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## **Anamnesis, Not Amnesia: The ‘Healing Memories’ and the Problem of ‘Uniatism’**

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No one who keeps abreast of the religious news can be unaware that ecumenical relations between the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches are in a period of crisis, worse, perhaps, than at any time since the official international ecumenical dialogue between these two communions began in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. The Eighth Plenary Session of the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church on July 9-19 at Mount St. Mary's College and Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, is known to have ended in a stalemate or worse— some have privately branded it a complete fiasco.<sup>1</sup>

### **“Uniatism”**

What has led to this impasse is the phenomenon known as “Uniatism,”<sup>2</sup> a pejorative neologism coined to denote a method of Church union the Orthodox see as politically rather than religiously motivated, and contrary to the “communion ecclesiology” of the Church of the first millennium.<sup>3</sup> In “Uniatism,” one Church is perceived as an aggressor against a “sister Church” with which it happens at the moment to be in schism, absorbing groups of its faithful deceptively by allowing them to retain their own liturgical and

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<sup>1</sup> This despite the customary diplomatic language of the official press releases: *SEIA Newsletter on the Eastern Churches and Ecumenism*, no. 58 (July 20, 2000) 2.

<sup>2</sup> I use the term Uniatism in quotation marks, because it is a pejorative term most Eastern Catholics consider gratuitously offensive.

<sup>3</sup> For a fair and objective recent Catholic analysis of the problem, see Ernst C. Suttner, *Church Unity. Union or Uniatism? Catholic-Orthodox Ecumenical Perspectives* (Rome: Centre for Indian and Inter-religious Studies/Bangalore: Dhamaram Publications, 1991).

canonical traditions and a certain autonomy. This type of union, considered the result of political pressure reinforced by violence, created not unity but new divisions in an already fragmented Christendom.

To understand “Uniatism” and this negative view of it, one must understand the nature of the reunions of the 16th and later centuries, and of the Eastern Catholic Churches that resulted. Regardless of the intentions behind them, these reunions were not, except in the most formal theological sense, a restoration of the communion that had existed before the schism between East and West. They represented something new in the history of the Church, a departure from the past, which is why the Slavic neologism “unija” was invented to describe it.

Had the Union of Florence in 1439 been successful, the phenomenon of “Uniatism” would never have emerged. For at Florence the Latin West and the Byzantine East tried to face and deal with each other directly as equals. But the Orthodox repudiation of the Union of Florence in 1484 provoked a clear though perhaps unconscious shift in tactics by the Latin Church. Disillusioned by the failure to achieve a general union, the Roman Church began to sign separate union agreements with individual groups of Orthodox, thus nibbling away at the fringes of Orthodoxy in areas under the political control of Catholic powers. For the Orthodox, this was perfidious, like signing a separate peace behind the backs of one’s allies instead of working for a general peace. Rome could respond that they were simply entering into union with a local Church (which indeed the Roman Church, like any other Church, had every right to do).<sup>4</sup>

But phenomenologically, the Churches had in fact evolved beyond the pre-Nicene system in which one could still legitimately view the universal Church as a federation of local Churches with no intervening higher structures— as if Canada, for example, were just a collection of towns not united into separate provinces. So the Orthodox groups that entered into union with Rome were not simply restoring the former, broken unity between a local Church and the Church of Rome, even if this is what they had intended. Rather, they were separating themselves from one entity, their Orthodox Mother Church, and being absorbed into another, the Latin Catholic Church of the West. In short, they were leaving the Eastern Church and being assimilated into the Western Church. Far from restoring the broken communion between East and West, this led to new divisions.

For the Orthodox, such partial reunions remove the whole ecumenical problem from its proper context. This is a view that most ecumenists now share. In this perspective, the separation between our Churches resulted between the hierarchies of East and West

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<sup>4</sup> On this see the remarks of Suttner, *Church Unity* 5-6, and esp. 58-62.

over ecclesial questions like the extent and powers of the Roman See, and it is up to those two hierarchies together, and not individuals or splinter groups of bishops, to solve these problems in common. Partial reunion only divides the Orthodox Churches and is seen as deceiving the simple faithful, who follow their bishops in good faith with no understanding of the issues involved. For the Orthodox, such partial reunions are not Union but “Unia,” breaking ranks and entering premature and treacherous submissions to one side in a dispute without the consent of one’s partners.

## Centuries of East-West Confrontation

But “Uniatism” is but the tip of the iceberg, the heritage of centuries of East-West confrontation stretching from the Middle Ages to the present. Since it is Catholic aggression against the East that is at the origins of today’s problem, let us review some of Catholic policy toward the East, much of which the objective observer can only view from today’s perspective as a comedy of errors.

The Catholic Church inserted itself dramatically into the life of the Christian East during the Crusades, and during the Renaissance, in the “Age of Discovery” beginning at the end of the 15th century, setting up parallel Church structures in lands of apostolic Christianity and creating problems that exist to this day. In so doing, the Catholic Church was true to its evolving exclusivist ecclesiology in which there was but one valid Christendom, its own, entirely under the sway of the bishop of Rome, who could use his minions to do pretty much what he pleased everywhere.

Before the era of “Uniatism” at the end of the 16th century, Rome had worked for a general reunion with the Orthodox while striving at the same time for conversions to the Latin rite.<sup>5</sup> Previous to the Florentine Union (1439), Greek dioceses in lands under the control of the Italian maritime city-states, as in the islands of the Aegean, had automatically come under Latin ecclesiastical rule as well. The same was true in the Latin Kingdoms the Crusaders carved out for themselves in the Middle East, where Latin hierarchies were imposed on the conquered lands. But on the parish level the clergy and people were pretty much left alone.<sup>6</sup> This was long before the East-West Schism had

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<sup>5</sup> See for example the July 18, 1231 bull of Gregory IX (1227-1241) in A.G. Welykyj OSBM (ed.), *Documenta Pontificum Romanorum Historiam Ucrainae Illustrantia (1075-1953)*, 2. vols., (Analecta OSBM, series II, section III, PP. Basiliani, Rome 1953-1954), vol. I (1075-1700) 19-20, and numerous other pertinent documents; cf. James J. Zatko, The Union of Suzdal, 1222-1252, *JEH* 8 (1957) 33-52, here 36; A.M. Ammann, *Kirchenpolitische Wandlungen im Ostbaltikum bis zum Tode Alexander Newskis. Studien zum Werden der russischen Orthodoxie* (OCA 105, Rome 1936) ch. III.3.

<sup>6</sup> For example in 13th c. Cyprus under Latin domination the Orthodox were free to elect their own bishops.

hardened in the 18th century,<sup>7</sup> and was not really the same thing as a formal act of union separating the faithful from their Orthodox Churches and integrating them into the Latin Church.

