROC. In 1965 it was combined with the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (*Sovet po delam religioznykh kul'tov*) to form the Council for Religious Affairs (*Sovet po delam religii*) (CRA).
9. The sole exception in the post-1943 period was a resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of 7 July 1954, *Significant Shortcomings in Scientific and Atheist Propaganda and Measures for its Improvement* (*O sereznykh nedostatkakh v nauchno-ateisticheskoi propagande i meropriyatiyakh po yeye uluchsheniyu*), the first sign of Khrushchev's imminent antireligious campaign, which questioned the political loyalty of believers. Defining religion as a 'reactionary ideology', the resolution stated that the interests of its adherents were foreign to that of the Soviet state and society and therefore the loyalty of believers remained in question: '[Religion causes major harm] by distracting some of our citizens from conscious and active participation in the construction of communism' (Shtrikker, 1995, p. 10).
10. It is noteworthy that Lenin's view on this matter was invoked as soon as Khrushchev's campaign began, in the speech by a member of the CAROC, Sivenkov, during a conference of CAROC plenipotentiaries on 20 January 1959 (TDAHO, 1/24/5028, p. 119).

11. A striking example of this extreme solution is found in an appeal written by two Ukrainian Orthodox women in 1964. They openly rejected any identification with 'Godless communists ... [who] want to build their communism on the tombs of believers' (KI, 1964, p. 1). The exceptional character of this declaration is testified to by Michael Bourdeaux's acknowledgment that reading this document gave him the final impetus to found Keston College with the aim to 'respond to the needs of the millions of suffering Christians' (Bourdeaux, 1983, p. 9).

12. The term 'Uniate' was the original self-definition of the church, but it acquired a pejorative connotation in Soviet vocabulary. In this article I therefore use it only in quotations from official Soviet documents.

13. A fundamental reason for this kind of attitude is identified by Wilson in the quotation above; this demonstrates the validity of his analysis in certain contexts.

14. The lexical distinction between the Russian and Ukrainian equivalents of 'priest', *pop* and *parokh*, is telling in this quotation.

Archival Holdings and Unpublished Primary Sources

AIIT *Arkhiv Instytutu istorii Tserkvy* (Archive of the Institute of Church History) *L'vivska Bohoslovs'ka Akademiia* (L'viv Theological Academy) (L'viv):

AIIT (1992) *Interv'iu z Ivannoiu Krypiakevych* (*Interview with Ivanna Krypiakevych*), 16 December, L'viv, // P-1-1-67.

AIIT (1993a) *Interv'iu z otsem Mykhailom Datsyshynym* (*Interview with Fr Mykhailo Datsyshyn*), 11 February, Stryi, L'viv *oblast'*, // P-1-1-97.

AIIT (1993b) *Interv'iu z otsem Ivanom Kubaiem* (*Interview with Fr Ivan Kubai*), 10 April, the village Zymna Voda, Pustomytivs'kyi *raion*, L'viv *oblast'*, // P-1-1-192.

AIIT (1993c) *Interv'iu z otsem Mykoloiu Tsarykom* (*Interview with Fr Mykola Tsaryk*), 7 February, L'viv, // P-1-1-315.

AIIT (1994) *Interv'iu z yepyskopom Mykhailom Sabryhoiu* (*Interview with Bishop Mykhailo Sabryha*), 30 March, Ternopil', // P-1-1-321.

AIIT (1996) *Interv'iu z otsem Myronom Beskydom* (*Interview with Fr Myron Beskyd*), 5 June, Mukachevo, Zakarpats'ka *oblast'*, // P-1-1-687.

AIIT (1997a) *Interv'iu z vladykoiu Sofronom Dmyterkom* (*Interview with Bishop Sofron Dmyterko*), 6 November, L'viv, // P-1-1-419.

AIIT (1997b) *Interv'iu z otsem Illieiu Ohurkom* (*Interview with Fr Illia Ohurok*), 20 October, L'viv, // P-1-1-739.

AIIT (1997c) *Interv'iu z pani Lidiieiu Zelenchuk-Lopatyns'koiu* (*Interview with Ms Lidiia Zelenchuk-Lopatyns'ka*), 11 November 1997, Morshyn, L'viv *oblast'*, // P-1-1-780.

AIIT (1998) *Interv'iu z otsem Oleksandrom Bodrevychem-Butsem* (*Interview with Fr Oleksandr Bodrevych-Buts*), 25 September, L'viv, // P-1-1-907.

AIIT (2000) *Interv'iu z pani Mariieiu Lazar* (*Interview with Ms Mariia Lazar*), 13 August, Chervonograd, L'viv *oblast'*, // P-1-1-1141.

KI Keston Institute (Oxford):
KI (1964) SU/Ort 7/14.1 Pochayev: *Prosheniye ot pravoslavnykh khristian vseya Rossii Vostochnym Patriarkham Iyerusalimskomu, Antiokhiiskomu, Konstantinopol'skomu i drugim i v Organizatsiyu Ob"yedinennykh Natsii* (*An appeal from the Orthodox Christians of all Russia to the Eastern Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and others, and to the United Nations Organisation*).

GARF *Gosudarstvenny arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (National Archive of the Russian Federation) (Moscow).

