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The Uniate Church and the Partitions of Poland: Religious Survival in an Age of Enlightened Absolutism*

LARRY WOLFF

INTRODUCTION: DISUNION WITHIN THE UNION

“We are experiencing disunion within the Union itself,” observed Iason Smohozhevs’kyi (Jason Smogorzewski), the Uniate archbishop of Polatsk (Połock), in May 1774. “The body of the Uniates is split into so many completely different parts, and subject to diverse heads.”¹ In fact, the aspects of disunion were manifold. Principally, there was the very recent shock of the first partition of Poland in 1772, which transformed the Union all at once from a religious phenomenon of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to an international Church in the Russian and Habsburg empires, as well as in the remains of the Commonwealth. The Uniates were now subject to the “crowned heads” of Catherine, Maria Theresa, Joseph, and Stanisław August. At the same time, the lines of ecclesiastical authority within the Uniate Church were “split,” as the demarcations of partition fragmented the domain of the metropolitanate without corresponding to the diocesan boundaries. Smohozhevs’kyi was now a subject of Catherine II and already knew he was cut off from the authority of the metropolitan across the border in Poland. When Smohozhevs’kyi himself became metropolitan in the 1780s and left Russia behind him, he would be similarly severed from his former diocese of Polatsk. In 1774, however, there

* This study is dedicated to the memory of Omeljan Pritsak, my professor when I was an undergraduate student at Harvard in the 1970s; he was always a source of profoundly erudite guidance and generous encouragement to me as a scholar, and especially for the research and writing of this study of the Uniate Church. I am also grateful for the suggestions, advice, encouragement and criticism of John-Paul Himka, David Frick, Barbara Skinner, and Virginia Reinburg.

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was also disunion within the Uniate hierarchy (as Smohozhevskyi well knew, for he had vainly attempted to mediate), and disputed authority among some of the bishops had reached such a heat that they raided each other's ecclesiastical properties while posting furious accusations and counteraccusations to the Vatican. Although that divisive struggle was, to a certain extent, the product of highly particular personalities and circumstances, there was nothing accidental about the mounting fundamental tensions between the privileged and prosperous Basilian order of Uniate monks and the downtrodden secular clergy who attended to the parish flocks. All these factors of "disunion within the Union" were especially debilitating at a time when the Uniates faced the most grave external pressures as well: the nationalizing pressure of enlightened states and the proselytizing pressure of rival religions.

Smohozhevskyi carried himself very carefully in May 1774, and, right after noting the problem of "diverse heads," he recorded the celebration of Catherine's birthday (2 May) in his own church, followed by a dinner in his own home. That same first week of May ended with the festival of St. Stanisław, which the archbishop also celebrated until midnight in honor of his patron and former sovereign, the king of Poland. He obtained Russian official permission for this party, and, hoping that no one would be offended by his marking of the occasion, he included important local Russians on the guest list. When Smohozhevskyi designated the splitting of the "body of the Uniates" he was probably conscious of the implied analogy between the religious body of his Church and the political body of partitioned Poland. Throughout the last quarter of the eighteenth century their fates would obviously be analogous and, at the same time, quite subtly interrelated. The Uniate archbishop, who had just the week before celebrated the festival of a Roman Catholic saint in an Orthodox state, could have contemplated the political implications of the eleventh-century martyrdom of St. Stanisław—his body dismembered and then miraculously recomposed. Yet, if Smohozhevskyi meditated on miracles, he was nevertheless an ecclesiastical statesman fully attuned to the pragmatic implications of worldly politics for religious affairs. First as archbishop of Polatsk under Russian rule after 1772, and then as the Uniate metropolitan in the Commonwealth from 1779 until his death in 1788, Smohozhevskyi confronted perhaps more directly and comprehensively than any other Uniate leader the changing political circumstances that followed the first partition of Poland. His perspective on Uniate disunion will serve as the focus for this analysis of the Uniate Church in the age of the Polish partitions.