The western assault on the East began in earnest only with the missionary era in the Age of Discovery, when Catholic missionaries spread far and wide on the heels of Portuguese colonization. Can one wonder that the local hierarchies of age-old Churches in places like India were more than bewildered by this invasion, which was in reality if not in intention little more than imperialism on the ecclesial level.<sup>8</sup> In this invasion, the role of Jesuit missionaries, perfectly suited for the task by St. Ignatius of Loyola's universalist and papalist ecclesiology, was pivotal. The sudden, uninvited intrusion into the life of local Churches of a group of well-educated, dynamically zealous foreign priests, owing obedience not to the local hierarchy but to a foreign "universal bishop" tens of thousands of kilometers away, could not but spell trouble.<sup>9</sup>

In Malabar on the Fishery Coast of southwest India under the Portuguese "Padroão," the Latin invaders coopted in 1599 the hierarchical structure of the native apostolic Church of the Thomas Christians, and Jesuit Francis Roz was imposed as the first Latin prelate of the Syrians that same year. Portuguese archbishops of Angamali-Cranganore, all Jesuits, governed thereafter the once independent Malabar Church that had flourished in those parts for a millennium before anyone ever heard of the Society of Jesus. Chauvinistically, the Jesuits allowed only their own members to work in Malabar, with predictable results. On January 3, 1653, the exasperated people revolted. Gathering at the cross before the Church at Mattancherry, they took a solemn oath no longer to recognise the archbishop at Cranganore, and to drive the Jesuits out. This has gone down in history as "The Coonan Cross Oath." Native Syro-Malabar Catholics even

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<sup>7</sup> See K.T. Ware, *Orthodox and Catholics in the Seventeenth Century: Schism or Intercommunion*, in D. Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (Studies in Church History 9, Cambridge 1972) 259-276.

<sup>8</sup> Three recent books illustrate all-too-painfully what a comedy of errors modern Catholic policy toward the Christian East, and especially toward Russia, has been: G. M. Croce, *La Badia Greca di Grottaferrata e la Rivista "Roma e l'Oriente"*, 2 vols. (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1990); A. Tamborra, *Chiesa cattolica e Ortodossia russa. Due secoli di confronto e dialogo. Dalla Santa Alleanza ai nostri giorni* (Cinisello Balsamo [Milano]: Ed. Paoline 1991); L. Tretjakewitsch, *Bishop Michel d'Herbigny SJ and Russia. A Pre-Ecumenical approach to Christian Unity* (Das östliche Christentum, Neue Folge, Bd. 39. Würzburg: Augustinus Verlag 1990). In this context, note that the first two of these books represent a devastatingly honest self-criticism by Catholic authors.

<sup>9</sup> This has been detailed in E. Chr. Suttner, *Jesuiten Helfer und Ärgernis für die Kirchen des Ostens*, *Der christliche Osten* 49 no. 2 (1994) 80-95. Prof. Suttner of the University of Vienna is a Catholic priest and no enemy of the Society of Jesus.

today will take one with pride to visit this symbol of their heroic uprising against their ecclesiastical oppressors, the Jesuits. They took me there in the summer of 1986, and I prayed for those heroic souls, literally driven out of the Catholic Church by Portuguese Jesuit malfeasance, and asked God to forgive this mindless destructiveness.

The Jesuit Mission in Ethiopia, the Society of Jesus' first encounter with the Christian East in the time of St. Ignatius himself, was an even greater fiasco. The tale is narrated under the title "Prester John's Business" in James Brodrick's delightful classic, *The Progress of the Jesuits*. What neither Brodrick nor St. Ignatius knew, since both shared a Catholic ecclesiology common before Vatican II, is how amusing the whole story would be to someone with a different view of things, one not based on Latin ecclesiological exclusivism and Roman pretensions.

As the story goes, back in the days when gentlemen from the Iberian Peninsula spent their time discovering the Americas and colonizing the rest of the world, a Portuguese adventurer named Peres de Covilham came into contact with what he thought was the mythical priest-king Prester John in the person of the Negus of Abyssinia. That legendary African potentate, who had not the slightest interest in contacting anybody, promptly interned de Covilham for life, though he had the courtesy to provide him with a wife with whom to while away his captivity. Vasco da Gama was looking for that same Prester John chap in 1497 when he took a wrong turn and discovered India instead, which, as we have seen, the Portuguese also promptly colonized.

But eventually, contact with the Negus was made again, and after a certain amount of skirmishing and feinting, relations were established and the Ethiopians, adherents of a pre-Chalcedonian Church, even hinted at possible ecclesiastical union, which despite its faults the Catholic Church, unlike a more introverted, self-satisfied East, had never lost interest in. That, of course, is how the Jesuits got into the act. On December 22, 1553, the prominent early Jesuit Juan Alfonso de Polanco, first Secretary of the Society of Jesus under St. Ignatius, wrote that King John of Portugal "has this month urgently requested our Father Ignatius to nominate twelve of the Society, including a patriarch, for the lands of Prester John..." After much consultation and searching about, not so much for the right men as for anyone who could be freed up for the job in those busy days, a Portuguese patriarch was chosen for hapless Ethiopia by Ignatius of Loyola, a mere presbyter of the Roman Church. On January 24, 1554, Pope Julius III confirmed the nomination of Father John Nuñez Barreto, S.J., a Portuguese nobleman, as first Catholic patriarch of Ethiopia.

From today's perspective, the absurdity of the undertaking is simply breathtaking, as if President George Bush had asked the US Jesuit authorities to name some American Jesuit to head the Iraqi-based East-Syrian "Church of the East" once things got cleaned

up after the Gulf War. Of course such a judgement is inevitably an anachronism. One does not need to know much about the early history of the Society of Jesus to realize that in those days a nuanced communion ecclesiology was not a specialty of Catholics, or Jesuits, or anyone else for that matter, nor can one legitimately expect it to have been.

But the story doesn't end here. Fortified with instructions from his presbyter-superior St. Ignatius, the fledgling patriarch and his coadjutor bishop, the Spanish Jesuit Andrew d'Oviedo, set sail for Ethiopia. Patriarch Baretto died at Goa in 1561, but Oviedo, who succeeded him on the patriarchal throne, eventually reached Ethiopia, where Jesuits continued to labor heroically for three quarters of a century until, predictably, they got themselves kicked out.

The trouble began under the Negus Susneyios, who had already embraced Catholicism privately. At his behest, the Holy See named Alfonso Mendez, S.J., patriarch. Mendez arrived in Ethiopia in 1625, the following year the union of the Ethiopian Church with Rome was proclaimed, and the Jesuits proceeded to make the same mistakes their confrères were making at the same time in Malabar. The Gregorian Calendar and Latin fasts and abstinences were imposed by force of arms. Mendez even wanted to impose the Roman liturgy translated into Ge'ez. Inevitably, the people revolted, the Jesuits were expelled in 1636, and Ethiopia was closed to the Catholic Church for two hundred years.

