Chapter 8

STATE POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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I. INTRODUCTION

The new law of the Russian Federation on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations, enacted on October 1, 1997, has effectively reestablished state control over religious life in Russia and is considered an obvious setback to democracy as compared with Soviet legislation of 1990.[1] It is difficult, if not impossible, to understand why the religious legislation of the new Russia appears to be less democratic than the respective laws of the Soviet Union without taking into account the evolution of church-state relations in the other post-Soviet countries.

Ukraine, the second largest republic of the former Soviet Union, presents an interesting case for comparison with Russia as regards the development of church-state relations and religious pluralism. At the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the two republics were not very far apart in terms of the political culture of their ruling elites, and both shared a strong tradition of government control over religious life. Nevertheless, after the fall of communism, they chose somewhat different ways of dealing with the religious organizations on their respective territories. Russia adopted a law that established special relations between the state and the dominant Russian Orthodox Church while discriminating against the numerous "new" religions. Ukraine's govern-

ment, after some hesitation, refused to establish special relationships with any of the country's traditional churches and, although reluctantly, has been supporting religious pluralism on its territory.[2]

This article examines the differences in the state of religious pluralism in Russia and Ukraine by analyzing the different relationship patterns between state structures and religious organizations in the two countries. It takes as its point of departure the assumption that government policy toward religious minorities in the postcommunist countries is influenced mainly by the kind of relationship that emerges between the state authorities on the one hand and the dominant religious groups on the other. It also employs the hypothesis that the character of government policy toward the dominant churches is influenced by the character and intensity of the nation-building process that is currently under way in the Newly Independent States (NIS).

In almost all postcommunist countries, ruling elites have turned to nationalist symbols and to those religious organizations that are closely linked with national traditions in order to legitimize their regimes and broaden their power bases. The Serbian example is the most obvious one, but neither Russia nor Ukraine has completely avoided this pattern. The difference between Russia and Ukraine in that regard comes to the fore when one analyzes the attitudes of their respective governments to nationalism in general and religious nationalism in particular. If the Russian elites were able to forge a lasting alliance with the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian officials found themselves in a significantly different position. Not one but two religious communities—the Ukrainian Orthodox and Ukrainian Greek Catholic churches—sought recognition from the Ukrainian government as truly national churches. The split of the Orthodox community into three groups—two under the jurisdiction of the local religious authorities, and one under the jurisdiction of Moscow—left the ruling elite with little choice but to reject the "Russian model" of church-state relations and look for other alternatives.

II. THE POLITICS OF RELIGION IN RUSSIA

After the demise of the USSR and the rise of an independent Russian state, two competitive trends emerged in Russian religious policy. The first is represented by a younger generation of politicians who are pro-Western in orientation, want to build a free and democratic Russia, and advocate principles of religious pluralism and equal treatment of all religious groups in accordance with "international standards." The second trend is represented by nationalistically oriented politicians who include representatives of the old *nomenklatura* and members of the new Communist Party. That group is anti-Western in orientation, wants to build the new Russian state first and foremost for Russians, and insists on the granting of special rights to the Russian Orthodox Church. The

spread of Western, mostly Protestant-based, religious associations in post-Soviet Russia is viewed by the latter group as a civilizational threat, an attempt to buy out the Russian soul, and the most visible symbol of Western aggression against the humiliated Russian state that lost the Cold War.

In 1993 the Russian parliament, which by that time had been effectively transformed into a stronghold of nationalistically oriented politicians, passed a law that if enacted would have granted special status to the Russian Orthodox Church and curbed the proselytizing activities of Western religious groups in the country. At that time the pro-Western politicians around President Boris Yeltsin were strong enough to ensure that he did not approve the law. But in 1997, under different political circumstances, Boris Yeltsin was forced to sign another law that was very similar to the 1993 legislation. The new law has effectively divided religious organizations on Russian soil into two major groups. It granted special status to the Russian traditional religions headed by the Russian Orthodox Church and discriminated against the "new arrivals," especially those groups that have been registered in Russia for fewer than fifteen years. They are prohibited from opening religious schools, becoming involved in publishing activities or importing religious literature into the country.[3]

The new law in fact attempts to undo the changes that were introduced into the realm of church-state relations by Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika*. At that time, the tacit protection that had been granted earlier by the state to the Russian Orthodox Church was all but withdrawn, and the Moscow Patriarchate was left to compete on its own with its numerous rivals.[4] The Patriarchate struck back in 1997, when its leadership joined the political campaign that forced President Yeltsin to sign the law. The introduction of the new law initiated a campaign of legal and administrative discrimination against non-Orthodox churches and Orthodox rivals of the Moscow Patriarchate, and it is the Russian Orthodox bishops and clergy who have been trying to influence local authorities in the vast regions of Russia to implement the new law in such a way as to make life most difficult for the minority churches and religious groups.[5]

Since the adoption of the new law on freedom of conscience, the Moscow Patriarchate has continued its campaign of intimidation against other churches and Christian missions from the West. Metropolitan Kirill (Gundiaev) and other hierarchs of the Patriarchate have repeatedly warned the public about the dangerous character of the sects. The Patriarchate never clearly defined the term "sectarians," which is in fact is used by its spokespersons to include any religious organization except the Russian Orthodox Church itself. But even for members of the church there is no guarantee that they will not be labeled "sectarians" if they disagree with the official line of the Patriarchate.[6]

The close cooperation between the leading hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate and the state authorities in Moscow is mirrored by similar relationships on the local level. The provincial authorities often go out of their way to assist

the hierarchs and priests of the Russian Orthodox Church in fighting against their competitors. The influence of Russian Orthodox bishops may be discerned behind many actions of local authorities against Western missions and Protestant organizations in general.[7] The Moscow Patriarchate's fight against its Orthodox rivals is also conducted with the help of the state authorities. Such cooperation demonstrates that the state's real objective in the realm of church-state relations is not so much to support Orthodoxy in general as to support the Moscow Patriarchate as its main political ally.