The last quarter of the eighteenth century constitutes an historically coherent period in the history of the Uniate Church, albeit a coherence of disunion. This periodization rests on the chronological framework of the Polish partitions, for it was the dramatic international and political changes of 1772, 1793, and 1795 that conditioned the cultural and religious crisis of the Uniates. The founding of

the Uniate Church at the Union of Brest of 1596 occurred under the sovereignty and sponsorship of the Commonwealth; the period from Poland's humiliation in 1772 to Poland's elimination in 1795 witnessed the weaning of the Uniates from their fundamentally Polish political framework and, ultimately, the cutting of their connection to the Commonwealth. At the same time this was the age of the French Revolution in which the ancien régime of early modern Europe faced the rumblings of modernity, and the Uniate Church was no exception in its experience of transitional development at this historical juncture. Recent historical scholarship on the Uniates has included an important new account of the Union of 1596, *Crisis and Reform* by Borys Gudziak, published in 1998, and a similarly significant revisionist study of the Uniates in the nineteenth century, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine* by John-Paul Himka, published in 1999. Most recently, in 2005, Barbara Skinner has published a pathbreaking article, "Borderlands of Faith," evaluating the religious tensions between Orthodox and Uniates in the 1760s.² The crucial period of transition from the early modern establishment of the Union in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to the modern national development of the Uniates in Ukraine occurred in the late eighteenth century, the age of the Polish partitions.

The Uniate Church was dramatically affected by the unprecedented instability of political geography caused by the partitions, as territories changed sovereignty according to the diplomatic negotiations of the partitioning powers. The Uniate Church measured its fragmentation in dioceses, and already in 1772 those of Lviv and Przemyśl (Peremyshl) were of the portion assigned to Austria, whereas the archbishopric of Polatsk lay in the lands of Belarus claimed by Catherine II. The division of the Church among three different sovereignties—Austrian, Russian, and Polish—was traumatic enough in view of the fact that the whole history of the Uniates to that point was barely conceivable apart from the sponsorship of the Commonwealth. In 1793 and 1795, however, when the Commonwealth ceased to exist altogether, the dioceses of Volodymyr, Lutsk, Chełm (Kholm), Kam'ianets, Pinsk, and Brest, as well as the metropolitan diocese of Kyiv, found themselves in either Russia or Austria—with additional bits gratuitously assigned to Prussia, including the important Basilian monastery at Supraśl.

This unstable geopolitical base created in itself serious problems of ecclesiastical adaptation, but in fact the partitioners' appropriation of dioceses was really the most straightforward aspect of the Uniate circumstances. Changing sovereignties brought with them radically disruptive eighteenth-century intrusions of state upon Church, in both Austria and Russia, while the whole period also was punctuated by intervals of potent pressure at the parish level to leave the Union altogether. These disturbances occurred not only in the newly annexed lands of Orthodox Russia, but also in the Poland of Stanisław August, where Catherine II retained a dominant influence after 1772. At the close of each interval, however, when

pressure to apostatize was lifted, there was a return to the fold of the Union. In addition to this periodic ebb and flow between Orthodoxy and Union, there also were those Uniates who chose to escape that alternative by anchoring themselves somewhat more stably in the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican itself officially disapproved of this “transit” from the Union, but Rome’s effective control over ecclesiastical activities in the relevant regions was distinctly limited. Such a high degree of religious motility on the parish level, set in the context of the diocesan rearrangements dictated by the partitions, made of the Uniate Church in the late eighteenth century something virtually kaleidoscopic in its divisions, variations, and permutations.

The problems and pressures that the Uniates experienced under Russian sovereignty after 1772, and also in Poland as a consequence of Russian influence, guaranteed that nineteenth-century Church historians would make their accounts into chronicles of persecution, forced apostasy, and martyrdom, inevitably reminding their readers of the suffering and survival of the early Christians. Edward Likowski, a professor at the Roman Catholic seminary in Poznań, wrote thus of the death of Catherine II in 1796: “The eternal Judge called her to the justice of His judgment seat so that she might account for the rivers of blood and tears that flowed during her reign from millions of Uniates, solely on account of their religious conviction.”³ Iulian Pelesh, the rector of the Uniate seminary in Vienna and ultimately a Uniate bishop, attributed the misfortunes of the Uniates to “the hellish arts of a Catherine or a Nicholas.”⁴ The nineteenth-century works of Likowski and Pelesh remain important for any twentieth-century historical study of the eighteenth-century Uniate Church, but they take for granted certain historiographical perspectives that in fact may be anachronistically inappropriate for interpreting the period in question.

The demonological reference to Catherine’s “hellish arts” might be noted as hyperbolic, along with the rivers of blood and tears, but more subtly problematic is Likowski’s interpretation of the persecution of the Uniates—“solely on account of their religious conviction”—especially taken together with the casual conflation by Pelesh of the reigns and aims of Catherine II and Nicholas I. It was Tsar Nicholas who finally and decisively did away with the Uniate Church in the Russian Empire in 1839, and Likowski and Pelesh in the later nineteenth century, interpreting Catherine II in the light of her grandson, stressed religious and also nationalist motivations. The late eighteenth century, however, must be taken on its own historiographical terms, and not invested anachronistically with the modern spirit of mingled religion and nationalism. For if Catherine II, with her generally irreligious inclinations, is interpreted as a Russian Orthodox crusader, then it becomes difficult to appreciate the characteristic responses of the enlightened absolutist state to the issue of religious diversity.

