

Competing Loyalties in Galicia: The Challenges Facing Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi after the Disintegration of the Habsburg Empire*

In 1900 Andrei Sheptytskyi¹ was appointed by the Vatican and the Austrian emperor Franz Joseph to lead the Greek Catholic Church as Archbishop of Lviv and Metropolitan of Halych.² A descendant of a Polonized family, the members of which included several Uniate bishops and archbishops, Sheptytskyi changed from the Latin rite to the Eastern, Byzantine rite and became Metropolitan at the age of 35. He led the Greek Catholic Church in the region for forty-four years, seeking a *modus vivendi* with various state and political entities.

After the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, Sheptytskyi and his church faced major changes involving the political and legal status of their land – Eastern Galicia, formerly part of the Austrian crown land (*Kronland*) of Galicia and Lodomeria. The Austro-Hungarian Confessional Laws of May 7, 1874 had regulated the rights and obligations of the Catholic Church. Subsequently in Austria-Hungary, the Greek Catholic clergy and hierarchy had enjoyed a status close to that of imperial bureaucrats, participating in many important functions of the state. The leadership of the national states proclaimed by Ukrainians and Poles in 1918 had different views as to the role and functions of the Greek

* The research in different archives for this article was made possible thanks to the support of the Petro Yatsyk Program for Study of Modern Ukrainian History and Society.

1 The most valuable among the books on Sheptytskyi are: Cyrille Korolevskij, *Le Métropolitain André Szeptyckyj* (Roma, 1964); Andrii Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine: The Legacy of Andrei Sheptytsky* (Edmonton et al.: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian, 1997); *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky*, ed. Paul Magosci (Edmonton et al.: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian, 1989).

2 For more on the circumstances of Andrei Sheptytskyi's appointments, see: Giovanni Coco, «Tra la Galizia e la Russia: la Nomina Episcopale di Andrej Szeptycki nell'ambito dell'Unionismo di Leone XIII,» in *Collectanea Archivi Vaticani* 61 (2006), 33–91.

Catholic Church.³ Its spiritual leader, Andrei Sheptytskyi, until recently a loyal subject of the Emperor, was caught in the middle of a bloody struggle between two national movements, both of which claimed Eastern Galicia as an important part of their states. His personal quandary symbolized the painful dilemma of those inhabitants of Galicia who were of mixed ancestry, or who shared the legacy of more than one culture.⁴ For a long time after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, Sheptytskyi's line of thought continued to be dominated by the imperial legacy. One can argue that, for such public figures, the multiethnic empire with its complicated balance of powers, was rather more explicit and predictable than any national state. The metropolitan needed time to realize the implications of the national state concept and to reshape his own attitudes towards it. The other very problematic issue for him was the leftist, socialist orientation of the mainstream Ukrainian national movement, which often linked social and national issues.

This article will focus on the changes in the national and political loyalties of Andrei Sheptytskyi. The Ukrainian-Polish War (1918–1919), and the years of international discussions on the Eastern Galician problem in Paris (1919–1923) became a test for the metropolitan's national and political loyalties. My research, based on recently discovered archival sources, shows that his support for the Ukrainians during the Ukrainian-Polish War over Eastern Galicia derived from his very broad understanding of his own pastoral mission and duties.

Multiple identities and loyalty towards the Habsburg dynasty

Under Austrian rule, Sheptytskyi had rendered great services to the Ukrainian cause – though he generally abstained from involvement in current politics – through the tactful use of his legal status as member of the Upper House of the Austro-Hungarian Parliament and as *ex officio* member of the Galician Diet. Before the First World War, his chief political concerns were the opening of a separate Ukrainian University in Lviv and reaching a Ukrainian-Polish agreement over electoral reform in Galicia.

3 The clergy and laity of the Greek Catholic Church were almost entirely of Ukrainian nationality.

4 The Metropolitan's brother Stanisław Sheptytskyi became a general in the Polish army and defended Polish independence. At the same time, his other brother, Kazimir-Klymentii Sheptytskyi, who became a Greek Catholic monk, shared Andrei Sheptytskyi's stance. The greater part of his extended family supported Polish independence. The metropolitan's second cousin, Władysław Skrzyński, served as Polish envoy and ambassador to the Apostolic See in 1921–1937.

It took Sheptytskyi, a Galician nobleman, a considerably long time to reconsider his multiple identities and political loyalties, and to support the national aspirations of his Ukrainian congregation. In many respects, up to the beginning of the First World War, he tried to preserve his multiple identities, which did not come into conflict with his loyalty to the Habsburg Empire. For a rather long time, he saw himself as a representative of old Ruthenian nobility, drawing on the legacy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

In his first pastoral letter as Bishop of Stanislaviv⁵ he declared himself to be »of Ruthenian kin.«⁶ In the early twentieth century he was not ready to think in strictly national terms. In a 1908 letter to one of his relatives, he revealed his reasoning on issues of nationality: First of all, he saw himself as a transmitter of the legacy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, for whom the Ruthenian and the Polish components of his identity were equally important.⁷ When Sheptytskyi assumed higher ecclesiastical posts, he was mindful of his role in the reconciliation of the Polish and Ukrainian inhabitants of Galicia. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire he became an active patron of Ukrainian culture and education, as well as a champion of the economic emancipation of the Ukrainian community in Galicia. His charitable initiatives gained him popularity among the Ukrainians of Galicia before the First World War.