In the opinion of Russian attorney Galina Krylova, one of the main purposes of the new law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" was to " . . . solve the problem of property ownership by religious organizations of other confessions, as well as by certain Orthodox communities which presently have the status of independent legal owners of their own property."[8]

During the last ten years the Russian Orthodox Church has gone a long way in its relations with the state. In 1987 it was still involved in bargaining with the state authorities and traded its service in the form of support for the state's national and international policies for the government's concessions to the church within the country. Following the 1988 Millennium celebrations, it continued these services to the state in the form of enthusiastic support for *perestroika*, and later its ardent opposition to the disintegration of the multinational Soviet Union. At the time of the August coup of 1991, the church leadership kept a low profile, but in 1993 it emerged as an intermediary in the struggle for power between the Russian president and the Russian parliament. By 1997, the Moscow Patriarchate considered itself strong enough to manifest its open opposition to the highest office in the country, and in fact won a decisive victory, forcing the president to sign new religious legislation. Within ten short years, the Russian Orthodox Church had transformed itself from a state-controlled structure headed by KGB informers and appointees into a powerful political actor capable of dictating its will to the Russian president.[9]

That dramatic change in the pattern of the church-state relations in Russia was caused not so much by the actions of the church itself as by a change of political climate in the country as a whole. Even today, the Moscow Patriarchate remains a relatively weak institution when it comes to its organizational structure or the number of its faithful.[10] Most of its parishes are still outside of Russia in such countries as Ukraine and Belarus.[11] Despite that organizational weakness, the role played by the Moscow Patriarchate in Russian public life has grown steadily within the last ten years. Russian Orthodoxy as an amalgam of nationalism and religion is in great demand by the authorities who are desperate to fill the ideological vacuum left after the collapse of communism and to acquire legitimacy for their corrupt rule. Whether it is the opening of a new office building or the signing of the "union treaty" with Belarus, a representative

of the Russian Orthodox Church, a parish priest or Patriarch Alexii II himself is unfailingly invited to attend the event and provide much-needed legitimacy for the undertaking.

The Russian authorities from top to bottom also need the church to boost their own ratings. As a poll conducted in 1993 shows, more Russians (51%) trust their churches than their government (29%) or their president (33%).[12] Not surprisingly, therefore, the two leading candidates in the 1996 Russian presidential elections, the incumbent President Boris Yeltsin and communist candidate Gennadii Ziuganov, both made use of religious phraseology and rhetoric in their electoral campaigns. The continuing usage of Orthodox rhetoric by communist and reform-minded politicians alike demonstrates better than anything else the importance of Orthodox symbolism in Russian political life.[13]

On the symbolic level, Russian Orthodoxy acts as an embodiment of both the traditional and the new Russia, a unique "bridge" between the prerevolutionary Russian Empire and the post-Soviet Russian Federation. The most visible symbol of this Orthodox bridge between the Russia's past and its future is the construction by Moscow mayor and presidential hopeful Yurii Luzhkov of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, which was destroyed on Stalin's orders in 1931. The Cathedral was built on the initiative of Tsar Alexander I as a symbol of gratitude to divine forces for the Russian victory over Napoleon in 1812. It took forty-four years to complete the construction. The murals and sculptures of the cathedral created in the times of Nicholas I brought together images of biblical and Russian history. The cathedral was built in a newly "rediscovered" Russian architectural style and became one of the most prominent symbols of the idea known under the name of the theory of Official Nationality. That theory proclaimed the unity of Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality in Russia.[14]

Back in the nineteenth century, the cathedral was built primarily with the help of the public funds, and that is how its reconstruction is being financed today. In this instance, it is not the national but the Moscow city government that is playing the major role in the project, and money is not taken directly from public funds but is being coerced by Luzhkov from state and private sector enterprises in return for special treatment of those businesses that cooperate with the mayor's office. The federal government is also offering its support for such business with such measures as issuing tax concessions and granting rights for oil and gas exports, as well as liquor and tobacco imports. There is little doubt that the Russian Orthodox Church is the only religious organization that could receive such government support for the reconstruction of its place of worship. The reason for government participation in the reconstruction of the Orthodox cathedral is reflected in the words of President Yeltsin, who made the following comment on the issue: "It is a Russian national place and it must be

resurrected." Thus the politics of Russian nationalism appear to be the most important factor behind official support for the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow.[15]

Another example of the important role played by the Russian Orthodoxy in the symbolic politics of Russian nationalism is the reburial of the remains of the last Russian tsar, Nicholas II, and members of his family. Unlike President Yeltsin who attended reburial of the royal remains in St. Petersburg on July 17, 1998, Patriarch Aleksii II all but ignored the event. The Russian Orthodox Church seized an opportunity to demonstrate its alleged independence from the politics of the state. The tsar's bones were first discovered in the late 1970s near the city of Yekaterinburg (in Soviet times, Sverdlovsk) in the Urals, and preparations for the reburial began immediately after the dissolution of the USSR and the creation of the new Russian state. From the very beginning, the Moscow Patriarchate was an important participant in the negotiations conducted between the representatives of the central and local governments. Its official position has been defined by an attempt to link the issue of the reburial of the tsar's family with its prospective canonization, which has resulted in endless scientific examinations of the bones and contributed significantly to numerous delays in the reburial of the remains.[16]

The Russian Orthodox Church wants to prove the authenticity of the bones "beyond reasonable doubt" in its attempt to establish itself as the sole bearer of the Russian national tradition. That role is also claimed by the Moscow Patriarchate's long-standing rival, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. The latter has been the church of the White émigrés and their descendants, who have never recognized the legitimacy of Soviet rule in Russia and have repeatedly condemned the Moscow Patriarchate for its collaboration with the communist authorities. The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has its own remains of the tsar's family, which were recovered by the White Army during the Revolution and taken abroad to be encased in the wall of the Church of Job the Long-sufferer in Brussels.[17] The authenticity of the Brussels bones was never tested by DNA analysis, but the Church Abroad canonized the tsar and his family in 1981, and now the Moscow Patriarchate faces the difficult and delicate task of taking over from its rival the role of protector of the Russian national tradition.