The historian must refrain from fitting eighteenth-century developments into

a schema of tragic destiny that depends on hindsight instead of history: Nicholas I at the end of every vista, with Stalin lurking behind him. The extraordinary resurgence (as the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church) of the Uniate Church in Ukraine in the 1990s may serve as a caution against any unilineal or determinist perspective on Uniate history, and a reminder that political upheaval, as in the 1790s, may have volatile religious consequences. Taking the eighteenth century on its own terms yields a distinctive historiographical agenda with a set of interrelated arguments. First, the consequences of the Polish partitions for the Uniate Church did not develop as part of a grand design, but, quite the contrary, were the improvised responses, within the Uniate Church and without, to the unprecedented shock of the partitions. Second, though Catherine became the “hellish” nemesis of the Uniates, while Maria Theresa and Joseph II were hailed as its beneficent patrons and saviors, in fact the divergent Austrian and Russian approaches to the Uniate Church grew out of startlingly similar principles: the characteristic enlightened (“Josephinist”) intervention of the state in Church affairs. Third, while hindsight may reveal Russian Orthodoxy as the mortal enemy of the Uniate Church, late eighteenth-century Uniates, even within the Russian Empire, were often at least equally apprehensive about the possibly aggressive intentions of Roman Catholicism, especially of the Polish hierarchy and the not quite suppressed Jesuit order.

Finally, one finds in the Uniate Church of the late eighteenth century not so much the utterly committed self-certainty of the early Christians who embraced their martyrdoms, but rather a profound crisis of identity that reflected the “disunion in the Union.” There was religious ambivalence in every stratum of the Uniate Church—the bishops, the Basilians, the parish priests, the local laity—and also uncertainty from without, as outsiders—Russian and Polish, Orthodox and Roman—consulted their own interests in seeking to identify a religious community as it wrestled with the dilemma of identifying itself. Those intervals during which hundreds of Uniate parishes left the Union and then returned again, back and forth, according to the pressures of the moment, made the issue of identity all the more urgent to contemporaries—and it remains similarly challenging to historians. This study seeks to outline the historical problems in their eighteenth-century dimensions, especially as perceived within the Uniate hierarchy and in correspondence with the Vatican. It also is important to emphasize the need for further research on many of these problems, especially on Catherine’s religious policy, as reflected in the Russian archives, and on the social history of the religious and community life of the Uniate populations.

“In truth,” observed Smohozhevs’kyi in 1774, “all the evils and every danger now seems to be enveloped in the perplexity of that one little word: Catholics.”⁵ It is true that the Russian authorities did not always recognize the Uniates as Catholics, but Smohozhevs’kyi also was often preoccupied with the “perplexity”

of the Uniates themselves in regard to their own Catholicism. Even a bishop like Smohozhevs'kyi might be theologically ambivalent about the Uniate religious compromise between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, but those at the top of the hierarchy did not hesitate to attribute the uncertain identity of the lower clergy and their flocks to a lamentable "ignorance." The problem of "ignorance" came up constantly throughout the period, along with a likewise reiterated concern about education. In this respect the preoccupations of the Uniate Church corresponded to those of the period in general. The call for education among the Uniates coincided and intersected with the reforms of the National Education Commission in Poland, the controversial continuation of the Jesuit schools in Russia, and the Josephinist intervention in religious education in Austria. The importance of education, both secular and religious, was emphasized throughout Europe in the age of the Enlightenment. In the case of the Uniates it was seen as significant for the consolidation of religious identity. While the first part of this study will explore changing religious circumstances as an issue of relations between Church and state, the second part will focus on the relevance of ritual and identity for Uniate religious survival.

General ignorance, even among the parish clergy, constituted a less urgent problem for the Uniate Church in early modern Poland, when a reasonably stable hierarchy of dioceses and parishes was held in place by a relatively functional Polish-Lithuanian state. After 1772 the new divisions with their consequent pressures encouraged the Church to put greater emphasis on raising the religious consciousness of its parish clergy and peasant constituents. The attentions of the hierarchy in the Uniate Church to the proverbial *wiara chłopska* or "peasant faith" of its members would have the ultimate effect of opening up the Church's social and cultural circumscription, making possible a broader national and religious engagement of society in the nineteenth century.