The war became a true watershed for Sheptytskyi, as he was now obliged to take sides. His choice to become an active player in Ukrainian politics did not weaken his loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty. In the early weeks of the war he repeatedly urged his followers to maintain their loyalty to Emperor Franz Josef and their Austro-Hungarian motherland. Thus, in his address to the Greek Catholic population of the villages on the border between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, he argued that »the Russian Tsar cannot tolerate that we have freedom of faith and of nationality in the Austrian state, and wants to take away that freedom.«⁸ Sheptytskyi was convinced that the Habsburg dynasty, after the victory over the Russian Empire, could guarantee the national and

5 Sheptytskyi's first pastoral letter had the title »Our Program« and was issued on August 2, 1899.

6 Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, *Pastyrs'ki poslannia 1899–1914* (Lviv: Apriori, 2007), 20.

7 Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv/Tsentrāl'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy u Lvovi (hereafter TsDIAL), collection/coll. (fond) 358, inventory/inv. (opis) 2, file (sprava) 35, folio/fol. (arkush) 30–31.

8 »Bo moskovs'kyi Tsar ne mih toho sterpity, shcho v Avstriis'kii derzhavi maiemo svobodu viry ta narodnosty; hoche nam vyderty tu svobodu, zakuvaty v kaidany«. Andrii Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dialnist', Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia. Dokumenty i Materialy 1899–1944*, vol. 2, part 1 (Lviv: Misioner, 1998), 443.

cultural development of Ukrainians, even beyond the current borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

From the beginning of the First World War, the metropolitan paid special attention to the consolidation of different Ukrainian political groups and movements, thus inviting leaders of the Ukrainian parties to discuss the current political situation in his palace on St. George Hill.⁹ Perhaps influenced by these meetings, Sheptytskyi wrote and submitted a memorandum to the Austrian foreign ministry, where he laid out some ideas for the possible future reorganization of the Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire, which he believed would be conquered by the Austrians. Essentially, he proposed the creation of a separate political entity from these territories »independent from [...] and alien to the Tsarist Empire.«¹⁰ He thought that such a Ukrainian entity under Habsburg rule could be created in the traditional form of a hetmanate.¹¹ He also stressed the importance of legal reform for the new Ukrainian part of the empire, and suggested the use of Ukrainian lawyers from Galicia to facilitate the translation and rapid implementation of Austrian civil and criminal law.¹²

In church matters, Sheptytskyi contemplated using a future Austrian victory for his plans to create an Eastern-rite Ukrainian Catholic Church under the Roman Pope.¹³ Towards that end, he was prepared to assume the title of Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine. He regarded the Austrian Empire as the best ally for Ukrainians in Galicia, as well as for those who still lived under tsarist rule. He also perceived an Austrian victory as a precondition for the fulfillment of his grand plans to convert the Slavic population of the Russian Empire to Catholicism. He assumed that war between the Russian Empire and Austria-Hungary could offer a unique opportunity to spread the Catholic faith of the Eastern rite among the subjects of the Romanov Empire, particularly among the Orthodox Ukrainians.

The tsarist authorities regarded Sheptytskyi as a Ukrainian nationalist, as well as an Austrian loyalist, and, more generally, as an enemy of the Russian Empire.

9 *Tsarskyi viazen' 1914–1917* (L'viv: Stavropigiiskyi Instytut, 1918), 5–6.

10 Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia*, vol. 2, part 2 (L'viv: Misioner, 1998), 610.

11 The *Hetmanate* was a Cossack state in today's Central Ukraine and a small part of Russia (former Starodub region of Chernigov province) between 1649 and 1764. It was founded by Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi during the so-called Khmelnytskyi Uprising (1648–1657). In the 18th century the territory of the Hetmanate was limited to Left-Bank Ukraine. In 1764 Catherine II of Russia officially abolished the autonomy of the Cossack state.

12 *Ibid.*, 610–611.

13 *Ibid.*, 611–612. Kravcheniuk Osyp, *Veleten so Sviztoiurs'koi hory* (Yorkton, SK: Redeemer's Voice Press, 1963), 124–126.

They arrested him in September 1914 and imprisoned him in various Russian Orthodox monasteries for two and a half years.¹⁴ Sheptytskyi's efforts on behalf of the Ukrainian national movement before the war and his wartime arrest strengthened his authority among the majority of Galician Ukrainians. He was released from tsarist imprisonment after the February Revolution in Russia and triumphantly returned to Lviv on September 10, 1917.

Sheptytskyi and Ukrainian statehood in Eastern Galicia

On the eve of the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, Sheptytskyi, together with two other Greek Catholic bishops, became a member of the Ukrainian National Council, which, in its meeting of October 18, 1918 resolved to proclaim the creation of a separate political entity consisting of the Ukrainian lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Among the members of the Ukrainian National Council, formed on the initiative of Ukrainian deputies to the Austrian Parliament and the Galician Diet, Greek Catholic clergy represented an important group. The council decided that the future of the Ukrainian part of Galicia lay with Austria and was not seeking full independence, at least for the moment.¹⁵

Sheptytskyi thought that a demand for independence from Austria would be »careless and even dangerous, and first of all disadvantageous« and therefore supported the idea of an autonomous Ukrainian political entity under the auspices of Austria.¹⁶ The Ukrainians' seizure of power in Lviv and other Galician towns initiated the Ukrainian-Polish War over Eastern Galicia. On November 1, 1918, Ukrainian officers informed Sheptytskyi of the Ukrainian coup.¹⁷ In his response, he expressed his satisfaction that the city had been taken without serious bloodshed. By the force of the events he was prompted to declare his support for the Ukrainian takeover and on November 3, 1918 celebrated a mass of thanks »for the foundation of the Ukrainian state from

14 For more on Sheptytskyi's imprisonment in Russia see: Athanasius D. McVay, »A Prisoner for his People's Faith: Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi's Detentions under Russia and Poland«, *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 50, no. 1–2 (2009): 13–54.

15 *Dmytro Paliiev. Zhyttia ta Dial'nist'*, ed. Oleh Kupchyns'kyi (Lviv: NTSH, 2007), 106–125.