## **The Age of “Uniatism”**

Classical “Uniatism” originated in a similar context, though this time it is not the foreign but the home missions, during the Catholic Reformation and the struggle with the Protestants for the soul of Europe. In this struggle the Orthodox Church was in a sense a bystander caught up in the crossfire of the main belligerents. The scenario is the 16th century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where on October 19, 1596, in the church of St. Nicholas in the city of Brest in what was then the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, five of the seven Orthodox bishops in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth entered into union with the Holy See.<sup>10</sup> This union, far from being “forced” or “imposed” on the Orthodox, as

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<sup>10</sup> For an objective account of these events and their aftermath, the latest study is B.A. Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Harvard Ukrainian Institute, Harvard Series in Ukrainian, Harvard University Press 1998). See also A. Jobert, *De Luther à Mohila. La Pologne dans la crise de la Chrétienté, 1517-1648* (Collection historique de l'Institut d'études slaves, Paris 1974). For briefer accounts of the situation with historical objectivity in Sophia Senyk, *Vicissitudes de l'Union de Brest au XVIIe siècle*, *Irénikon* 65 (1992) 462-487; eadem, *The Background of the Union of Brest*, *Analecta OSBM* 21 (1996) 103-144; Silverio Saulle,

one always hears said, was the outcome not only of long negotiations, but also of a parallel religious movement tirelessly propagated for twenty years by the Polish Jesuit Peter Skarga. One of the great literary and religious figures of Counter-Reformation Poland, Skarga was for his homeland what St. Peter Canisius was for Germany. Skarga's book *On the Unity of the Church of God under One Pastor*, published at Vilna in 1577, was without equal in promoting the cause of conversion to Catholicism.<sup>11</sup> Second only to Skarga as a vigorous promotor of the Catholic cause was the ubiquitous Italian Jesuit Antonio Possevino, better known to history for his more spectacular missions as a Papal Nuncio, especially to the Court of Ivan the Terrible, to whom the subject of Church Union was broached only to be rudely rejected. In the famous scene that has become a familiar part of history, as well as an active prophecy of the level of later Orthodox-Catholic relations, the Tsar insulted the pope and raised his scepter against the papal envoy who had pressed the cause of Church union.

But these Jesuits, far from inventing "Uniatism," as they are often accused, took a dim view of Ruthenian Orthodoxy and favored conversion of the Ruthenians to the Roman Church plain and simple. By then it was evident that the prospect of a general return to the Union of Florence had become impracticable, and Possevino's exchange with Ivan the Terrible confirmed it. But the idea of a regional corporate reunion based on the precedents established at Florence in 1439— the Ruthenians would enter the Catholic Church as a body, preserving their own hierarchy and rite— was not the invention of the Jesuits. Initially, at least, the Union was not viewed favorably by any of the three parties— Rome, the Poles, and the Jesuits— traditionally indicted in the mythological view.

Far from being the result of some preconceived Catholic strategy, "Uniatism" was wholly an invention of the Ruthenian Orthodox bishops themselves, and grew out of the difficult situation in which the Ruthenian Orthodox hierarchy of the day found itself, between Moscow and Poland, Reform and Counter-reformation. Of course these hierarchs did not see it as, nor desire it to be, a break with Orthodoxy. On the contrary, it aimed to protect the unity of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church, at that time under stress from a multitude of factors, including the desire of the Ruthenian bishops to preserve their independence over against the powerful independent Brotherhoods supported by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Ruthenian lands, the pretensions of Moscow from the

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L'Unione di Brest. Genesi e sviluppi storici, *Studi sull'Oriente cristiano* 2/1 (1998) 137-164, 2/2 (1998) 137-167.

<sup>11</sup> It went through two editions largely because the Ruthenian nobles, enemies of the Union, had bought up and burnt so many copies of the first edition.

East, and the pressure of Reformation and Counter-Reformation proselytism from the West. All of this has been amply demonstrated by the latest historical scholarship on the question.<sup>12</sup> In the well-informed, balanced and objective view of historian Ambroise Jobert, “The Union of Brest is not the work of Polish or Roman policies. The Ruthenian bishops, irritated by the reforms of [Constantinopolitan patriarch] Jeremias II, requested it, the Polish court decided, not without hesitation, to risk it, and Rome received the Ruthenians into union without making any precise commitments in their regard.”<sup>13</sup>

Despite fierce opposition from the Orthodox and even violent persecution from the Cossacks and later in the Russian Empire under Catherine the Great (1762-1796) and Nicholas I (1796-1855),<sup>14</sup> the Eastern Catholic Churches issuing from the 1596 Union of Brest and later unions consolidated and developed, especially where they had the protection of a Catholic regime, as under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where they acquired the name “Greek Catholics” to distinguish them from the Latins.

## **The Communist Suppression of the Eastern Catholic Churches**

All this would change dramatically with the westward expansion of the Soviet Empire following the Second World War. There is no way one can fairly judge the present tense ecumenical situation between Orthodox and Eastern Catholics in the former Communist East Bloc without an objective view of the martyrdom of the Greek Catholic Churches from the end of World War II until 1989. Attempts to attenuate or deny this history merit the same contempt now given to renewed attempts to deny the Holocaust. As His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Batholomew II said after Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of St. George in the Phanar on the feast of St. Andrew this year, “Revisiting the past and examining human faults must continue in all directions ... because whoever consents to the misdeeds of another or tolerates them by his silence, shares the responsibility of their author.”<sup>15</sup> It is in this exact same spirit that I recount what follows

The forced reunions with the Orthodox Church began at the Pseudo-Synod of Lviv, capital of Galicia (Halychnya) in Western Ukraine, an area occupied in 1939 by Hitler’s Soviet allies and definitively incorporated into the USSR at the end of World War II. Lviv was the metropolitan see of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to which most of the

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<sup>12</sup> See note 10 above.

<sup>13</sup> Jobert, *De Luther à Mohila* 343. For an Orthodox account in the same sense, see also Jean-Claude Roberti, *Les Uniates* (Fides 44, Paris 1992) 75.

<sup>14</sup> Suttner, *Church Unity* 83ff; W. Lencyk, *The Eastern Catholic Church and Czar Nicholas I* (New York 1966). Further literature in Suttner, *Church Unity* 124-5 note 70.