In Rome in 1773, at the missionary congregation of the Propaganda Fide, the committee of cardinals considered the need for "concord" so that "in such dangerous times as these the Uniate Ruthenian Church may be spared the scandals and divisions that can cause it infinite harm."⁶ The term "Ruthenian" was employed throughout this period to designate the Uniate Church, its rituals and its populations, from Belarus to Ukraine. Though the name was hardly an expression of modern nationalism, its usage hopefully assigned to the Uniates a certain cultural coherence in the face of so many imposed divisions. The hope of bringing concord out of division at this point, in 1773, seemed almost to reflect a nostalgia for the early modern political and religious order in Poland that could never again be recovered. The particular scandal under discussion was the squabbling among the Uniate bishops, but that was only one of the manifold contemporary forms of disunion, menacing "infinite harm" in "dangerous times." Concord was perhaps beyond recovery, but in exploring its own divisions and

addressing itself to the identity of its constituents, the Uniate Church in the late eighteenth century also confronted the challenges that appeared at the threshold of modern European history.

PART I: CHURCH AND STATE

Principles of Authority

In 1782 Tsarina Catherine II gave her Warsaw ambassador a message for Pope Pius VI, insisting that he create a Roman Catholic archbishopric in Russia for her extremely cooperative pet bishop, Stanisław Sierzeńciewicz. The pope was to be informed, in no uncertain terms, that if he did not swallow his objections to Sierzeńciewicz and promptly provide the ceremonial regalia for the grand promotion, the tsarina would not hesitate to withdraw her protection from the Catholic Church in Russia. The consequences, Catherine pointed out, would be particularly grave for the Uniates who resided in the Belarusian lands detached from Poland in 1772:

The Pope himself can not be ignorant of the fact that most of those who profess the Roman communion under my government of White Russia were once of our Orthodox religion, and that they and their ancestors only adopted the Roman communion on account of the persecution they experienced in Poland and the artifices of Roman priests. Under these circumstances, the majority of them await only the least signal to embrace our Orthodox religion, which they abandoned with regret and of which they retain many traces and vestiges in their hearts—a religion whose dogmas are all the more precious to humanity inasmuch as they have never been found in contradiction with the principles of authority and civil power, nor with the well-being and the administration (*la police*) of states.⁷

The tsarina's reading of Uniate history was simplistic, one-sided, and self-serving, but not so wildly off the mark as to fail to put across her basic point: that the balance of power in the region, which had favored Poland and Catholicism at the time of the Union in 1596, had now shifted decisively in favor of Russia and Orthodoxy. For Catherine the past history, current crisis, and future fate of the Uniates was, above all, a question of power. Her interest in the "traces and vestiges in their hearts" suggested that she was attuned to the political significance of Uniate religious identity. For Orthodoxy, which she claimed to discern vestigially in the Union, revealed its preciousness in its relation to "principles of authority" and "the administration of states."

These were, of course, the great political issues of enlightened absolutism in eighteenth-century Europe, and they were particularly sensitive in empires

confronting a diversity of cultural and religious communities. Catherine in the 1770s immediately addressed the administrative problems raised by her acquisitions from Poland, and remained attuned to the religious ramifications of those problems throughout her reign. In the 1780s, the Josephine revolution in the Habsburg relations between Church and state also addressed these issues of authority and civil power. In the 1790s, at the Four-Year Sejm, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth reorganized its religious institutions in the same spirit of state authority and government involvement—a spirit not altogether unrelated to that of the simultaneously codified Civil Constitution of the Clergy in revolutionary France. Whatever the evolving religious climates for the Uniate Church—nourishing in Austria, harassing in Russia, ambivalent in Poland—the fundamental institutional engagement of Church by state was structurally similar. The terms of that engagement were defined according to the values of enlightened absolutism, by the governments in Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Warsaw pursuing analogous political agendas, however divergent the ultimate religious consequences.

Pacification

Catherine II, from the moment she cast her imperial eye on Poland in the 1760s, was inspired to present herself as the enlightened patroness of religious freedom against the alleged intolerance of the Commonwealth. Voltaire led the pack of philosophes who acclaimed her imperial policy of power as a crusade of the Enlightenment. From the very start of the reign of King Stanisław August, whose royal election Catherine arranged in 1764, she began to interfere in Polish affairs with a memorandum to Warsaw favoring the equality of civil rights for Poland's non-Catholics, the Dissidents. This was framed as a demand for legislative equality presented to the Sejm in 1766, and formalized in an imposed Russian-Polish treaty as the religious articles of 1768.