There is little doubt that the last ten years have witnessed the return of Russian Orthodoxy as an important element of Russian national identity. This return occurred at a time when the whole society had embarked on the project of "rediscovering" its nationality, and President Yeltsin had entrusted the Russian intellectual establishment with the task of formulating a new "Russian idea." What kind of idea this will be, and what will be the role of the Orthodoxy in its formation? There is ample evidence that the new Russian idea will include both national and religious components, and in that respect will continue the tradition established by the nineteenth-century formula of Official Nationality.

The reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour with the political and financial support of the Russian and Moscow governments makes it apparent that at least two of the three components of the Official Nationality formula, namely Orthodoxy and nationality, are strongly connected in contemporary Russia. The role of the Moscow Patriarchate in the preparations for the reburial of the last Russian tsar demonstrates that in the new Russia the recovery of historical memory of autocracy, the third component of the Official Nationality formula, is also impossible without the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church.

In contemporary Russia, the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church reflect that country's national and imperial tradition. The church is often viewed as a vehicle of Russian influence in the "near abroad" and as a legitimizing factor in any international initiative aimed at the reconstruction of the former empire. Despite some significant losses suffered by the Moscow Patriarchate since the dissolution of the USSR, the Holy Synod (the ruling body of the church) managed to preserve its "all-union" character. From that perspective, the Moscow Patriarch appears to be a much more successful player than the Russian President, who, in the eyes of Russian nationalists, while getting rid of Gorbachev, lost not only Baltic and Central Asian provinces of the USSR, but also its Slavic republics of Ukraine and Belarus. The Moscow Patriarchate, on the other hand, has strengthened its position in Belarus and, even though it lost numerous parishes to its Greek Catholic and Orthodox rivals in Ukraine, succeeded in preserving its status there as the largest religious organization in Ukraine.[18]

In Belarus, the Moscow Patriarchate has never allowed the appearance of a strong autocephalous or Uniate (Greek Catholic) movement. It has also enlisted the strong support of the authorities, especially Belarusian President Aliaksandr Lukashenka, in its struggle with the Roman Catholic Church in the western regions of the country. The head of the Belarusian exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Filaret (Vakhromeev), an ethnic Russian who does not speak or write Belarusian, has never challenged the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate in Belarus, as did his counterpart in Ukraine, Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko). He also gave his full support to the creation of the Russian-Belarusian Union, which was proclaimed by the presidents of Belarus and Russia in the spring of 1996.

The prominent presence of the Moscow Patriarch, Aleksii II, at the signing ceremony of the "unification" treaty between Russia and Belarus in April 1996, demonstrated the strong support granted by the Russian Orthodox Church to the reunification campaign. The key figures in the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate apparently share Alexander Solzhenitsyn's vision of a single East Slavic Orthodox state to be formed on the ruins of the disintegrated Soviet Union and composed of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. The idea was first ex-

pressed by Alexander Solzhenitsyn in 1990, on the eve of the dissolution of the USSR, and has its Orthodox parallel in the nostalgic vision of one indivisible Holy Rus', which in the nineteenth century included Russia, Little Russia, (Ukraine) and White Russia (Belarus.)[19]

There are numerous signs that Russian Orthodoxy has been gradually replacing Marxism-Leninism as an ideological factor in the formulation and legitimization of the Russian foreign policy in the "near abroad." This has been the case as regards Russian policy not only toward the Slavic and predominantly Orthodox Belarus and Ukraine, but also toward the other former Soviet republics. The 1997 conflict between the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates over the Orthodox communities in Estonia is one of the best examples of the unwillingness of the Russian Orthodox Church to relinquish its control over Orthodox communities in the former USSR.[20]

The decade that has passed since the liberalization of government policy on religion by Mikhail Gorbachev has brought significant changes in the status of the Russian Orthodox Church vis-à-vis the government. If Gorbachev's reconciliation with the church on the eve of its Millennium in 1998 was an expression of good will on the part of a government that wanted to improve its human-rights record abroad, Boris Yeltsin's enactment of the 1997 law was the result of a campaign of intimidation conducted by the Russian Orthodox Church that significantly damaged the democratic image of the Russian state in the West.

III. THE POLITICS OF RELIGION IN UKRAINE

In Ukraine, much of the current discussion concerning the future of the independent state has centered on the issue of nation-building. Two models of the Ukrainian state, national (the state of the "Ukrainian people") and multiethnic (the state of "the people of Ukraine,") usually serve as starting points for scholarly discussion.[21]

It is quite obvious that the future of church-state relations in Ukraine will depend heavily on the choice made by the newly independent state in its nation-building strategy. It is equally true that the religious policy of the government and the response to it on the part of organized religion will influence the process of nation-building. In the area of church-state relations, current Ukrainian governments face the dilemma of either forging an alliance with the traditional (national) churches or allowing "all flowers to bloom," with consequent equal treatment of all denominations, including those closely linked to neighboring states (especially Russia and Poland).