<sup>15</sup> Translated from the French as reported in *Irénikon* 73 (2000) 112.

population of Western Ukraine belonged. A Polish Orthodox parish in Lviv was the only Orthodox Church in the entire region. The Russian Orthodox Church had no representation there at all. Only in the light of these simple facts can the oft-repeated and widely publicized present Russian Orthodox complaints about losing to the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church almost all their Churches in the region of Galicia be placed in their proper context.<sup>16</sup>

In the winter of 1944-45 the Soviet regime prohibited all contact of the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy with its clergy and faithful, and initiated a campaign of forced meetings and propaganda in favor of union with the Russian Orthodox Church. Opponents were arrested and tortured, in April 1945 the entire Greek Catholic hierarchy was imprisoned, and the Soviet regime recognized the "Initiative Group" of three Catholic priests, formed to carry out the government plan, as the sole authority over the Church, instructing them to make lists of all clergy who refused to recognize their authority. Under police protection this group carried out a feverish campaign of propaganda and threats. The NKVD pressured the unwilling clergy to sign a petition for union with Orthodoxy. Those who refused were arrested. At the end of February, thirteen Catholic priests were received into Orthodoxy in Kiev and the two celibate members of the "Initiative Group" were secretly consecrated Orthodox bishops. Their leader, Havriyil Kostel'nyk, a married priest, was elevated to the rank of mitred archpriest, the highest dignity open to the married clergy.<sup>17</sup>

On March 8-10, 1946, a "synod" of 216 terrorized priests and nineteen laypersons, orchestrated in Lviv under the leadership of this group, abolished the Union of Brest (1596). This purported to be a synod of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and to this day the Russian Orthodox Church has claimed it to be such and has steadfastly refused to repudiate either the synod or its own role in the charade. But as the Russian Orthodox Church authorities are well aware, the entire Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy was in prison, and the entire presidium of the synod had in fact already become Orthodox, though this

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<sup>16</sup> Only in the light of the facts can one evaluate fairly, and in context, statements like the one made by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, in an interview in *Odyssey* (August/Sept. 1993) 34: And in Russia, even if the Uniates owned the Churches before Stalin, today the ratio of Uniates to Orthodox in these places has changed. There are far more Orthodox today than Uniates, so the latter cant claim these buildings and want to take them back, be they schools or Churches, because where will the Orthodox go? Where will they commune? In the street? This is not Christian. Regarding the area in question, Galicia in Western Ukraine, where Greek Catholics were and are again the majority, that statement is simply false. And, I might add, where but in the street are many Romanian Greek Catholics, still deprived of their Churches, celebrating liturgies in Romania?

<sup>17</sup> He was assassinated, presumably by his Soviet handlers, on Sept. 20, 1948.

was kept secret until the farce was a fait accompli. The action was followed by massive arrests, interrogations, abuse, trials, banishment and deportations, causing incalculable suffering and death.

Russian Orthodox authorities ever since have defended what was done as a canonically legitimate synod of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church that freely and legitimately abolished of the “forced” Union of Brest, and to this day they have refused to disclaim or condemn it. The Acts of the synod were published in Ukrainian in Lviv in 1946, and in 1982 the Moscow Patriarchate issued bowdlerized (i.e., deliberately doctored) versions in Russian and English for the 45th anniversary of the shameful charade.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was not destroyed but driven underground, to re-emerge maimed but still vigorously alive when finally granted freedom in 1989, at which time almost the entire Russian Orthodox Church in Western Ukraine, clergy, parishes, and faithful, re-entered the Catholic Church en masse.

Similar forced reunions with the Orthodox Church took place in 1947 in Transcarpathia, 1948 in Romania, and 1950 in Slovakia

These are the unvarnished facts. This history is important for several reasons. First, it shows the demonstrable falsity of the accusation that the Catholic Church has “reinvented” or “resurrected” a dead and gone “Uniatism,” thereby stalling the Orthodox-Catholic ecumenical dialogue. A more nuanced view, one corresponding to the historical facts, leads one to recognize the following realities. Eastern Catholics were forced into the underground in the 1940’s by one of the bitterest and most violent persecutions in Christian history. Although this was done by Stalinist regimes there is abundant and irrefutable evidence that it had the active support and/or collaboration of at least some Orthodox hierarchs and authoritative exponents. Each case must be taken by itself, and justice demands avoiding generalization, but there can be no doubt that ambiguous figures like Patriarch Justinian Marina in Romania, and Archbishop Makarij Oksijuk in Lviv and Transcarpathia, were active participants in these historic violations of human rights. And one of the chief Romanian Orthodox ideologues of modern times, the Orthodox priest and noted theologian Rev. Dumitru Staniloae (d. 5 Oct. 1993), gave wholehearted vocal support for this massive violation of human rights, insisting that the “reunion [of Greek Catholics with the Orthodox Church which took place in 1948] was entirely free and spontaneous.<sup>18</sup> This is not only a patent lie; it is also a denial of the bitter suffering of martyrs.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ronald G. Roberson, CSP, *Contemporary Romanian Orthodox Ecclesiology: the Contribution of Dumitru Staniloae and Younger Colleagues* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome 1988) 208-209; cf. 206-212 for a complete discussion, with abundant bibliography and citations from

Thereafter, authoritative Orthodox exponents carried on for forty years a hateful, mendacious campaign concerning every aspect of the life and history of the Greek Catholic Churches, and of their “reintegration with the Mother Church” in the 1940’s. As late as 1987, during the Gorbachev era when toadying to the party-line was no longer a matter of life or death, then Moscow Patriarch Pimen gave this mendacious account of these events to the Italian journalist Alceste Santini:

The anti-Uniate sentiments of the faithful of Galicia and Transcarpathia were strengthened especially during the last war, when the Uniate hierarchy sided with the enemy of the fatherland, the German Nazi invaders. Such collaboration on the part of the leaders of the Greek-Catholic Church provoked a natural reaction. And so the completion of the process of liberation from the union [with Rome] which was expressed in the Synods of 1946 in Lvov [Lviv] and of 1949 in Mukachevo gave rise to great satisfaction among the believers of Galicia and Transcarpathia.<sup>20</sup>

The business about the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy and the Nazis is an oft-repeated calumny of the Soviets, who were, let us never forget, Hitler’s allies in the 1939 invasion of Poland and Western Ukraine.<sup>21</sup> Of course, after twenty-one years of Soviet rule practically everyone in the USSR initially welcomed the Germans as liberators.<sup>22</sup> And

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Staniloaes support of the forced reintegration. Roberson is sympathetic to the figure on whom he chose to write his thesis, which makes the documentation he presents more devastating. On negative aspects of Stanisloaes career before and after the Communist period, see: Olivier Gillet, *Religion et nationalisme. Lidéologie de l’Église orthodoxe roumaine sous le régime communiste* (Collection «Spiritualités et pensées libres», Éditions de l’Université de Bruxelles, Bruxelles 1997) 92, 136.