Catherine thus gave satisfaction to her own Russian Orthodox hierarchy inasmuch as she offered protection to the Orthodox peasant population in the eastern lands of the Commonwealth. For Orthodoxy, like Protestantism, was “dissident” in Catholic Poland, and Orthodox grievances targeted not just Catholic dominance by law in the Commonwealth, but the ongoing pastoral struggle between Orthodox and Uniates that dated back to the Union of 1596. The Uniate Church did not spring fully formed from the Union of Brest: such dioceses as Lviv and Przemyśl remained Orthodox through the seventeenth century, and during the first half of the eighteenth century the Union continued to aggrandize itself among the communities of Ukraine under the sponsorship of the Commonwealth. In the articles of 1768 Catherine determined to set back this ongoing displacement of Orthodoxy by the Union, and a tribunal was proposed to

settle disputes with reference to the status quo of a hundred years ago. Political explosions forestalled such a resolution at that time, but Catherine already had elaborated the perspective that would lead her later to denounce the Uniates for “persecution” of the Orthodox.

The mounting tensions of the 1760s finally erupted into warfare in 1768 when Catherine’s treaty articles on behalf of the Dissidents provoked patriotic Catholic Poles to take up arms in the Confederation of Bar, to fight against their own king and his Russian patroness. For Catherine this quickly turned into a two-front war against the Ottoman Empire as well as the Polish Confederation. Therefore Ukraine, the heartland of the Uniate Church, became strategically central terrain between Turkey and Poland, and was overrun by Russian troops. This Russian military presence in the lands of the Commonwealth created a domain in which Warsaw could not hope to govern or protect its subjects. At the same time there was unleashed an Orthodox missionary crusade against the Uniate parishes of Ukraine, led by the bishop of Pereiaslav from beyond the Dnieper River, and also a campaign of insurrectionary violence directed against Roman Catholics, Uniates, and Jews, led by Haidamak bands. This latter violence culminated in the Uman massacre, after which Catherine felt obliged to dissociate herself and her state from such irregular atrocities. It was, however, precisely the presence of the Russian army that made possible these irregularities, and, if she did not actually incite and encourage them, they certainly helped to create a convenient political void and chaos in those strategic lands which she intended to occupy for the duration of hostilities. Indeed, one of the Orthodox incitements to violence was a forged ukaz from Catherine.⁸

With Russian troops canceling Polish government, and Haidamak bands adding an element of terror, the Orthodox missionary effort met with great success. Uniate priests were pressured to go over to Orthodoxy and bring their parishes with them, while those who resisted were expelled and replaced. Thus began in 1768 a period of intense pressure on the Uniate Church which did not begin to abate until after the partition of 1772, and did not finally cease until the treaty settlement of 1775. During this period more than a thousand Uniate parishes in Ukraine were taken over by Orthodox priests. Missionaries, however, did not achieve these impressive results entirely on their own, for Russian soldiers actively collaborated in the crusade. At Bila Tserkva, for instance, the Orthodox priest Vasył Zrazhevs’kyi and the Russian captain Kruglov worked together to arrest all the local Uniate priests on Christmas Eve and keep them locked up through Christmas Day.⁹ Such local teamwork reflected the presumed collaboration at the highest level between Hervazii Lyntsev’skyi, the Orthodox bishop of Pereiaslav, and General Rumiantsev, the Russian commander in Ukraine. Catherine formalized the religious role of her army in Ukraine with an ukaz

of 1771 that authorized the protection of Orthodox communities from Uniate persecution. Thus, she continued to present herself as the champion of religious freedom.

Regardless of who was actually the object of persecution (and by 1771 the balance already had shifted against the Uniates), the point was Catherine's official approval, indeed mandating, of the arbitration and interference of her military officials. In 1768 she had involved herself in Polish religious affairs by bilateral treaty; now she did so by unilateral decree. In fact, in 1771 it almost was meaningless to speak of Poland's sovereignty in Ukraine: the war was ongoing, the partition under negotiation. Under these circumstances, for the duration, Catherine could issue decrees against Uniate persecution, her soldiers could arrest Uniate priests, and her missionaries could take over Uniate parishes. The Warsaw nuncio, Giuseppe Garampi, was trying to keep a careful account of the lost parishes, but recognized in 1772 that it would be impossible to think about restitution until after the "pacification" of Poland.¹⁰ The religious crisis of the Uniate Church in Ukraine between 1768 and 1772 accompanied the course of Catherine's Polish policy, from the war against the Confederation of Bar to the diplomacy of the partition settlement.