In Ukraine, the discussion on which road to take—whether to Ukrainize the traditional churches (Orthodox and Greek Catholic) and make them into state bodies or to abandon all hope of exploiting their nation-building potential and throw open the doors to Protestantism and its attendant spirit of capitalism—

was begun more than a century ago by Mykhailo Drahomanov.[22] That discussion is by no means over, but its subject has already entered current political debate.

In 1991 the Supreme Council of Ukraine adopted a law on religious associations that resembled the old Soviet legislation in proclaiming the complete separation of church and state, but was much more democratic than the laws previously in force. In many respects, this law could be termed a declaration of intent on the part of the state, while the historical tradition inherited by society and prevailing political circumstances impelled state functionaries toward active intervention in church affairs.[23] By August 1991, when Ukraine declared its independence, the Ukrainian churches had become deeply involved in political conflict. Each of them had its political sponsors, who in turn enjoyed church support in election campaigns, political activity, etc.

The proclamation of Ukraine's independence and the election of Leonid Kravchuk as the first president of Ukraine in December 1991 established the presidential administration as the main generator of ideas in realm of church-state relations. The government found a devoted supporter and executor of its plans in the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC), Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), who had held the Kiev metropolitanate since 1966 and was well known for his anti-Uniate and anti-autocephalist views. Moscow managed, however, to exploit tensions within the church in Ukraine, particularly the Ukrainian episcopate's dissatisfaction with Filaret, in order to remove him from the church leadership in the spring of 1992. In June of that year, with the support of the government, Filaret became one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, which he had once persecuted, and which was now renamed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP). This new church enjoyed substantial support from the government during the administration of President Leonid Kravchuk.[24] Ukraine in fact embarked on a project similar to the one under way in Russia—the creation of a quasi-state national church that would become an important element in the Ukrainian nation-building process.

The establishment of such a national church, which the Council for Religious Affairs was in fact bringing about, resulted in the government defense of the UOC-KP not only against its Orthodox competitors, but against those of other denominations as well. In its claim to be the only national church of Ukraine the UOC-KP faced a serious competition on the part of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, destroyed by Stalin in 1946–49 but restored in Western Ukraine in 1988–90 as part of the national revival in that part of Ukraine. The state generally tended to ignore the existence of that church and was very reluctant to grant it any significant role in the nation-building project during the Kravchuk administration. One of the signs of this was the lack of Ukrainian diplomatic representation at the Vatican. Even the Directory (a short-lived

Ukrainian government in 1919–20) had proceeded to establish its mission at the Holy See.

Another symptom of government's double standard in the treatment of the traditional churches of Ukraine was its complete passivity in the matter of winning recognition of a Greek Catholic Patriarchate. Even though several prominent representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora made personal appeals to President Kravchuk, arguing that the establishment of a patriarchate would serve the purposes of state policy concerning the need for an independent church in a sovereign state, the government remained entirely passive on the question. This passivity is particularly striking when compared with the government's active support for Orthodox autocephaly and the Orthodox Kiev Patriarchate. In a certain sense, the religious policy of President Kravchuk even favored Roman Catholics over Greek Catholics, according in that respect with the Vatican's official line. Thus one national church, the Greek Catholic, was denied support, while another, the UOC-KP, was generously showered with it.[25]

The roots of that policy should be sought in the close alliance between the authorities and the Orthodox hierarchy, especially Metropolitan Filaret. He (not without reason) regarded the Greek Catholics as his competitors, in the traditional suspicion with which Uniates had been treated in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, and in the official policy of the creation of a state church that was to be exclusively Orthodox.

The election of Leonid Kuchma as the new president of Ukraine in the summer of 1994 had a significant impact on church-state relations in Ukraine. The "church question" came to Leonid Kuchma's attention during his first days in office. It is worth noting that the presidential decree on the liquidation of the Committee for Religious Affairs—the symbol of active state intervention in the affairs of religious associations—was signed on the same day (July 26, 1994) as the decree appointing the head of the presidential administration. The committee was replaced by a ministry with an awkward designation—the Ministry for Nationalities, Migration and Cults.[26] The date of the signing of the decree and the poorly conceived name of the new ministry (an observer, commenting on the word "cults," noted that at least "superstitions" had not been used instead) testify to the hastiness of the decision and the new administration's desire to dissociate itself from the policy introduced by its predecessor.[27]

The new government almost immediately demonstrated its support for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). The change in religious policy was predetermined by the main provisions of the presidential administration's broader policy on questions of nationality, culture, and language. That policy was governed by the basic postulates of Leonid Kuchma's electoral program and the circumstances of his struggle for the presidency with the incumbent, Leonid Kravchuk. The organizers of the Kravchuk campaign, seeking to distract voter attention from eco-

nomic problems and government inaction on economic reform, staked their fortunes on the national question. During the campaign, Kravchuk was represented as the sole guarantor of Ukrainian independence, which would be surrendered to Moscow in the event of Kuchma's coming to power.