16 »Zhadannia vidluchennia Halychyny vid Avstrii [...] bulo by, po moiemu, neostorozhno, v danim sluchaiu, nebezpechne; a peredusim – bezhosenne.« Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist'*, *Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia*, vol. 2, part 2, 669.

17 Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1994), 367–368.

the Ukrainian lands of the former Habsburg Empire.¹⁸ The metropolitan was not prepared for the course of events, which developed rather rapidly. It was probably somewhat later that he took the view that the Ukrainian takeover was a manifestation of Ukrainian political maturity, and was ready to share with his congregation the responsibility that went with it.

The Ukrainian-Polish War challenged Sheptytskyi's multiple loyalties. When the empire disintegrated, he faced a difficult personal choice. In November 1918 he decided to lend his support to the Ukrainian side within the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Galicia, because, as he believed, his people had the right, like other nations, to demand a separate political entity. The form »our people« was his term of choice, and he frequently used it instead of »Ukrainians« or »the Ukrainian people.« Such vocabulary shows his inclination to avoid identification in national terms.¹⁹ In the years prior to the First World War, Sheptytskyi also tried to refrain from referring to his Greek Catholic followers as either Ukrainian or Ruthenian, using the inclusive formulation »our people«. Such an approach irritated the leaders of the Ukrainian national movement and was discussed in the Ukrainian press.²⁰

For his choice to side with the Ukrainians, Sheptytskyi faced charges of betraying Polish national interests, leveled at him by members of the Polish community in Galicia, and by leaders of the independent Polish state. Józef Bilczewski, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Lviv, thought him to have become an »ardent Ukrainian«.²¹ However, Sheptytskyi's choice in favor of Ukrainian allegiance was precipitated by the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, whereby he found himself in a situation, in which it became impossible or at least very difficult to identify with more than one national group. His pro-Ukrainian stance, and his support of the Ukrainian efforts to build a Ukrainian state in Eastern Galicia, was determined above all by his office as Metropolitan of the Greek Catholic Church, whose congregation consisted almost exclusively of Ukrainians. But even when acting in favor of the latter, Sheptytskyi avoided making any overt statement regarding his own national identity. As a young

18 *Dilo*, November 4, 1918.

19 For such references see for example the letter to Count M. Tyshkevich in Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dialnist', Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia*, vol. 2, part 2, 647. In a letter to the Apostolic visitor, G. Genocchi, Sheptytskyi used instead »Galician ruthenian people«. See *ibid.*, 717.

20 Volodymyr Doroshenko, *Velykyi mytropolyt* (Yorkton, SK: 1958), 26. Semen Vityk, *Shcho dali robyty?* (Lviv, 1902), 46.

21 *Nieznana korespondencja Arcybiskupów Metropolitów Lwowskich Józefa Bilczewskiego z Andrzejem Szeptyckim w czasie wojny Polsko-Ukraińskiej 1918–1919*, ed. Józef Wołczański (Lwów–Kraków: Wydawnictwo Bł. Jakuba Strzemię Archidiecezji Lwowskiej ob. łac., 1997), 84.

man, Sheptytskyi had been strongly influenced by the ideas of Ultramontan-ism,²² and as a church leader, he regarded national issues as secondary to Christian values. His support for the Ukrainian cause was secondary to his Catholicism.

The challenge of the Ukrainian-Polish War

The Ukrainian-Polish War led to enormous atrocities visited upon Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish civilians. Both the Ukrainian and Polish sides perpetrated numerous brutalities. The Ukrainian troops and armed volunteers committed many crimes against the Polish population, while the victorious Polish troops launched their own campaign of mass persecution against the Ukrainian population of Galicia. Jewish inhabitants of the city of Lviv were caught in the middle of the conflict,²³ and accusations that they had sided with the Ukrainians prompted a three-day pogrom.²⁴ When combat reached the streets of Lviv, Sheptytskyi was concerned for the lives of civilians. He addressed the magistrate, urging the city officials to normalize life for the residents. On November 12, in the midst of the fiercest battle in the streets of Lviv, he officially addressed the Ukrainian National Council with the initiative to stop fighting, and open peace talks with the Poles.²⁵

Upon the offer of Roman Catholic Archbishop Bilczewski, Sheptytskyi composed an official letter from both archbishops to the commanders of the Ukrainian and Polish armed units, urging them to exchange prisoners and wounded combatants.²⁶ He himself led the Ukrainian delegation in the Ukrainian-Polish talks, which concluded with a brief armistice. When warfare intensified in the outskirts of Lviv, Sheptytskyi demanded on March 10, 1919 that the Ukrainian troops stop bombarding the city. The Ukrainian commander Victor Kurmanovych fulfilled his request. In this way, using his standing among

22 A religious philosophy within the Roman Catholic community that places strong emphasis on the prerogatives and powers of the Pope. In particular, Ultramontan-ism may consist of the assertion that the superiority of Papal authority supersedes the authority of local, secular or spiritual hierarchies.

23 Wacław Wierzbieniec, «The Process of Jewish Emancipation and Assimilation in the Multiethnic City of Lviv during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,» *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 24 (2000): 229–253, here 239.

24 According to the memoirs of Joseph Tenenbaum, Sheptytskyi was very distressed by Tenenbaum's information concerning pogroms and gave 500 korons to help the victims. See: Joseph Tenenbaum, *In Search of a Lost People: The Old and the New Poland* (New York: Beechhurst Press, 1948), 115.

25 Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia*, vol. 2, part 2, 692.

26 Ibid., 693.

Ukrainians, Sheptytskyi played an important role in easing the suffering of the local population. Nevertheless, Polish authorities and church hierarchs openly accused him of having a passive attitude toward the war atrocities, and of unequivocally supporting Ukrainian military actions. Sheptytskyi was even charged with these accusations before the Roman Curia.²⁷ In those official documents, signed by Polish state authorities and members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy he was also accused of supporting the pro-Ukrainian political activities of his clergy.