While the massacre of Uman became a byword for anti-Catholic terror in Ukraine, it was above all the imprisonment at Berdychiv that came to epitomize the violent persecution of the Uniate Church by the Russian army. There, in 1772 and 1773, sixty-eight Uniate priests were jailed, and in 1774 the Uniate bishop of Chełm, Maksymilian Ryllo (Maximilian Rylo), who was touring Ukraine to visit ecclesiastical prisoners, was himself imprisoned at Berdychiv. The case of the sixty-eight priests received considerable attention, with reports reaching Garampi at the Warsaw nunciature that the prisoners were chained, starved, and confined together in a suffocatingly inadequate space; the affair was publicized in something of the manner of the Black Hole of Calcutta twenty years before. The nuncio appealed to King Stanisław August and also to Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, while sending the prisoners copies of St. Cyprian's *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. The Uniate metropolitan sent a Polish translation for those captive priests who could not read the *Exhortatio* in Latin; they were not, after all, Roman Catholics.¹¹

Martyrdom, however, was not the ultimate outcome. The priests were liberated in September 1773 at the recommendation of the Russian ambassador in Warsaw, Otto Magnus Stackelberg, and just after the ratification of the treaties of partition by the Polish Sejm. Clearly, the prisoners were not destined to follow the exhortation of St. Cyprian; the timing of their liberation revealed that all along they had been not martyrs, but hostages—hostages to Catherine's Polish policy. Once the partitions had been ratified in Warsaw, Russia could begin to relax its grip on Ukraine. As for the bishop detained in 1774, he woke up two

months later to discover that his guards had disappeared, that he was free to go. In fact, the Russian government denied that he had ever been detained, dismissing the incident as “merely a Uniate calumny.”¹² The years since 1768 had been years of lawless bullying in Ukraine, which remained in a state of suspended irregularity while Catherine fought her wars and negotiated the partition. By 1774, however, Catherine was ready to reconsider the value of ordered stability over irregular violence.

When the captive priests of Berdychiv were liberated in 1773, they were not restored to their parishes, which remained in the hands of the Orthodox. In this sense the liberation, though naturally a joyous occasion, was no great institutional triumph for the Uniate Church. The thousand lost parishes remained lost, for the moment. Garampi, the nuncio, was well aware of this, and in 1774 he so despaired of being able to influence Ukraine from Warsaw that he resorted to a most extravagantly roundabout approach to the problem. From Warsaw he urged the Vatican to appeal to Versailles, so that the French king might in turn appeal to the sultan in Constantinople on behalf of the Uniates of Ukraine. Garampi hoped that the restitution of the Uniate parishes might become one of the concerns of the Ottoman Empire in its war against Russia. This peculiarly indirect and rather unlikely appeal was never properly launched, for Russia finally won the war in 1774, and so Turkey was in no position to realize any desiderata at all.¹³ The scheme clearly indicated, however, Garampi’s sense of the urgency of the Uniate situation, and also suggested the apparent futility of strategies for achieving a remedy.

When the Partition Sejm in Warsaw finally concluded its two-year session in 1775 with a general confirmation of the religious articles of 1768 on behalf of the Dissidents, the question of the parishes of Ukraine was referred to a future joint commission of Polish and Russian membership. It was to consider “the grievances of the Greek non-Uniates against the Greek Uniates and reciprocally of the latter against the former,” and the phrasing reflected Catherine’s preferred emphasis on the Uniates as persecutors, only reciprocally as persecuted. The commission, however, was never constituted, for by the end of 1775 the usurped parishes were suddenly returning to the Union. Orthodox priests were set aside, while Uniate priests who had accepted Orthodoxy under pressure now renounced their apostasy. Already in 1774 Ryllo, the visiting bishop, had been absolving Uniate priests from their coerced apostasies—but Ryllo had been arrested at that time. Now in 1775 the Uniates returned to the Union without obstruction, and what had seemed to promise the elimination of the Union in Ukraine was revealed as just temporary harassment.

Like the priests at Berdychiv, their parishes too had been held hostage—pending the “pacification” and the new order in Poland. For the timing again was unmistakable: just as the liberation of the priests followed immediately the

ratification of the partition treaties, so the return of the parishes began within months of the conclusion of the Partition Sejm in Warsaw. Catherine relaxed her grip, the army ceased to intervene, and the Orthodox ecclesiastical intruders could no longer hold onto the parishes they had acquired. The nonchalance of Catherine as she watched the parishes of Ukraine slip back into the Union suggests that she was not, at that time, dedicated to the destruction of the Uniate Church. For Catherine, the Union in Ukraine served as a convenient pressure point in the campaign to dominate Poland.