The accession of Leonid Kuchma, the dissolution of the pro-Filaret Committee for Religious Affairs, and the administration's new course in the area of church-state relations greatly worsened relations between the state and the UOC-KP, creating a strained and explosive situation in that area. The incident that sparked the transformation of the "cold war" into a "hot" one was the dispute between the government and the church over the place of interment of the patriarch of the UOC-KP, Volodymyr (Romaniuk), on July 18, 1995. In fact, the incident was provoked by the ongoing rivalry between the UOC-KP and the UOC-MP for control over the sacred sites of Kiev, the most eminent of which was St. Sophia Cathedral, which remained under state ownership.[28]

The struggle between the different Orthodox jurisdictions was waged not so much for buildings as for sacred places—symbols of Kievan Christianity, that is, for the spiritual heritage of Kiev and, accordingly, for the legitimacy of this or that church. Among the potential claimants to Sophia, in addition to the Orthodox churches, one should mention the Greek Catholic Church, whose late patriarch, Cardinal Yosyf Slipyi, had asked in his will to be buried at the cathedral. In the autumn of 1993, members of a new denomination, the White Brotherhood, headed by their living god, Maria Devi Khrystos (Maryna Tsvyhun), attempted to seize St. Sophia. But the main battle for that holy place took place between the Kiev and Moscow Patriarchates. On July 18, 1995, a day that came to be known as Black Tuesday, government units dispersed the funeral procession of supporters of the Kievan Patriarchate who had attempted to bury their late patriarch, Volodymyr (Romaniuk), on the territory of St. Sophia, thereby securing it for their own church.

The conflict at St. Sophia ended in tragedy and a resounding scandal that undermined the prestige of the government and the presidential administration. For the first time in Ukraine, which had attained independence bloodlessly and was justly proud of its tolerant practices, blood had been shed and brute force applied.[29] It was probably no accident that such a conflict occurred at the gates of St. Sophia, a cathedral that bears important symbolic meaning for proponents of both Russian and Ukrainian nationalism. At the origin of the conflict between the two nationalisms lies a historical controversy over the rights to the heritage of Kievan Rus', which is currently claimed not only by Russians and Ukrainians, but also by Belarusians.

For the Moscow Patriarchate, the St. Sophia Cathedral is one of the major symbols of the historical "Holy Rus' " and the idea of the unity of the three East Slavic peoples. For the Kiev Patriarchate, possession of the St. Sophia Cathedral means ultimate victory for the Ukrainian claim to the spiritual heri-

tage of Kievan Rus'. That deep symbolic meaning of the St. Sophia Cathedral for Ukrainian nationalism in general and religious nationalism in particular contributed to the fact that the Kiev Patriarchate's procession to the cathedral was led by former President Leonid Kravchuk himself, as well as by many leaders of the Ukrainian nationalist and national-democratic parties. The government, for its part, has preferred to keep St. Sophia under its own control, rejecting the claims to it made by individual churches and keeping it within its own jurisdiction as a reward that it will transfer to the church in the event of its unification.

Kiev has its own version of Moscow's Christ the Saviour Cathedral reconstruction project. That is a reconstruction of the Cathedral of St. Michael Golden Domes in the center of the city. The cathedral, which was destroyed by the Soviet authorities in the 1930s, dates back to the times of Kievan Rus, and once rebuilt will be destined to serve as a symbol of reborn Ukrainian Christianity. The reconstruction project began under President Kravchuk and continues under President Kuchma, but there is little hope that it will play the same unifying symbolic role in the politics of Ukrainian nationalism as the Moscow Cathedral is playing in the politics and symbolism of Russian nationalism. During the period of intense conflict between Leonid Kravchuk and the Kuchma administration that followed "Black Tuesday," both politicians made public their perceptions of the events of that tragic day and their views of the model of church-state relations required for the good of Ukraine. Leonid Kravchuk was the first to do so. He blamed the government for the tragedy that had taken place, asserting that the reason for the conflict was the refusal of the authorities to work together with the national church, which was an important factor in the rise of Ukrainian national consciousness and nation-building. Leonid Kuchma, on the other hand, identified the provocative actions of the nationalists and church officials who had tried to drive the government into an impasse as the factor primarily responsible for the tragedy. He noted that granting permission to inter the patriarch on the grounds of St. Sophia would have worsened the government's relations with the other churches and contravened the policy of official noninterference in church affairs.[30]

Thus the principal burden of Kravchuk's statement was a defense of official intervention in church affairs for the purpose of state-building and support of the national cause. Kuchma, on the other hand, stressed the principle of the separation of church and state. The two statements reflected opposing views of the problem and were more in the nature of political declarations than practical suggestions for resolving the complex questions of church-state relations. After all, it is public knowledge that in the last months of his presidency Leonid Kravchuk established good relations with Filaret's most powerful competitor, the UOC-MP. And the Kuchma administration, for its part, initiated virtually

open warfare with the UOC-KP following the events of "Black Tuesday" and its declarations of noninterference.

Clearly, it was this "flexibility" in resolving practical questions of church-state relations that allowed both political forces to achieve a compromise in the first half of 1996 in order to attain their common goal, the adoption of a new Ukrainian constitution. The government discontinued its pressure on the UOC-KP, while the latter, in the person of Patriarch Filaret and his political allies, renounced its antigovernment propaganda and withdrew the demand for the establishment of a state-sponsored Orthodox church (which the UOC-KP was to have become under a new patriotic government). Thus was the grave of Patriarch Volodymyr put in order as a result of the reconciliation of former enemies, the reanimation of old political alliances, and a change in the orientation of presidential policy on questions of culture, nationality, and religion. Thus for the first time since the declaration of Ukrainian independence did the government renounce a policy of confrontation and enter into a dialogue with the two largest Ukrainian Orthodox churches.

The abrupt turns in government policy toward the Ukrainian Orthodox churches under presidents Kravchuk and Kuchma had a direct impact on the official attitude toward Protestants and "new" religions in Ukraine in general. Initially the semiofficial attitude of the government—that there was to be an independent church in a sovereign state—also served to define the main lines of official policy toward Protestants and representatives of other nontraditional churches in Ukraine. On the one hand, the government attempted to make the administrative centers of those churches independent of Moscow, a goal that it more or less effectively achieved;[31] on the other hand, it was open to pressure from the Orthodox hierarchs who were its allies and who demanded resolute measures against the flood of missionaries entering Ukraine from the West.