<sup>19</sup> The publication in western, even Catholic journals of laudatory necrologies (e.g., *Irénikon* 66, 1993; *Sobornost* 16:1, 1994) of this apologist for one of the 20th centurys great crimes against humanity without a word about this aspect of his career must be branded a moral scandal.

<sup>20</sup> *Mille anni di fede in Russia. Pimen, Patriarca di Mosca e di tutte le Russie intervistato da Alceste Santini* (Cinisello Balsamo [Milano]: Edizioni Paoline, 1987) 216.

<sup>21</sup> Most recently on the topic, see Werner Maser, *Der Wortbruch. Hitler, Stalin und der Zweite Weltkrieg* (Munich: Günter Olzog Verlag, 1994).

<sup>22</sup> The matter has been treated with historical objectivity by an author who is by no means an apologist for the Catholic Church: Hansjakob Stehle, Sheptytskyi and the German Regime, in P.R. Magocsi (ed.), *Morality and Reality. The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptyts’kyi* (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton 1989) 125-144. Sheptytskyi was the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church during the war. Stehle says, Quite unlike the Orthodox Metropolitan Polikarp [of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church] who, as late as May 1944, was still praying for Hitlers victory over the Jewish Communists, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi grounded his hope exclusively in religious faith (*ibid.* 139). For a Jewish witness to Sheptytskyjs efforts to save Lvivs Jews from the Nazi occupiers, see Rabbi David Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary* (Amherst: University of Mass. Press, 1990).

one can only speculate to what “fatherland” Patriarch Pimen claims the Catholic bishops were being disloyal, since before the war Galicia was part of Austria, not the USSR. Furthermore, no synod whatever was held in Mukachevo, as Pimen knew perfectly well; and I have already detailed above the realities of the Lviv “synod.”

This is but one of literally dozens of examples I have on file of mendacious public denials of the past from the highest Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities of the Soviet Bloc, a denial rendered even more ludicrous by the fact that even the NKVD agents responsible for orchestrating the drumhead 1946 Lviv synod have in the meantime spilled the beans publicly and in print.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Serge Keleher, *Passion ad Resurrection The Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukraine 1939-1989* (Lviv: Stauropegion, 1993), with its rich Appendix of historic documents (pp. 187-298), all from the Soviet period, including the fascinating account, Here We Are Lord!, first published in Russian in the well-known Soviet satirical journal, *Moscow*, N° 38 (Sept. 1989) 6-8, giving the true story of the Lviv pseudo-synod of March 8-10, 1946, with the testimony of a sixty-year old colonel of the Soviet security forces, who had been an actual participant in the farce, ironically juxtaposed with contemporary statements from Russian Orthodox Metropolitan (now patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kiev Patriarchate) Filaret (Denysenko) of Kiev and Galicia (p. 264) repeating the customary lies claiming the reunion orchestrated by the 1946 Lviv Pseudo-Council had been free, as in the official Soviet line on the reunion. See B.R. Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950)* (Edmonton/Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996) 179-80, esp. note 127, and 238-43; on Filaret, 241. Among the other documents, many available here in English for the first time, are: The Articles of the Union of Brest; the Decrees of the Eparchial Synod of the Greek-Catholic Church in Petrograd, May 29-31, 1917; the letter to Molotov of Greek-Catholic priests repudiating the activities of the Initiatory Group formed in 1945 to instigate the forced reunion with the Orthodox Church; the January 15/28, 1950 pastoral letter of the Orthodox bishops in Western Ukraine and Transcarpathia concerning the consolidation of the reunion with Orthodoxy and the abolition of Catholic or Latin practices from the liturgy; The Life of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, a January 1980 document from the underground Church detailing the Church's continued existence and the persecution it was undergoing; the August 4, 1987 Open Letter to His Holiness John Paul II from the bishops, priests, monastics and faithful of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, publicly announcing their emergence from the underground because of the better conditions under Gorbachev; the April 7, 1989 appeal to Gorbachev; the April 7, 1989 letter of Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sterniuk) of Lviv to Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Bishop Isidore (Boretsky) of Toronto and Eastern Canada, and the latter's response; the August 27, 1989 pastoral letter of the same Metropolitan Volodymyr of Lviv and Halych, the first formal public statement of the metropolitan to his flock in Ukraine; the September 1989 open letter to Gorbachev of leading Ukrainian intellectuals. The rambling account concludes with eyewitness testimony of the Church's spontaneous rebirth in the Gorbachev period, followed by documents relative to Gorbachev's meeting with Pope John Paul II on December 1, 1989; the Declaration of the Council for Religious affairs at the Council of Ministers of Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic concerning their intention to resolve positively the problem of the freedom of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church; and, finally, the Statement of the March 17, 1990 Synod of Bishops of the Greek-Catholic Church in Ukraine on the interruption of the

Apart from some religious dissidents condemned by their own Church authorities, and some secular scholars of good-will like Andrej Sakharov, slow and reluctant admissions of truth began to come from some official exponents of the Orthodox Churches only after continuing the mendacity became embarrassingly counterproductive when the world press, at last interesting itself in the issue, began to publish the true story.

Meanwhile the Greek Catholic Churches, some of whose membership (almost all in Galicia, Transcarpathia, and Slovakia; far fewer in Romania where the history and circumstances were quite different), having remained steadfast in their convictions, emerged from the catacombs to which they had been relegated and began to reclaim their heritage and give the lie to the systematic slandering of them and their history over the past fifty years. So there was no “rebirth of Uniatism,” just an end to persecution and the shameful conspiracy of silence.

With this historical freight in the background, no person of fairness and good will can be surprised at the present tensions between Byzantine Catholics and Orthodox in the former Soviet Union, especially in the light of continued Orthodox stonewalling in refusing to repudiate definitively and officially the forced “reunions” of 1946-1950

Inevitably, the emergence from the underground of the persecuted Eastern Catholic Churches has led to confessional conflicts and a resurgence of traditional Orthodox anti-Roman hysteria. As Catholics struggle with the issue via an examination of conscience that is often painful, much Orthodox writing on the topic, highly biased, is often little more than a mélange of hysteria and lies.<sup>24</sup>

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negotiations of the Quadripartite Commission for the Normalization of Relations between the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches in Western Ukraine.