RGANI *Rossiisky gosudarstvenny arkhiv noveishei istorii* (Russian State Archive of Contemporary History) (Moscow).

RGASPI *Rossiisky gosudarstvenny arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii* (Russian State Archive of Social and Political History) (Moscow).

TDAHO *Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'iednan' Ukrainy* (Central State Archive of the Civic Associations in Ukraine) (Kiev).

TDAVO *Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyschykh orhaniv vlady ta upravlinnia Ukrainy* (Central State Archive of the Higher Organs of Power and Administration in Ukraine) (Kiev).

References

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1972) 'The Orthodox Church and the Soviet regime in the Ukraine, 1953–1971', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, XIV, 2, pp. 191–213.

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1977a) 'The Catacomb Church: Ukrainian Greek Catholics in the USSR', *Religion in Communist Lands*, 5, 1, spring, pp. 4–12.

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1977b) 'Religion and nationalism in the contemporary Ukraine', in G. W. Simmonds (ed.), *Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev and Kosygin* (Detroit, The University of Detroit Press).

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1977c) 'Religious and non-religious dissent in the Ukraine and its contribution to the struggle for human rights' (a paper presented at an international seminar on 'Religious dissent: cooperation between Christians, followers of other religions, and non-believers in the struggle for human rights and freedom of expression in the countries of Eastern Europe', The Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy, 29–30 November 1977), in *Studies in Religion and Politics in the Ukraine since 1917* (Cambridge, MA, Ukrainian Summer Institute, Harvard University).

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1990) 'Nationalities and Soviet religious policies', in L. Hajda and M. Beissinger (eds), *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Policies and Society* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press).

Bociurkiw, B. R. (1996) *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton and Toronto, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press).

Bourdeaux, M. (1983) *Risen Indeed: Lessons in Faith from the USSR* (London, Darton, Longman and Todd).

Chadwick, O. (1993) *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (London, Penguin Books).

Cochran, C. E. (1990) *Religion in Public and Private Life* (London, Routledge).

Fletcher, W. C. (1965) *A Study in Survival: the Church in Russia 1927–1943* (London, SPCK).

Hastings, A. (1997) *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

Keleher, S. (1993) *Passion and Resurrection: the Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukraine, 1939–1989* (L'viv, Stauropegion).

Kolarz, W. (1961) *Religion in the Soviet Union* (London, Macmillan).

Luka (arkhiyepiskop Krymsky i Simferopol'sky) (1948) 'K miru prizval nas Gospod'', *Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii*, 1, pp. 61–64.

Luka (arkhiyepiskop Krymsky i Simferopol'sky) (2001) *Nauka i religiya* (Moscow, Troitskoye slovo).

Markus, V. (1976) 'The suppressed church: Ukrainian Catholics in the Soviet Union', in R. T. De George and J. P. Scanlan (eds), *Marxism and Religion in Eastern Europe: Papers Presented at the Banff International Slavic Conference, September 4–7, 1974* (Dordrecht, D. Reidel).

Markus, V. (1989) 'Religion and nationality: the Uniates in the Ukraine', in P. Ramet (ed.), *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press).

Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1957) 'Manifesto of the Communist Party', in K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House).

Newman, J. H. (1974) *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine (the Edition of 1845)* (London, Penguin Books).

Nikolai (Yarushevich), Georgiyevsky, G. P. and Smirnov, A. P. (eds) (1942) *Pravda o religii v Rossii* (The Truth about Religion in Russia) (Moscow, Moskovskaya Patriarkhiya).

Odintsov, M. (ed.) (1992) 'Deklaratsiya mitropolita Sergiya ot 29 iyul'ya 1927 g. i bor'ba vokrug neye', *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, 6, November–December, pp. 123–40.

Prulovich, Z. R. (1964) 'Spotlight on the Russian Church: Christians convinced they are not fighting a losing battle', *Church Times*, 10 October, pp. 8, 14.

Ramet, P. (1988) 'Autocephaly and national identity in church–state relations in Eastern Christianity: an introduction', in P. Ramet (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press).

Shtrikker, G. (ed.) (1995) *Russkaya pravoslavnaya tserkov' v sovetskoye vremya (1917–1991): materialy i dokumenty po istorii otnoshenii mezhdu gosudarstvom i tserkov'yu*, vol. 2 (Moscow, Propiliei).

Siegelbaum, L. H. (1992) 'Religion, anti-religion and double faith', in L. H. Siegelbaum, *Soviet State and Society between Revolutions, 1918–1929* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

Stark, W. (1966) *The Sociology of Religion: a Study of Christendom*, vol. 1: *Established Religion* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).

Swatos, W. H., Jr. (ed.) (1994) *Politics and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe: Traditions and Transitions* (London, Praeger).

Sysyn, F. E. (1987) *The Ukrainian Orthodox Question in the USSR* (Cambridge, Ukrainian Studies Fund, Harvard University).

Thompson, D. M. (2002) *Eastern Vessels or God's Building? The Identity of United and Uniting Churches* (unpublished paper for the World Council of Churches' Sixth Consultation of United and Uniting Churches (Driebergen, Holland)). I quote the paper with the kind permission of the author.

Wilson, B. (1982) *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford, Oxford University Press).

Young, G. (1997) *Power and the Sacred in Revolutionary Russia: Religious Activists in the Village* (University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press).