The Moscow Patriarchate demanded similar measures from the government of Russia. Because of international public protests against changes in Russian legislation, measures to limit the activity of foreign missionaries in Russia were blocked by President Yeltsin in 1993. In Ukraine, however, such legislative changes were made almost unnoticed by the end of the same year. There was virtually no protest against them, as the amendments were adopted by parliament following the attempt of members of the White Brotherhood to seize the St. Sophia Cathedral in the autumn of 1993, which was widely featured in the media.[32]

It was generally considered that the discriminatory changes in legislation were directed against Russia, whence most of the "brothers" had come to Ukraine, and they did not lead to any noticeable restrictions on the activity of Western missionaries. As in the past, those missionaries could preach freely in Ukraine and buy time on radio and television, competing only with the officially

supported UOC-KP in terms of hours of air time. Since the last decades of the nineteenth century, Ukraine has been part of the "Bible belt" first of the Russian Empire and later of the USSR. Many Protestant organizations, including numerous Baptist and Pentecostal communities active in the USSR, had their origins in Ukrainian soil, and Ukrainian ministers played leading roles in all-Union Protestant organizations prior to the collapse of the USSR.

The much deeper historical roots of Protestantism in Ukraine as compared to Russia, as well as the larger percentage of adherents of Protestant teachings among the population in general, the different makeup of the Ukrainian religious landscape, and the pro-Western orientation of many segments of Ukrainian population all significantly contribute to the fact that Protestants in general and Western missions in particular are viewed in Ukraine with less animosity than in Russia. One of the major indicators of the sociological climate that surrounds Protestants in Ukraine is the role of the "Protestant" factor in Ukrainian politics in general and elections in particular. Significant interest demonstrated by various political parties in the Protestant vote and the participation of protestants in Ukrainian politics at the highest levels are evidence of general tolerance of the Protestant churches in predominantly Orthodox Ukraine.[33]

IV. CONCLUSION: NATION-BUILDING AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The current revival of religion in the former USSR cannot be explained only by the end of the persecution of religion by the atheist state or by the ideological vacuum left by the collapse of communist ideology. The religious revival in the former Soviet republics should be viewed as the result of at least two important processes that are currently under way in the post-Soviet countries: first, the dramatic social and economic changes caused by the collapse of the state-run economy and the advance of capitalism, and second, the development of nation-building projects.

The "first advent" of capitalism on the territory of the Russian Empire took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was so rapid and dramatic in character that it undermined the imperial social system and eventually brought about the Russian Revolution. The "second advent," which began in the late 1980s, has also resulted in the dramatic growth of social tensions. It is also closely linked in the eyes of former Soviet citizens with the West, and consequently with Western missionaries, the only Westerners whom the majority of post-Soviets have ever seen.

The missionaries, who are bringing the "spirit of capitalism" to Russia along with their teachings, are also perceived as a major threat to the traditional churches, which remain very weak, unreformed, and unadapted to the new circumstances after decades of communist control. The traditional churches

are unable to satisfy the spiritual needs of the post-Soviet public, which is largely secularized, disoriented, and threatened by dramatic social change. As a rule, the traditional churches refuse to reform, seek protection from the state, and play the nationalist card to maintain their dominant position in the rapidly changing society.

Nationalism and religion, as well as religious nationalism as a product of their interaction, have become important factors in the search for a new identity in the post-Soviet republics. Those republics that belong to the world of "Slavia Orthodoxa" turned to the Orthodox tradition and its institutional embodiment, the Orthodox Church, as an important factor in the creation of their new national identities. The missionary activity of Western Protestant groups has been viewed in that context as a serious threat to the core element in the new nation-building process, and the state in the countries of "Slavia Orthodoxa" has generally supported the traditional Orthodox churches, protecting them against their Western rivals in return for Orthodox participation in the state's nation-building projects.

Government support for traditional Orthodox churches differs from one country to another, and the cases of Russia and Ukraine well demonstrate the nature of those differences. Why does Ukraine appear much more pluralistic when it comes to religious policy than neighboring Russia? A number of answers to this question are possible, although it is the conclusion of this author that the weakness of Ukrainian ethnic nationalism, which has been recently called "a minority faith,"[34] as well as the fragmentation of the Ukrainian religious community, has caused the Ukrainian elites to look beyond ethnic and religious nationalism while searching for a new ideology to legitimize their rule. Those factors have also made Ukrainian elites less receptive to the lobbying of the dominant religious organizations. The Russian elites, on the contrary, while depending on the moral and political support of the one national church, found themselves extremely vulnerable to any pressure from its leadership and were forced to enact a law that openly discriminates against minority religions and new religious organizations.

ENDNOTES

1. For an assessment of the new Russian law On Freedom of conscience and Religious Associations, *see* Lauren B. Homer, Law and Liberty Trust Written Testimony Before the Helsinki Commission Regional Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, December 1997 (News about Religion in Russia ("*NRR*") http://www.stetson. edu/~psteeves/relnews); Galina A. Krylova, *On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations. Juridical Overview of the New Russian Federal Law,* NRR , January 22, 1998)

2. For an assessment of the current status of religious freedom in Russia and Ukraine, *see* the U.S. State Department Report, United States Policies in Sup-

PORT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: CHRISTIANS http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/970722_relig_rpt_christian. html.

3. For an English translation of the law, *see* NRR website above, at http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews/svobodasovesti1709eng.html

4. *See* Nathaniel Davis, A LONG WALK TO CHURCH. A CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY 215–17 (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1995).

5. For a list of discriminatory acts against minority religions, *see* Mark Elliot, *The Impact of the 1997 Russian Law on Religion*, vol. 5, no. 4 EAST-WEST CHURCH MINISTRY REPORT 6 (1997).