The Mutation of Temporal Dominion

The person who was most articulately aware of the political significance of religion in Ukraine during these years was the Warsaw nuncio Garampi. When he came to Warsaw from Rome in 1772 it seemed shocking to him that such a successful Orthodox campaign could be mounted in the lands of the Catholic Commonwealth; at first unable to believe that Warsaw was really so powerless to resist, he tried to impress upon the king, his ministers, and finally the representatives at the Partition Sejm the political importance of the Uniates for Poland. In 1773 he wrote and began to circulate anonymously a pamphlet entitled *Exposé of the Condition of the Church in Ukraine*. In it he appealed on behalf of the persecuted priests, but he also pursued a carefully reasoned political analysis of what that persecution implied. Because the peasants of Ukraine were “ignorant,” Garampi feared they were “incapable of distinguishing civil from religious obedience.” Therefore, he reasoned, “when such a people is won for the Greek Oriental religion, they will confuse the center of their religious state, which will be St. Petersburg, with that of their political existence, which is the Republic of Poland.” Garampi, beginning to accept that Poland was either powerless or indifferent, developed the same argument in his 1774 suggestions for an appeal to Constantinople, insisting that “beyond religious considerations there are political ones which ought to interest that court.” If the Uniates of Ukraine became Orthodox, they would become assets for Russian policy against Turkey. “Although Russia does not care at all about leaving to the Republic of Poland dominion and sovereignty over the territory of Ukraine,” wrote Garampi, “the inhabitants nonetheless will be, if necessary, like subjects, even more than subjects, of the Muscovite monarchy.”¹⁴ This whole analysis of “distinguishing civil from religious obedience,” of relating sovereignty and subjects, was both sophisticated and prescient, too much so for the members of the Sejm. When Garampi was lobbying for a formal Polish guarantee of the rights of the Uniates in Poland, the representatives were “dazed and dead tired”—too tired to act on the nuncio’s recommendation.¹⁵

If the Vatican was disappointed at the inaction of the Polish Sejm, the Uniate Church itself might have been less surprised. The history of the Union in the

Commonwealth had always been marked by the disconcerting official concession of preeminence to Roman Catholicism—symbolized, on the highest level, by the exclusion of the Uniate bishops from the Senate. Given this historical imbalance, there was a certain irony in securing the fate of the Uniates separated from Poland with guarantees of the status quo, for Catholicism “of both rites,” in its aspects “both material and spiritual.” Russia and Austria both agreed to this in the 1773 treaties of partition with Poland, and both states, in their respectively acquired territories of Belarus and Galicia, treated these guarantees of the status quo rather casually. (The territory annexed by Catherine in 1772, designated as White Russia or Belarus, actually corresponds to just the eastern part of today’s Belarus.) “In the manifesto proclaiming the annexation of Belarus, Catherine had undertaken to respect the religion of its inhabitants, and in the treaty with Poland of September 1773, she bound herself to maintain the status quo with regard to the Catholic religion,” wrote the historian Isabel de Madariaga. “But the Russian tradition,” Madariaga continued, “by now well established, of domination over the Church signified that Catherine would interpret the status quo in her own way, namely the exclusion of any independent external (or internal) control of ecclesiastical institutions.”¹⁶ Emperor Joseph II in Habsburg Galicia would be no more respectful of the religious status quo than Catherine II in Belarus.

From the point of view of the Vatican, there was all the difference in the world between Poland losing its Uniates to Catholic Austria and to Orthodox Russia, but from within the Uniate Church both changes of sovereignty were greeted with tactful expressions of confidence and optimism. In 1774 Maria Theresa’s establishment of the Uniate “Barbaraem” seminary in Vienna was hailed as a magnificent gesture, especially in comparison to Poland’s past indifference. In 1773 Smohozhev’skyi in Belarus found that the Russian authorities were “no longer complicit in the improprieties of their priests,” and that, “on the contrary, frequenting the Catholic churches, they exhort me to the better education of my clergy.” He praised Count Zakhar Chernyshev, the provincial governor, for his “optimal probity” and “special gentility.” Smohozhev’skyi even found the Russian generals with whom he dealt to be “courteous, reasonable, impartial, and supremely prudent.” Catherine herself was “the most beautiful example of goodness, clemency, and justice,” not to mention “so enlightened, so benign, and completely impartial.” Was Smohozhev’skyi really so confident about the beneficence of Russian sovereignty, or did he imagine that the Russian authorities might be opening his letters? He addressed his conclusions to Pope Clement XIV himself: “From all this Your Holiness will deign to gather that the Catholic religion, thus succored, can not suffer here at all from the mutation of temporal dominion.”¹⁷ Smohozhev’skyi would eventually have cause to revise such optimistic first impressions.