During the Ukrainian-Polish war, the church and clergy themselves became victims of abuse, as both sides viewed the clergy of the enemy side as an element of national agitation. For this reason, acts of sacrilege against church buildings, arrests, and even executions of priests of both rites, took on a mass character. Although sources and figures vary, the statistics that testify to the scale of repressions of the clergy are striking: Six Roman Catholic priests were killed and 85 arrested or detained by Ukrainian forces;²⁸ the Polish side killed five priests and arrested or confined around 500 Greek Catholic priests and monks in prisons and camps.²⁹

In this situation, on February 27, 1919, Sheptytskyi addressed the government of the Western Ukrainian National Republic (hereafter WUNR), asking the Ukrainian authorities to release members of the Roman Catholic clergy who had been arrested or detained. The WUNR government released a great number of detained Catholic priests of Polish nationality.³⁰ Sheptytskyi probably expected the same step to be taken by the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Lviv. But the Ukrainian clergy was released only thanks to the intervention and assistance of the Vatican, represented by the apostolic nuncio Achille Ratti.³¹

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church did indeed take an active part in the state-building efforts of the Western Ukrainian National Republic. Some priests even became officials of this new Ukrainian state. Ivan Latyshevskyi, a priest, who later became auxiliary bishop of Stanislaviv, headed the Department for

27 Among others, such accusations against Sheptytskyi were put forward by Archbishop Józef Bilczewski and Lviv Armenian-rite Archbishop Józef Teodorowicz. See Archivio Segreto Vaticano (hereafter ASV), Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari (hereafter A.E.S.), Russia, positione (hereafter pos.) 634. Also the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs made such accusations. See ASV, Archivio Nunziatura Varsavia (hereafter Arch. Nunz. Varsavia), vol. 194, fol. 1049–1111.

28 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 634.

29 Actually 498 Greek Catholic priests, monks, and seminarians, according to the list presented to the apostolic nuncio by Sheptytskyi through Josaphat Jean. See ASV, Arch. Nunz. Varsavia, vol. 200, fol. 94–103.

30 TsDIAL, coll. 408, inv. 1, file 574, fol. 6.

31 ASV, Arch. Nunz. Varsavia, vol. 200, fol. 64–65, 69–69v.

Religious Affairs in the WUNR government, and many parish priests were among the members of the local branches of the Ukrainian National Council in Galician towns and villages. At the same time, relations between the Greek Catholic clergy, headed by Sheptytskyi, and the government of the WUNR, were not free of disagreement and controversy. The leftist and atheistic faction enjoyed considerable influence among the members of the Ukrainian National Council, and, among other matters, discussed the secularization of Church property, as well as elimination of religious education from school curricula.³²

Diplomacy on behalf of the Western Ukrainian National Republic

Despite the anticlerical sentiments of some of the WUNR's leaders, Sheptytskyi assumed the role of an informal diplomat and spokesman for the unrecognized Eastern Galician state. He suggested that only a neutral international commission would be able to resolve the Ukrainian-Polish armed conflict in Galicia in accordance with the principles of international law. In January 1919 he had a conversation with a member of the Inter-Allied mission to oversee an armistice between Poles and Ukrainians, in the course of which he demanded that Woodrow Wilson's principles of self-determination be extended to Eastern Galicia. He also tried, albeit in vain, to meet with Józef Piłsudski, the head of the independent Polish state.³³

The metropolitan's international defense of the rights of Galician Ukrainians culminated during his long journeys abroad. In the fall of 1920 he obtained permission from the Polish authorities to pay an official visit to the Holy See. During his travel and stay abroad he held, in addition to his Polish passport,³⁴ a diplomatic passport of the Western Ukrainian National Republic.³⁵ While in Rome, he tried to obtain the Pope's support for the Ukrainian cause in Eastern Galicia. Pope Benedict XV offered his support for a peace settlement of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict, and humanitarian help to the Ukrainian Catholics. For these purposes, the Roman Curia decided to send an apostolic delegate, Giovanni Genocchi, to the Ukrainian National Republic (hereafter UNR), and charged him with a special mission in Eastern Galicia. The objectives of

32 Bohdan Budurowycz, »The Greek-Catholic Church in Galicia, 1914–1944,« *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 26, no. 1–4 (2002–2003): 291–375, here 302.

33 ASV, A.E.S., Russia, pos. 634. Budurowycz, »Greek-Catholic Church in Galicia,« 302.

34 Sheptytskyi obtained a Polish passport on December 16, 1920 and traveled to Rome with Ermenegildo Pellegrinetti, auditor of the nunciature in Warsaw. McVay, »A Prisoner for His People's Faith,« 39.

35 *Western Ukrainian National Republic, 1918–1923: Illustrated History* (Lviv et al.: Manuscript-Lviv: 2008), 302.

Genocchi's mission, which were of prime concern to the Vatican, had to be kept secret because of the opposition of the Polish government to the idea of a separate apostolic diplomat for Eastern Galicia. Genocchi's appointment was a major success of Sheptytskyi's efforts at the Vatican.

Genocchi, a well-known missionary, scholar, and diplomat became a great admirer of Sheptytskyi, regarding him as a true leader of his flock, and defended him against Polish accusations of using his pastoral mission in a politically instrumental way.³⁶ He did not manage to travel to Eastern Galicia or to Ukraine because of the warfare, though he spent some time in Vienna and Warsaw. The Polish government did not allow the apostolic diplomat to travel to Galicia. Genocchi distributed the voluminous humanitarian aid of the Vatican through officials of the Greek Catholic Church. Even after the termination of his mission, Genocchi remained Sheptytskyi's friend, and was regarded by the Polish authorities as a supporter of Ukrainian claims to Eastern Galicia.³⁷

Benedict XV demonstrated his sympathy to Sheptytskyi personally, and in an official letter to the Greek Catholics, dated February 24, 1921, in which he praised the »heroic people, who suffered so much in order to preserve its Church and rite, which at the same time are the guardians of its nationality.« The pope also expressed his desire to provide help to »the Ruthenians always so close to the Roman See«, and suggested that the Eastern Slavs could approach unity with the Apostolic See.³⁸ In Poland this letter resonated in a very unpleasant way for the Vatican.