6. In February 1998, the Patriarchate-controlled radio station RADONEZH declared one parish of the church a "totalitarian sect" because its priest celebrated services in modern Russian rather than in Church-Slavonic. *See* Anatolii Pchelintsev's commentary in RADIOTSEKOV (*NRR*, February 13, 1998).

7. In Kemerovo, the Christian "Gideons" mission was not allowed to continue its work in a number of local schools after the school administration began to cooperate with the Orthodox Church. (*See* Vadim Akentiev's report in RADIOTSEKOV (*NRR*, January 7, 1998). In Samara, as a result of close cooperation between the Orthodox Church and the local Department of Internal Affairs, practically every penal institution in the region got an Orthodox church or chapel. The Orthodox priests in fact replaced the "sectarians," who were the first to start working in the prisons. (*See Samara: Initsiativa v. mestakh lisheniia svobody perekhodit ot sektantov k pravoslavnym* BLAGOVEST INFO/PRAVOSLAVIE V ROSSII (*NRR*, January 21, 1998). In Khabarovsk, two Protestant groups lost their premises for holding services in the local hospital as a result of the interference of the Orthodox bishop Mark. The bishop went on record stating that "sectarians" were befuddling people and leading society to destruction. A Russian, in his view, was obliged to embrace a truly "Russian faith." (*See* Oleg Chernyi's report in RADIOTSEKOV (*NRR*, January 26, 1998). On the role of an Orthodox priest in the state persecution of Baptist group in Smolensk region *see* Liliia Solomonova's report in RADIOTSEKOV (*NRR*, August 13, 1998).

8. *See* Galina A. Krylova, above n. 1. Numerous actions taken by the authorities against Orthodox communities under the jurisdiction of the Kievan Patriarchate and the Russian Church Abroad demonstrate that is exactly how the new law is being used by the authorities against the Orthodox rivals of the Moscow Patriarchate. In late September 1997, on the eve of the enactment of the new law on religion, the local authorities in the city of Noginsk (50 km. from Moscow) transferred the Epiphany Cathedral from Archbishop Adrian of the Kiev Patriarchate to the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate. The police officers who took part in the action used brutal force to take control over the cathedral. (*See* Rostislav Khotin, *Ukraine Protests to Russia over Seized Church*, REUTERS, October 7, 1997). In October 1997, the authorities in Riazan transferred the local Church of the Epiphany from the congregation of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to the congregation formed by the Moscow Patriarchate. *See* Mark Elliott, above n. 5.

9. On the politics of religion in Russia, *see* Stephen White and Ian McAllister, *The Politics of Religion in Postcommunist Russia*, 25 (3) RELIGION, STATE AND SOCIETY 235–52 (1997); John Anderson, RELIGION, STATE AND POLITICS IN THE SOVIET

Union and Successor States 194–98 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jane Ellis, The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness 122–203 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

10. According to a 1994 Radio Free Europe survey, only 39% of Russians considered themselves religious, only 6% attended church on a regular basis, and only 4% had strong religious beliefs. (*See* Kevin Boyle and Juliet Sheen [eds.] Freedom of Religion and Belief. A World Report 374 (London: Routledge, 1997). According to a 1996 poll, roughly 55% of respondents identified themselves as believers, and only 51% of those as adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church. *See* Edwin Bacon, *The Church and Politics in Russia: A Case Study of the 1996 Presidential Elections* 25 (3) Religion, State and Society 253 (1997). Some experts claim that there are more practicing Muslims in Russia than practicing Orthodox Christians. *See* Pchelintsev, above n. 6.

11. In 1994, after the Moscow Patriarchate had lost thousands of its former parishes to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox churches, it still had more parishes in Ukraine than in Russia: 5,700 compared to 5,200. (*See* Nathaniel Davis, above n. 110). In 1997, there were 7,357 registered parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, while the Russian Embassy in the U.S. continued to report "over 5,000" parishes in Russia. (*See Relihiini orhanizatsii v. Ukraini stanom na 1 sichnia 1998 roku* vol. 1 Liudyna i Svit 24 (1998); Official Web Site of the Embassy of the Russian Federation: http://www.russianembassy.org/civil-code.html.

12. *See* White and McAllister, above n. 9, 240. A survey conducted in summer of 1996, on the eve of the presidential elections in Russia, showed that 41 % of respondents "fully trusted" the church. *See* Bacon, above n. 10, 253.

13. For the role of religion in the 1996 presidential elections in Russia *see* Bacon, above n. 10.

14. On the origins of the theory of Official Nationality *see* Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825–55 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959).

15. *See* Kathleen E. Smith, *An Old Cathedral for a New Russia: The Symbolic Politics of the Reconstituted Church of Christ the Saviour* 25 (2) Religion, State and Society 163–75 (1997).

16. *See* the text of the Decision of the Holy Synod on the "Yekaterinburg Remains" of February 26, 1998 at the Official Web Site of the Moscow Patriarchate: http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru/en. htm.

17. On the reaction of the Moscow patriarchate to the claims of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad *see* Maksim Shevchenko, *Pozitsiia RPTs*, Pravoslavie v Rossii (*NRR*, February 13, 1998). On the burial of the tsar *see* Besik Pipiia, *Rossiia provodila v poslednii put svoego poslednego imperatora*, Nezavisimaia Gazeta (July 18, 1998).

18. On the policies of the Moscow Patriarchate in the former Soviet republics, *see* John B. Dunlop, *The Russian Orthodox Church as an 'Empire-Saving' Institution*, in Michael Bourdeaux (ed.), The Politics of Religion in russia and the New States of Eurasia 15–40 (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe1995).

19. *See* Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Rebuilding Russia. Reflections and Tentative Proposals (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991).