<sup>24</sup> This problem, too, can be understood and resolved only with attention to its objective historical context. Numerous statements from the Moscow Patriarchate state clearly the Orthodox position on this matter. One recent example will have to suffice. Accusing the Catholic Church of proselytizing in Russia and Ukraine, Moscow Patriarch Aleksij II said on June 10: I find it hard to understand when, in the 20th century, I see three Orthodox dioceses being crushed by Catholics in Ukraine, when people are run out of their churches, priests are beaten and saints are blasphemed against... The Patriarch accused Pope John Paul II of failing to condemn the actions of the Uniate Church, which has occupied a number of Russian Orthodox churches and let other Orthodox sites be desecrated. This is not how you should treat a sister church, as Catholics call the Orthodox... Proselytism, which turns people who have been baptized into Orthodoxy, or who are Orthodox by their very roots, to Catholicism this also cannot take place between sister churches. This makes our relations difficult today. As reported in *SEIA* no. 57 (June 27, 2000) 3. See in this regard the very courteous, respectful, moderate in tone, but also forthright reply of Bishop Lubomyr Husar of Lviv, auxiliary to the head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: *Risposta ad Alessio II, Il regno*. Anno XLV N. 865 (15 settembre 2000) 512-15; id., I greco-cattolico rispondo, *La nuova Europa* N. 5 (settembre-ottobre 2000) 53-56.

Painful as all this is for anyone with a modicum of common sense and Christian spirit, almost everyone (except for a couple of local Orthodox Churches which systematically boycott the dialogue) is in agreement that the dialogue must continue. But how? Those of good will on both sides of the dialogue are in agreement that “Uniatism,” as I have described it, must be rejected a no longer acceptable method for the future. But past also dealt with, is real problem blocking any future progress. That why of late Pope John Paul II has repeatedly called healing or purification memory way dealing with past. From my point view an historian, will require each side to confront our common historical objectivity and truth, own up responsibilities, seek forgiveness, then turn page move on hopefully better future.

We can change the future but we cannot change the past, and it is the bitter heritage of this past that is blocking all ecumenical progress today. The hostilities created by that dolorous past are deep-rooted in the psyche of Eastern Christians, both Orthodox and Catholic, so deep-rooted that the average westerner finds them perplexing, at times even infantile and ridiculous. All of which provides stark confirmation of the need for “the healing or purification of memory.” In the twofold process of [1] facing up to the past and [2] then moving beyond it to a better future, step 2 is the work of the official ecumenical dialogue between our two Churches. Step 1, however, “the purification and healing of memories,” involves everyone.

In many ways this healing of the historical memory is the most difficult step. For nations and peoples live not by their histories but by their myths, As one historian— I think it was Timothy Garton Ash of Oxford— put it, “A nation is a group of people who hold the same mistaken view of their common history.” So in this context I would like to suggest some hermeneutical principles I consider essential to arriving at a balanced view of our common past.

Contrary to what is usually imagined by the non-historian, history is not the past, but a vision of the past, in itself a complex reality. For ecumenism to advance, we must put aside our own limited, often hagiographical view of our past, and seek to understand how others see us. Since criticism, like charity, should begin at home, and I am a Jesuit, I illustrated this point already by making a Jesuit examination of conscience on some aspects of our role in the problem of “Uniatism.”

But if we are to make ecumenical progress, such hard-nosed reflection on our past cannot be restricted to Jesuits and Catholics. The Orthodox, too, must reach the point where they can make their own frank examination of conscience. Western Christianity's historic defects of imperialism, power, and domination led to the historic crimes for which Pope John Paul II asked pardon in Rome on the First Sunday of Lent this year. An Orthodox response was not long in coming: Metropolitan Kallinkos of Piraeus, an official

spokesman of the Greek Orthodox Church,<sup>25</sup> and Russian Orthodox Bishop Pavel of Vienna,<sup>26</sup> responded to the pope's request for pardon and forgiveness not by forgiving and asking forgiveness in turn, but by declaring that the Orthodox Church had not done anything for which it needed to ask pardon.

Such responses are hardly helpful. Apart from the fact that they lead the press to subject their authors to sarcasm and derision, they are also untrue. A short list of what the Orthodox might reflect on were they to examine their historical conscience would begin in Byzantine times with the forced conversion of Jews already from the 4/5th centuries but especially in the 6/7th; with the persecution of the Armenians and Copts in the aftermath of the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451); the forced unions of Armenians with the Byzantine Church, for example in AD 590 under Emperor Maurice (582-602),<sup>27</sup> a clear example of Orthodox "Uniatism," repeated in modern times by the Russian Orthodox mission among the Assyrian,<sup>28</sup> and the "Western-rite Orthodoxy" fostered in North America and, formerly, in France,<sup>29</sup> despite repeated Orthodox claims that "Uniatism" is an exclusively Western phenomenon. To this we can add the incorporation into the Patriarchate of Constantinople by political force of areas that belonged by age-old right to the Western Patriarchate under Rome, and the imposition by force of Byzantine

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<sup>25</sup> SOP 247 (avril 2000) 14.

<sup>26</sup> Bischof Pawel: Mea culpa is der Orthodoxie unnötig. KNS press interview in Vienna as reported by Gertraud Illmeier in *Pressespiegel pro Oriente* Nr. 115 (2000) 19-20: see also *Glaube in der 2. Welt* 28 (2000) Nr. 6, pp. 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> Nina G. Garsoïan, "Secular Jurisdiction over the Armenian Church (Fourth-Seventh Centuries)," in C. Mango, O. Pritsak (eds.), *Okeanos. Essays presented to I. eväenko* (Harvard Ukrainian Studies 7, Cambridge, Mass. 1983) 228; eadem, "The Armenian Church between Byzantium and the East," in *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Art, Religion, and Society*. Papers Delivered at the Pierpont Morgan Library at a Symposium Organized by Thomas F. Mathews and Roger S. Wieck, 21-22 May 1994 (New York 1998) 7 and the references in 11 note 25. See also Suttner, *Church Unity* 39ff.

<sup>28</sup> See J.F. Coakley, *The Church of the East and the Church of England. A History of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Assyrian Mission* (Oxford: Clarendon 1992) 216-234.

<sup>29</sup> Roberti, *Les Uniates* 102-7; W.S. Schneirla, *The Western Rite in the Orthodox Church*, 2/2 (1958) 2045, and the discussion in *ibid.* 2/4 (1958) 37-38, 3/1 (1959) 36-37; *Missel orthodoxe. Rit occidental Gallican de s. Germain de Paris (6e siècle). Italique pré-Célestinien (début 5e siècle). Missel ou livre de la synaxe liturgique approuvé et autorisé pour les églises orthodoxes de rit occidental relevant du Patriarcat de Moscou. Version française officielle établie sur le texte latin original. Édition revue et typique* (Collection «Documents liturgiques», supplément de la revue «Contacts», n° 38/39, 2e/3e trim. 1962, Paris 1962) with further bibliography on p. 96. According to a recent report, the Western Rite Orthodox Vicariate under the jurisdiction of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of N. America has 27 parishes: *Eastern Churches Journal* 6/3 (1999) 150.

ecclesiastical authority on conquered areas of the non-Orthodox East<sup>30</sup> or of Catholic Southern Italy.<sup>31</sup>