Even before his trip to Rome, Sheptytskyi coordinated his actions at the Vatican with the activities of the diplomatic representatives of the Ukrainian National Republic. Count Mykhailo Tyshkevych, the first head of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission to the Apostolic See, was on friendly terms with Sheptytskyi. The metropolitan and Tyshkevych corresponded frequently, especially from 1917 to 1923.³⁹ On May 20, 1919, Tyshkevych addressed the Secretary of the Roman Curia with a letter declaring the intentions of the Ukrainian govern-

36 Ivan Khoma, *Apostols'kyi Prestil i Ukraina 1919–1922* (Rome: Ukrainian Catholic University Press, 1987); ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 30–33, fascicolo/fasc. (file) 37, fol. 24.

37 For more details on Giovanni Genocchi's mission, see Liliana Hentosh, *Vatykan i vyklyky modernosti. Shidnoevropeiska polityka papy Benedykta XV ta ukrains'ko-pols'kyi konflikt v Halychyni, 1914–1923* (L'viv: Klasyka, 2006), 308–328.

38 »Herois'koho narodu, iakyi stilyk zumiv vuterpity zadlia zberezhenia svoho obriadu, shcho ie odnochasno i zaborolom ioho natsional'nosti ... [...] rusyniv, kotri zavzhdy blyz'ki Ryms'komu prestolu«. Letter of Benedict XV to Andrei Sheptytskyi, published in *L'vivs'ko-arkhyieparkhial'ni vidomosti*, April 20, 1921.

39 Mykhailo Tyshkevych's letters to Sheptytskyi can be found at TsDIAL, coll. 358, inv. 1, file 357, and at the Archive of the General Curia of the Basilian brothers in Rome, Files of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi.

ment.⁴⁰ In this document he raised several points concerning Galicia and the Western Ukrainian National Republic. The Ukrainian envoy urged the Vatican to officially condemn the abuses of the Polish government, and the atrocities of Polish troops led by General Haller in Galicia.⁴¹ Tyshkevych also passed on a request from the government of the Ukrainian National Republic to the Roman Curia to honor Sheptytskyi's suffering for the faith by making him a cardinal.⁴² The metropolitan's contacts with UNR diplomats indicate that he was indeed open to the possibility of a union of Eastern Galicia (WUNR) with Ukraine (UNR), but on the condition that the Catholic Church of the Eastern rite was granted unrestricted freedom of activity.

In 1921–1923, while traveling abroad, Sheptytskyi was preoccupied with the Ukrainian-Polish hostilities, and sought to find a solution that would prove satisfactory to both sides. In his opinion, the international authorities had to pay more attention to the Galician problem. Between April and July 1921, he traveled to Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and the United Kingdom, where among other things he tried to meet with political and civic leaders in order to attract their attention to Galicia. He also sought financial support for his impoverished church and for the numerous war orphans sheltered in orphanages under the guidance of Greek Catholic monks and nuns.⁴³

At the same time, Sheptytskyi was trying to draw the attention of the foreign political leaders to the situation in Eastern Galicia and to the abuses of the Polish authorities. He stayed longer in the United Kingdom than originally planned, and, after meeting with political leaders, he hoped for British support for the Ukrainians. In Paris, on July 14, 1921, he managed to meet with French President Aristides Briand, and handed him a memorandum on the situation of Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia. In this document he argued that it would not suffice »to propose to his people the rights of a national minority in the Polish state«. ⁴⁴ He tried to persuade the French president to pay more attention to the

40 ASV, A.E.S., Russia, pos. 592.

41 ASV, Protocolli della Segreteria di Stato, vol. 622, no. 92346 and 92347; vol. 623, no. 93573. ASV, A.E.S., Russia, pos. 592.

42 ASV, A.E.S., Russia, pos. 592.

43 Sheptytskyi received the support of the Vatican for his fundraising activities. The Congregation for Eastern Churches granted its support to the Metropolitan in a letter from January 24, 1921. In this document, Cardinal Niccolo Marini, Prefect of the Congregation, encouraged Catholic believers to help »Ruthenians, hoping that they will play a pivotal role in the conversion of the Russians to unity in one flock of Jesus Christ«. See Andrii Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Tserkovna Iednist'*, vol. 1 (L'viv: Svichado, 1995), 188.

44 Maria Klachko, »Podróż Metropolity Szeptytckiego do Zachodniej Europy i Ameryki w latach 1920–1923,« in *Metropolita Andrzej Szeptycki. Studia i materialy*,

problem of Eastern Galicia, which he believed had to be seen beyond the so-called Little Treaty of Versailles, the Polish Minorities Treaty of June 28, 1919. Sheptytskyi thought that his activities could bring about a more favorable approach from the United Kingdom and France towards Ukrainian claims in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict. But he also took into consideration a possible unfavorable decision in Paris and wanted »to secure for his people positive public opinion in the West, and the support of Western Christianity«.⁴⁵

In August 1921 he traveled overseas to visit Canada and the United States. He spent more than two months in Canada, where his main interest was to collect money for orphans in Galicia. However, it was in the United States that he managed to attract the attention of the highest state authorities. In November 1921 he rushed to Washington, where he met with leading politicians – President Warren G. Harding, Secretary of State Charles Hughes, and Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover. His meeting with US leadership focused on the situation of Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia, and the Ukrainian-Polish conflict. Sheptytskyi also presented his interlocutors with a memorandum on Eastern Galicia, urging the political leaders of the United States to reconsider their attitude towards the issue. During the meeting with Hoover, he expressed his gratitude for the humanitarian help sent to Eastern Galicia and pleaded for more aid for the suffering civilian population.⁴⁶