20. For the history of the jurisdictional conflict between the Constantinople and Moscow patriarchates, *see* Serge Keleher, *Orthodox Rivalry in the Twentieth Century: Moscow versus Constantinople*, 25 (2) RELIGION, STATE AND SOCIETY 125–37 (1997).

21. For a discussion of nation-building in post-1991 Ukraine, *see* Alexander J. Motyl, DILEMMAS OF INDEPENDENCE: UKRAINE AFTER TOTALITARIANISM (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993); Dominique Arel, *Ukraine: The Temptation of the Nationalizing State*, in Vladimir Tismaneanu (ed.), POLITICS, CULTURE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN RUSSIA AND THE NEW STATES OF EURASIA 157–88 (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995); Andrew Wilson, UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM IN 1990S: A MINORITY (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Frank E. Sysyn, *Ukrainian "Nationalism": A Minority Faith?* 10 (2) HARRIMAN REVIEW 12–20 (1997). On problems of church-state relations and religious tolerance in Ukraine, *see* David Little, UKRAINE: THE LEGACY OF INTOLERANCE (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1991); Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, *The Politics of Religion in Ukraine: The Orthodox and the Greek Catholics*, in Michael Bourdeaux (ed.), THE POLITICS OF RELIGION IN RUSSIA AND THE NEW STATES OF EURASIA 144–50 (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1995), and my article *Nezalezhna Ukraina: derzhavna tserkva chy hromadians'ka relihiia?* 2–3 PAMIATKY UKRAINY 3–6 (1992).

22. On the place of Protestantism in Mykhailo Drahomanov's political plans, *see* Ivan L. Rudnytsky, ESSAYS IN MODERN UKRAINIAN HISTORY 212–14 (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987).

23. *See* the text of the law *On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations* (25 Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainskoi RSR) (1991). For English translations of the all-Union and Russian Federation laws on freedom of conscience, *see* Igor Troianovsky (ed.), RELIGION IN THE SOVIET REPUBLICS: A GUIDE TO CHRISTIANITY, JUDAISM, ISLAM, BUDDHISM AND OTHER RELIGIONS 19–37 (San Francisco: Harper, 1991).

24. *See* Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, above n. 21. On developments within the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, *see* Frank Sysyn, *The Russian Sobor and the Rejection of Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephaly*, UKRAINIAN WEEKLY (Jersey City, NJ) July 26, 1996; Serhii Plokhii, *Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephaly and Metropolitan Filaret*, UKRAINIAN WEEKLY (Jersey City, NJ) August 2, 1992.

25. On the issue of the Greek Catholic patriarchate, *see* my article *Between Moscow and Rome: Struggle for the Greek Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine*, 37 JOURNAL OF CHURCH AND STATE 849–68 (1995).

26. RADIO FREE EUROPE LISTING, July 28, 1994.

27. On the role of the "church question" in the presidential election, *see* Viktor Yelensky, *Tserkva i derzhava: seredyna 1994 r.*, UKRAINA I SVIT (Toronto), July 20–26, 1994, at 11.

28. On the struggle between the Orthodox churches over the sacred sites of Kiev, *see* my article, *Kyiv vs. Moscow: The Autocephalous Movement in Independent Ukraine*, vol. 9, nos. 1–2 HARRIMAN REVIEW 32–7 (1996).

29. On the opening of a criminal investigation into the mysterious death of Patriarch Volodymyr, *see* NEZAVISIMOST (Kiev), 28 July 1995. For the reaction of national-democratic forces to the events of "Black Tuesday," *see* letters and information about

the beating of participants in the funeral procession in MOLOD UKRAINY (Kiev), July 25 and 27, 1995.

30. *See* Leonid Kuchma's commentary on the events of "Black Tuesday" in HOLOS UKRAINY (Kiev), July 27, 1995.

31. On the status of the Protestant churches in Ukraine, *see* Vasyl Markus, *Politics and Religion in Ukraine: In Search of a New Pluralistic Dimension*, in Bourdeaux, above n. 18, 169–77.

32. Amendments and addenda to Ukraine's law *On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations* were introduced by resolution of the Supreme Council of Ukraine on December 23, 1993. On the activity of the White Brotherhood and the "living god" Maryna Tsyhun, *see* Oleksandr Skoryna, *Zhyttia v. borh i zhyttia na znyshchennia*, UKRAINSKA HAZETA (Kiev) nos. 19, 20 (1993); Vladimir Skachko, *Boginia rodilas' v. Donetske, a mozhet sest' v. Kieve*, ZERKALO NEDELI March 11, 1995. The brotherhood's attempts to seize the St. Sophia Cathedral and the arrest of its leaders were also reported in the foreign press, *e.g.* Malcolm Gray, *Kiev's Cult of Doom*, MACLEAN'S November 22, 1993, 32–3.

33. In the 1994 presidential election, one of the leading candidates for the office, the Kiev businessman Valerii Babych, made no secret of being a Protestant. He did not win the office, but there hardly was any negative attitude on the part of the voters in connection with his religious affiliation. In the 1998 parliamentary elections one of the electoral blocs, "Hromada," led by the former prime minister, Pavlo Lazarenko, enjoyed the support of the majority of Protestant congregations in the country. Some of the Protestant leaders, including the vice-president of the Donetsk Bible Institute, Oleksander Zaiats, were included on the electoral lists of "Hromada." It has been also reported that one of Lazarenko's aides, Volodymyr Shushkevych, has become a pastor in the "Word of Life" charismatic congregation in the Eastern Ukrainian town of Torez. *See* Svetlana Stepanenko's report in RADIOTSEKOV (*NRR*, February 21, 1998).

34. *See* Wilson, above n. 21.