The latter provides a interesting parallel to the Crusades, about which the Orthodox remain continually exercised, collapsing chronology and acting as if the Crusades happened yesterday. By the end of the 6th century AD, S. Italy was almost totally Latin except for colonies of Greeks in Reggio-Calabria and some of the coastal towns. This situation was to change rapidly from the 7th century, when the campaign of Constans II (647-668) drove the Saracens from Sicily, reviving Greek imperial and ecclesiastical hegemony there and in Calabria. The Byzantine reconquest of S. Italy was carried out with thorough consistency across the whole socio-political horizon, including the ecclesiastical. Those who deplore the incursions of the Latin Crusaders in the East and their setting up of Latin hierarchies in competition with the already existing age-old Oriental ecclesiastical structures conveniently forget that the Byzantines did the exact same thing in Italy. Their military help against the Arab incursions in Italy was no more disinterested than the Latin help against the Turks during the Crusades, and Byzantine ecclesiastical politics in Italy also involved an imposed religious Byzantinization of the areas that fell under their political control. For example, towards the middle of the 8th century, the Byzantines removed from the Roman obedience and placed under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of New Rome the dioceses of Calabria, Sicily, Eastern Illyricum, and perhaps also Otranto— all areas historically within the Patriarchate of the West from time immemorial.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Examples in Suttner, *Church Unity* 38-43.

<sup>31</sup> On the history of the Byzantines in S. Italy see Vera von Falkenhausen, I bizantini in Italia, in G. Cavallo et alii, *I bizantini in Italia (Antica Madre, collana di studi sull'Italia antica, a cura di G. Pugliese Carratelli, Milan 1982)* 1-136.

<sup>32</sup> See V. Grumel, L'annexion de l'Illyricum oriental, de la Sicile et de la Calabre au Patriarcat de Constantinople, *Recherches de science religieuse* 40 (1951-52) 191-200.

their setting up of Latin hierarchies in competition with the already existing age-old Oriental ecclesiastical structures conveniently forget that the Byzantines did the exact same thing in Italy. Their military help against the Arab incursions in Italy was no more disinterested than the Latin help against the Turks during the Crusades, and Byzantine ecclesiastical politics in Italy also involved an imposed religious Byzantinization of the areas that fell under their political control. For example, towards the middle of the 8th century, the Byzantines removed from the Roman obedience and placed under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of New Rome the dioceses of Calabria, Sicily, Eastern Illyricum, and perhaps also Otranto— all areas historically within the Patriarchate of the West from time immemorial.<sup>[32]</sup>

Medieval and modern examples would have to include the anti-Latin pogroms in Constantinople in the years immediately preceding the Fourth Crusade (1204), the Russian Church's persecution of the Old Believers in the 17th century and forcible suppression of the Georgian Catholicosate in 1811, the persecution and martyrdom of Catholics in the Russian Empire following the partitions of Poland, and the active collaboration of some Orthodox leaders in the post-World War II events already referred to.

Of course some (though by no means all) such incidents were the work of governments and seculars rather than Churches or ecclesiastics. But the same is true of events like the Crusades. "The separation of Church and State" is a modern "western" concept without meaning when applied to earlier centuries. So mythology and polemics aside, neither "Uniatism" nor the use of force were a Catholic invention. They were part of the spirit of the times, and pressure to change religious confession was exercised by Calvinists, Catholics, and Orthodox alike.<sup>33</sup> Nor was this process only interconfessional: it happened within Orthodoxy too. As the Russian Empire seized lands under the jurisdiction of other Orthodox Churches, the local non-Russian Slavic, Georgian, and Bessarabian Orthodox were incorporated willy-nilly into the Russian Church and subjected to religious and cultural Russification. In some areas of Eastern Poland absorbed by Russia, Latin Catholics were also subjected to this process, and some even lost their lives in the struggle.<sup>34</sup> The hatred this inevitably produced contributed to exacerbating the deplorable violence against Orthodox and the destruction of Orthodox

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<sup>33</sup> Our contemporary notions of religious tolerance were totally foreign to that earlier epoch. See O.P. Grell and B. Scribner, *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (New York 1996).

<sup>34</sup> Suttner, *Church Unity* 85.

churches in Eastern Poland when that country regained independence in the settlement following World War I.<sup>35</sup>

Telling the history of such past crimes justifies nothing, of course— but it does explain. For nothing happens without a reason, and to recount tragic events without also exposing what provoked them, or to recount only that half of the story that favors one's own side, is not history but confessional propaganda. So instead of laying all responsibility for the present situation at the feet of the Catholic Church, even indicting the person of Pope John Paul II, as in a recent statement of Moscow Patriarch Aleksij II,<sup>36</sup> an unbiased analysis of the facts would show that the present situation is entirely the result of Soviet persecutions, and that the Russian Orthodox dioceses Patriarch Aleksij claims the Catholic Church destroyed were not in origin Orthodox dioceses at all, but Ukrainian Greek Catholics forced into Orthodoxy in the already recounted events of 1946. This is confirmed by the fact that in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Serbia, the three East-Bloc countries where the Greek-Catholic Churches were not forcibly incorporated into Orthodoxy, none of these problems have arisen. The Eastern Catholic Churches there continue to live their lives in relative peace, and are a threat to no one.

So any true history must be integral not selective, and mature communities must accept responsibility for their entire past, not just for those selective episodes that they find serviceable to support a prejudicial vision of their virtues and others' defects. With respect to "Uniatism," then, Catholics must face up to the fact that, contrary to their mythologies, they have acted throughout much of history as an aggressor with respect to the Christian East, and the bitterness this has provoked must be laid squarely at their door.

But the Orthodox, too, must face up to their own responsibilities for the phenomenon known as "Uniatism." For not all "Uniate" movements were the result of Catholic machinations. Bulgarian "Uniatism" was at least partly instigated by Constantinopolitan Greek Orthodox imperialism *vis-à-vis* the Bulgarian Church. And the numerically tiny but by no means spiritually and intellectually negligible Russian Catholic Exarchate in Russia on the eve of the Revolution was a spontaneous movement from within the Russian Orthodox Church itself, largely among intellectuals and people of some substance, including several Orthodox priests, who were less than satisfied with the condition of their Church, reduced to little more than a department of the state since the

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<sup>35</sup> Stephen Joseph Bachtalowsky, CSSR, *Nicholas Charnetsky, CSSR. Bishop-Confessor*, translated by George J. Perejda, CSSR (Yorkton, Saskatchewan: Publications of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, Redeemers Voice Press, n.d.) 89-95.

<sup>36</sup> See note 23 above.

time of Peter the Great, but refused to abandon their native religious heritage for that of Latin Catholicism.