During his trip to Canada and the United States the metropolitan's activities were followed by representatives of the Polish diplomatic corps and secret service. Władysław Skrzyński, the Polish representative at the Vatican, asked the Roman Curia to order Sheptytskyi to avoid making any political statements. On January 1, 1922 the Cardinal Secretary of State sent a telegram to Giovanni Bolzano, the apostolic nuncio to Washington, instructing him to ask the metropolitan to refrain from further political declarations.⁴⁷

From late March until July 1921, Sheptytskyi, as apostolic delegate, visited Ukrainian Greek Catholic communities in Brazil and Argentina. By the end of the year he was back in Europe where he visited Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. During all these trips and in meetings with politicians, social and cultural leaders, and representatives of the press, he stressed that, in his opinion, the Entente powers were at that time the legitimate authorities in Eastern Galicia. In order to underscore his position he did not visit Polish diplomatic

ed. Andrzej Zięba (Kraków: Poligrafia Inspektoratu Towarzystwa Salezjańskiego, 1994), 155–168, 161.

45 Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Tserkovna Iednist'*, vol. 1, 192.

46 Klachko, »Podróż Metropolity Szeptytckiego,« 162–163.

47 Ibid., 163.

representatives abroad. He recognized the government of the Western Ukrainian National Republic as the representative of the Ukrainian claims to Eastern Galicia and kept in close touch with the WUNR's representatives abroad. Polish diplomats in the Vatican complained to the Cardinal Secretary of State about the metropolitan's stance of ignoring Polish diplomatic representatives.⁴⁸

Sheptytskyi's criticism of the Polish state and Polish military authorities was not an expression of his attitude towards the Polish people. Contrary to how his activities of 1920-1923 were seen by the Polish authorities and in the Polish media, he was not hostile to the Polish people in general. He hoped for an arrangement of future peaceful relations between the two peoples. In his opinion the international powers were obliged to create circumstances favorable to a Ukrainian-Polish agreement. Among the main responsibilities of the Entente in such a scenario would have been to guarantee the rights of the Ukrainian population within the borders of the Polish state. Sheptytskyi undoubtedly had much hope in international authorities; he did not believe in the possibility of a direct Polish-Ukrainian agreement, nor could he find anyone genuinely interested in a Ukrainian-Polish compromise from among the Ukrainian and Polish leaderships.⁴⁹

Sheptytskyi supported the Ukrainian side in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict to the last. On the eve of a crucial meeting of the Council of Ambassadors in Rome, he received a telegram from Kost Levytskyi, head of the WUNR government, asking him to travel to Paris immediately.⁵⁰ He rushed to Paris and managed to meet with the chairman of the Council of Ambassadors Jules Cambon, whom he tried to persuade to change or postpone the decision to place Eastern Galicia under Polish sovereignty. In a letter to the Basilian prior Lazar Berezowski, written the night before the decision, he wrote that he still hoped and prayed to God that »our cause would be solved in a way that could guarantee our people freedom of development«. ⁵¹ He made a final effort, but the future of Eastern Galicia was decided by the Allied powers in favor of Poland.

The metropolitan's diplomatic activity in support of the Western Ukrainian National Republic was very much connected to his ideas regarding the defense

48 Maciej Mróz, *W kręgu dyplomacji watykańskiej, Rosja, Polska, Ukraina w dyplomacji watykańskiej w latach 1917–1926* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2004), 208–209.

49 Ryszard Torzecki, »Sheptyts'kyi and Polish Society,« in *Morality and Reality*, 75–100, here 84–85.

50 The telegram is preserved at the Archives of the General Curia of the Basilian brothers in Rome: Collection of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi/Archive Heneral'noi Kurii Chynu Vasyliia Velykoho v Rymy: Fond Mytropolyta Sheptyts'koho, vol. 9.

51 »Dai Bozhe, shchob nasha sprava bula vyrishena po-Bozhomu, tak shchob narid nash mav bodai mozhlyvist' rozvyvatysia pryrodno.« *ibid.*

of the rights and future of »his people«. He supported the government of the Western Ukrainian National Republic in its efforts abroad, because he believed that its political leaders could provide favorable conditions for a peace settlement and reconciliation in Galicia, and could encourage socio-economic development of the Ukrainian community as a whole.

*Sheptytskyi and the political leadership of the
Ukrainian National Republic*

The metropolitan's attitude to other Ukrainian states and governments⁵² was not as explicit as his unequivocal support for the Western Ukrainian National Republic. In May 1917 he traveled from Petrograd to Kyiv, where he tried to establish personal relations with the leading politicians of the Central Council. He and Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, the President of the Central Council, had very different personalities. Hrushevskiy, a professor at Lviv University, avoided contact with him, suspecting him of pro-Polish inclinations.⁵³ Sheptytskyi was rather persistent in his efforts to convert the leading politicians of the Central Council to his view that the rebirth of the Ukrainian state was impossible without national unity, and that national solidarity could only be built upon a foundation of religious unity. He held the opinion that such religious unity could be built around the Greek Catholic Church. His talks with Hrushevskiy and with the Council's Vice President Volodymyr Vynnychenko were less than successful. They only vaguely promised to take his views into consideration.⁵⁴ In early 1918 Sheptytskyi demonstrated his support for the idea of an independent Ukrainian National Republic. In a speech before the upper chamber of the Austrian Parliament he strongly supported the provision of the treaty, signed in February 1918 in Brest-Litovsk between the UNR and the Central powers, wherein the Chelm region was to be placed under the authority

- 52 After the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 the Ukrainian lands of the empire declared their independence. The independence movement was led by the Central Council (*Tsentral'na Rada*) in Kiev, its President, Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, and Vice President Volodymyr Vynnychenko. After a coup by Hetman Skoropadski, the Central Council lost power, and the Hetman and his government ruled Ukraine with the help of German and Austrian troops from April until December 1918. In December 1918 the Ukrainian National Republic was restored, its governing body – Directory of the UNR – headed by Symon Petlura.
- 53 Mykhailo Hrushevskiy's letters reveal his dislike and suspicion of Andrei Sheptytskyi. Hrushevskiy could not appreciate the metropolitan's ideas and activities because of his own adherence to Orthodoxy and negative attitude to the Vatican. Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, »Lysty z-nad Poltvy,« *Mykhailo Hrushevskiy. Tvary u 50-ty tomah*, vol. 1 (Lviv: Svit, 2002), 147–164, here 148–149, 157–159.
- 54 Hentosh, *Vatykan i Vyklyky Modernosti*, 220–221.

of the Central Council. Sheptytskyi supported the claim that »the Chelm region is an ancient Ukrainian land, which was not only ethnically linked to Ukraine, but was incorporated into the Ukrainian state centuries ago«. He also shared the idea that the peace treaty between Austria-Hungary and the Ukrainian National Republic would be impossible without a solution for the Chelm issue.⁵⁵

During the rule of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, Sheptytskyi became involved in the affairs of Eastern Ukraine. In the second session of the all-Ukrainian Church Council held in June 1918, the pro-national group suggested his candidacy for the office of Patriarch of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. The metropolitan expressed his interest, but in a letter to Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg⁵⁶ he stated that he would only accept election by a majority of the council and that such an act would be tantamount to the conclusion of a church union with Rome.⁵⁷

His plans for spreading the activities of the Greek Catholic Church to all Ukrainian lands was met with greater understanding from within Symon Petlura's government of the Ukrainian National Republic. Petlura considered granting state support to the Greek Catholic Church in the UNR.⁵⁸ Volodymyr Chehivskyi, Minister for Education, authorized the construction of a Greek Catholic Church and a Basilian monastery with a printing house in Kamianets Podilskyi.⁵⁹ Petlura had been the first to send an official Ukrainian diplomatic mission led by the above mentioned Mykhailo Tyshkevych – a well-known Catholic activist – to the Apostolic See.

In January 1920, Petlura and Sheptytskyi exchanged letters. In his letter the metropolitan presupposed the hypothetical unification of Eastern Galician lands

55 »Pevnym, imenno, ie, shcho vsi ukraintsi uvvazhaiut' Holmshchynu staroiu ukrains'koiu zemleiu, iaka ne til'ky shcho ie etnografichno tisno poviazana z Ukrainoiu, ale takozh na protiazi stolit' bula inkorporovana v ukrains'ku derzhavu.« Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Suspil'ne Pytannia*, vol. 2, part 2, 676.

56 On the life and activities of Wilhelm von Habsburg, as well as his contacts with Sheptytskyi, see Timothy Snyder, *The Red Prince: The Secret Lives of a Habsburg Archduke* (New York: Basic Books, 2008). Wilhelm von Habsburg found in Sheptytskyi a moral authority, as well as support for his plans to become the ruler of a sovereign Ukrainian entity under an Austro-Hungarian protectorate. The letters from Archduke Wilhelm to the metropolitan can be located among the documents of Andrei Sheptytskyi at TsDIAL, coll. 358, inv. 3, file 166.

57 Documents rutheno-ukrainiens (Paris: Bureau Polonais de Publications Politiques, 1919), 12–13; Kravchuk, ed., *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Zhyttia i Dial'nist', Tserkva i Tserkovna Iednist'*, vol. 1, 137.

58 Ibid., 137–140.

59 Liliana Hentosz, »Kanadyjski duchowny o. Josafat Jean – ukraiński dyplomata,« *Biuletyn Ukrainoznawczy* no. 6 (2000): 48–60.

in a single state with Eastern Ukraine, formerly under the Tsarist Empire. One could infer that he regarded Petlura as a probable and suitable leader for a unified Ukrainian state. His approach to the Ukrainian government based in Kyiv must be viewed in light of his ideas on the reunification of Eastern Slavs with Rome. Thus, in his opinion, the best government for Ukraine would be one that could guarantee the right of free and unrestrained development for the Catholic Church of the Eastern rite in its territories.

Relations with the Polish government in 1923

Sheptytskyi's diplomatic activities in Western Europe and the United States in support of the Ukrainian cause in Eastern Galicia had hardly endeared him to the Warsaw government.⁶⁰ He became the *bête noire* of the Polish press and of Polish public opinion in general,⁶¹ and experienced considerable difficulties on his way back to his archdiocese in Lviv. The Polish government demanded from him his unconditional acceptance of Polish sovereignty over Eastern Galicia, and that he withdraw from any political activity. In this complicated situation, the Apostolic See negotiated the formal conditions of the metropolitan's return. Following a decision by Pope Pius XI, Sheptytskyi wrote an official letter to declare his loyalty to the Polish state⁶² and got an entry visa from the Polish Legation at the Vatican.

At that time a new political coalition came to power in Warsaw and the new government required that Sheptytskyi had to swear a formal public oath of allegiance to the Polish state.⁶³ The metropolitan rejected such demands, suspecting the government's »desire to compromise him in front of his nation«. ⁶⁴ The Vatican also opposed these demands on the grounds that they placed the Catholic hierarchy in direct subordination to the state authorities.⁶⁵ In the opinion of the Vatican, such an act by the Polish state contradicted the essential rights of a Catholic clergyman of the hierarchy appointed by the Pope to take care of his congregation. The situation grew even more complicated

60 The Polish diplomats at the Apostolic See informed the Secretary of State of their government's attitude towards Sheptytskyi, who was regarded as an »enemy of the Polish state«, and as a »renegade, who became a fierce enemy of his former kinsmen«. Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw/Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ambasada RP w Londynie, file (sygn.) 879, fol. 77–80.