Only the re-establishment of communion between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches will solve these problems satisfactorily. But if, in the meantime, solutions must remain provisional, interim answers to the pastoral and ecumenical problems posed by the existence of Eastern Catholic Churches must be sought with charity, objectivity, and realism, without the anachronistic, reductionist simplifications of history to which these communities are too often subjected by those who have concluded that the new age of ecumenism permits them to leave those they contemptuously refer to as “Uniates” behind, making them easy game and dispensing their critics from the basic demands of human decency, truth, and justice, to say nothing of Christian charity.

Until the phenomenon of “Uniatism” in its origins and the factors behind those origins, in its history, and in its present reality, comes to be viewed with more respect for historical truth, I see little hope for any lasting substantial progress in Catholic-Orthodox ecumenism. Both Catholics and Orthodox must reach the point where they can view and discuss not only “Uniatism’s” origins, but also its past and present history— all of it— without gliding over the problematic nature, in some (though by no means in all) instances, of its origins, its ultimate development, and its ideology, as Catholics have tended to do; but also without the use of selective memory, the double-standard, the hysteria and even outright slander with which Orthodox writings too often treat it.

As the Russian historian Medvedev said in the title of his devastating exposé of Stalinism, *K sudu istorii*— “let history judge.” Like it or not, no other principle will ever have any definitive validity in human affairs. That does not mean we do not forgive, nor does it mean we cannot, must not turn the page and move on. But I am firmly convinced that until both Catholics and Orthodox can put aside all confessional propaganda masquerading as history, look at this reality without blinkers or colored glasses, and see it as it is, with each side accepting its responsibilities, where necessary, in the condemnable aspects of its history, we are going to get absolutely nowhere.

For the Orthodox, this demands a clear recognition of the truth regarding the dolorous events of the 1940’s. Until the Orthodox come to recognize this history openly and without reservation, and until they own up to and repudiate publicly the active role some of their leaders played in the dolorous history of the forcible suppression of these Churches, their failure to protest this crime against humanity and their lying about for over fifty years, will, in my view, continue to render real ecumenical progress impossible. The days when the sufferings and the sensibilities of millions of Byzantine Catholics could be ignored or bypassed is over. Anyone who thinks the Balamond Statement, though undoubtedly a great step forward from almost every point of view, does the trick

here with its admission of “unacceptable means” by civil governments in the 1940’s debacle, is not being realistic. Though of course the statement is per se true, it is true in the same sense that it would be true to describe the Holocaust as “an activity not entirely favorable to the Jews.” That won’t do for genocide, and Balamond won’t do for what was “ecclesiacide.”

Where do we go from here? Let us make one thing crystal clear: until an adequate, equitable, and mutually acceptable solution is found to these problems caused by “Uniatism,” defects in the origins or history of any Church cannot be used to impugn its present natural human right to existence, to justice, and to its own history. What has been said above against “Uniatism” can in no way justify calling into question the natural-law right to existence, and the freedom to be exactly what they want to be, of the Eastern Catholics both as individuals and as Churches. Life is not a history lesson, and the right to existence of any individual or group can never be at the mercy of anyone outside that group. This includes not just the right to exist— i.e., not to be physically exterminated. It also includes the right to their identity and tradition, and the right to their history— i.e., the right not to have their past or present slandered and defamed.

The notion that the right to existence of the Eastern Catholic Churches can be challenged on the basis of what happened three or four hundred years ago, is historically and morally absurd. Did politics and even coercion have a part in the establishment of these Churches? Of course they did, just as they did in the establishment of Lutheranism and the Anglican Church. Or does someone think Henry VIII took a plebiscite to see if the English yeomanry wanted to separate from Rome? Does someone think the 16th-century German princelings who went over to the Reform, taking with them their principalities and all the Catholics within their borders, first put the issue to a vote?

Here I think we can all learn from the much-maligned modern secular West. It is this “western” culture, as the Russian Orthodox writer Alexander Solzhenitsin and others have pointed out, that invented “modernity” and its traditional values: a public life that is democratic and civil; respect for individuals and their civil and religious rights; a tradition of public service and beneficence in favor of the stricken or disadvantaged both at home and abroad; an academic, intellectual, artistic and cultural life free of political restraint or the manipulation of state-ideology, and open to all; to name but a few of its qualities. Those educated in this oft-derided “western” culture seek to acquire habits of thought and judgement, ways of behaving and acting, that I think we should try to instill in all those we have contact with. Deliberately setting aside intemperate condemnation and unfair caricature, the virulent, the scurrilous, the emotional, the one-sided, the

vituperative, the rude and dishonorable, the educated mind tries, instead, to respond to criticisms by a study of the facts.

What we need is what the much-maligned “western” academic culture espouses: the secular virtues of fairness, reciprocity, and the capacity for objective, coherent, logical thought. These ideals have deep roots in eastern spirituality, too. A recent article on the Fathers of the Desert in the ecumenical journal *Sobornost* was entitled “radical honesty about self,” a virtue at the basis of all true spirituality, but one, unfortunately, that can hardly be called common coin in much of the Christian world today. They are, however, qualities espoused by Orthodox authors of the diaspora who have imbibed what is best in this culture. Contrast, for example, the statements quoted about there being no question of any Orthodox *mea culpa* with the sentiments Prof. Nicholas Lossky of St. Serge Institute of Orthodox Theology in Paris expressed at the 37th meeting of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue in France on May 16, 1997, calling for an “ethic of dialogue” comprising “absolute intellectual honesty, especially in the re-reading of our common history, and in the recognition of our own faults...”

I think that these qualities of honesty, coherence, consistency, self-criticism, objectivity, fairness, moderation and courtesy of tone and language even when in disagreement—which I unabashedly call “western” because that is where they originated and where one sees them espoused and lived—are already elemental ideals and broadly acquired realities in the Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue. The point is not that we never disagree. What it does mean is at the official level, disagreements can be discussed truthfully and courteously, without invective, rudeness, and slander. This is a source of great hope, when one realizes that not many centuries ago Catholics and Anglicans were killing one another, or how recently Catholics acquired basic civil rights in England. So maybe there is hope after all for the Orthodox and Catholics too, but until hearts and minds are changed, none of our other ecumenical efforts will amount to anything of substance for the unity of the Churches of God. Let us not doubt for one minute that this has repercussions for humanity that go far beyond the question of Christian unity. One thing the 20th century, and especially the Holocaust, has taught us is that there is no such thing as ideological neutrality. One is part of the solution or part of the problem, an instrument of peace and love or an ideologue of division and hatred. I have spoken the truth with frankness. I trust I have not mistaken my audience. As Conor Cruise O’Brien has said, “Respect for truth, intellectual courage in the telling of truth: these are the qualities of a real, of a living university.”<sup>37</sup>

Thank you for your attention.

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<sup>37</sup> *New York Times Review of Books* (Sept. 10, 2000) 45.

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