61 Torzecki, »Sheptyts'kyi and Polish Society,« 82–83.

62 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 48, fol. 60–60v; McVay, »A prisoner for his People's Faith,« 43.

63 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 49, fol. 52, 82–84.

64 Ibid., fol. 13.

65 Ibid., fol. 37, 69.

when the Polish government refused to guarantee the metropolitan's safety on his way to his archdiocese.⁶⁶

Sheptytskyi was detained on the Polish border, first in the sleeping car of his train, and then taken under police guard to the hospital of the Sisters of Charity in Poznań.⁶⁷ The nunciature in Warsaw did its best to negotiate with the Polish government the formal conditions of the metropolitan's release.⁶⁸ After weeks the Polish government and the Apostolic See came to a compromise with Sheptytskyi: The metropolitan would make a written but private declaration of his loyalty to the Polish state in a letter requesting a presidential audience.⁶⁹ On October 4, 1923 he met with the Polish President Stanisław Wojciechowski in the presidential country residence in Spalla, rather than in Warsaw.⁷⁰ At that confidential meeting he declared his loyalty to the Polish state.⁷¹ The place and the informality did enhance the private character of the meeting between the head of state and the prominent member of the church hierarchy. Sheptytskyi apparently succeeded in persuading the president of his loyalty.

It took several years to conclude the concordat between the Polish state and the Apostolic See; among other contested issues was the status of the Greek Catholic Church. Only the Concordat of 1925 provided legal grounds for its practically autonomous activity in Poland. The Greek Catholic Church was able to retain its considerable material possessions, which guaranteed financial independence.⁷² On the other hand, its activities outside Galicia were sharply limited, and Sheptytskyi's dreams of expanding its missionary work to Volhynia and the Chelm region – areas where the Greek Catholic Church had prospered before its suppression by the tsarist government in the 19th century – were thwarted, obstructed by the provision of the concordat that placed all Greek Catholics outside the three Galician eparchies under the spiritual jurisdiction of local Roman Catholic bishops.⁷³ As for the Greek Catholic Church, the Concordat of 1925 was an ambivalent compromise. It accepted such demands

66 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 48, fol. 58–58v.

67 Sheptytskyi was taken ill while traveling, in Vienna, but despite the serious nature of his illness, left for Lviv, because his passport was only valid for two more days.

68 Among the files of the Apostolic nunciature in Warsaw, there are at least 71 documents concerning Sheptytskyi's return to Lviv. ASV, Arch. Nunz. Varsavia, vol. 223, fol. 600–604v.

69 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 50, fol. 10; ASV, Arch. Nunz. Varsavia, vol. 223, fol. 539.

70 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 50, fol. 41–43.

71 ASV, A.E.S., Polonia, pos. 40, fasc. 50, fol. 41v.

72 Konkordat zawarty pomiędzy Stolicą Apostolską a Rzeczpospolitą Polską. Podpisany w Rzymie 10 lutego 1925 r. (Lwów: Światosław, 1925), 17–23.

73 Ibid., 9.

of the Polish government as patronage – a practice of control that had been used in the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – and limitation on land ownership by the Catholic Church, which was presented as part of agricultural reform.

Concordat of 1925 provided legal grounds for the Greek Catholic Church's practically autonomous activity in Poland. It was able to retain its considerable material possessions, which guaranteed financial independence.

Conclusion

Andrei Sheptytskyi was born in Galicia and in many aspects was shaped by life in the Habsburg Empire. Later he became a Greek Catholic archbishop and metropolitan, during a time when relations between major national and religious groups were balanced due to complex imperial legislation and structures of power in Vienna. Several agreements, concordats between the Habsburg monarchy and the Vatican had meticulously regulated the life of his church before 1918. The Roman Curia as well as the Vatican had been interested in providing equal rights for the activity of the Catholic Churches of different rites, which cared for different national groups.

The metropolitan led an almost entirely Ukrainian church congregation, which at the beginning of the 20th century started to claim cultural and national sovereignty. As a former loyal imperial subject, he extended his support to Ukrainian claims to Eastern Galicia. His stance and activities in the years 1918–1923 were not the consequence of a rediscovered Ukrainian national identity or a manifestation of his support for Ukrainian statehood as such. His support for the Ukrainians in the Ukrainian-Polish War derived from his very broad understanding of his own pastoral mission and duties.

Sheptytskyi's defense of the rights and interests of the Ukrainian congregation before the international authorities alienated him from the leadership of the Polish state and provoked negative attitudes from the Polish public in general. His detention and negotiations with the leadership of the Polish state in 1923 for his return demonstrated the lack of official regulations of the activities of the Catholic and Greek Catholic Churches in the Polish state. These events were related to the more general issue of the relations between the Vatican and the new national states emerging after the collapse of the multinational empires.

In the new setting of the national state Sheptytskyi needed time to reassess the place and tasks for his church. The idea of subordinating the pastoral mission and activity of his church to the demands of the national state, either Ukrainian or Polish, was not acceptable to him. The metropolitan had to face a difficult challenge: to lead the Greek Catholic Church of the Ukrainian national minority within the Polish state, which he perceived as a nationalizing and

assimilating force, while at the same time facing the rise of Ukrainian nationalism with its radical tendencies. Throughout the interwar period Sheptytskyi attempted to find the right place and mission for the Greek Catholic Church, striking a balance between radical Ukrainian nationalism and Polish etatism.

Liliana Hentosh