After 1772, while in Ukraine Russian soldiers still harassed Uniate sub-

jects of the Commonwealth, in Belarus the new Uniate subjects of Catherine remained unmolested at the parish level, and the “mutation of temporal dominion” affected the Church only with regard to issues of high jurisdiction. In 1773, when Smohozhevs’kyi was in St. Petersburg, he learned of the new regulations from Chernyshev:

I went to visit the Count Governor in his own carriage, was honorably received at the door of the company hall, and after the first ceremonies we left the other guests and retired just the two of us to a little cabinet where the Count confided in me that Her Imperial Majesty would confirm me in possession of my archbishopric; that she would not permit appeal outside the limits of her empire; that she would not suffer in her estates any bishop who was not her subject; and that finally every Roman communication would have to be presented to the court before being published. To such proposals I replied with modesty that, not being an illegitimate pastor, nor having committed any crime, I could always with the greatest security rely upon imperial justice.¹⁸

Smohozhevs’kyi informed Chernyshev that if the government wanted to regulate relations with Rome, it ought to take up the matter with the pope.

Such innovations were greeted in the Vatican with indignant protests about the violated status quo. In these points, however, Catherine displayed no special malice toward the Uniates (since Roman Catholicism in Russia was similarly regulated), and neither did she show any great originality in her religious concerns. It was a commonplace point of enlightened political thought that Rome’s absolute spiritual authority over its flock constituted an infringement upon the secular authority of the absolute state. Indeed, Joseph waited only for Maria Theresa’s death in 1780 to introduce in the Habsburg lands an even more thoroughgoing regulation of relations between his Catholic subjects (again, Roman and Uniate) and the Vatican. Madariaga argues that Catherine’s policy involved “treating the Uniates precisely as she had treated the Roman Catholics,” and that her affirmations of state control meant, in fact, that “the same principles which governed the state’s relations with the Orthodox Church would govern its relations with Rome.” John Alexander notes that Catherine’s reign began, in the Petrine tradition, with the arrest of the Orthodox Metropolitan Arsenii Matsievich of the Holy Synod in 1763, and the seizure of Orthodox Church properties: “For Catherine, these events signaled a triumph of state over Church.” In 1775, when Smohozhevs’kyi was informed that in accordance with “Russian custom” his Uniate Church communications would have to be officially countersigned, the archbishop bemoaned “such innovations by means of which will be gradually eradicated all the customs and rules of the ecclesiastical pastors.”¹⁹ This

was clearly a conventional eighteenth-century lament against enlightened state intervention, rather than any special cry of religious persecution.

Beyond these issues of Roman appeals and Russian countersignatures, Catherine's other major jurisdictional rearrangement was her insistence on exactly one bishop for each of the Catholic rites within her empire. Strict as she was about her political sovereignty, she wanted no scraps of her newly acquired territory, freshly severed from the Commonwealth, to retain any religious subordination to bishops in Poland. As Smohozhevskyi had been told, she "would not suffer in her estates any bishop who was not her subject." This model of one episcopal authority for each religious community also corresponded to Catherine's enlightened notions of rational religious organization, for it seemed to facilitate the exercise of her own sole secular authority over subjects spiritually governed by one sole bishop. Maria Theresa subscribed to a similarly unifying conception when in 1774 she made of the *Barbaraeum* a seminary for the Uniate rites of Hungary and Croatia, as well as Galicia. In the Russian Empire, the annexed territory in Belarus roughly matched the old diocese of Polatsk; thus, the concept of the single diocese would not become a weapon of destruction until after the vast acquisitions of the second and third partitions twenty years later. After 1772 there was, naturally, grumbling in Rome about the altered status quo, but, interestingly, the two bishops concerned—Smohozhevskyi for the Uniates and Siestrzeńciewicz for the Roman Catholics—seemed rather less distressed by a principle that actually enhanced their own authority. Smohozhevskyi, in fact, urged Rome to find a way to confirm canonically the new extent of his diocese, as Catherine had ordered, though he feared it might seem "almost as if I desired to dilate the borders of my pastorate," that he might appear to be "a usurper of the sheep of others."²⁰ Throughout this whole period of enlightened intervention in Russia, Austria, and Poland, there would always be certain elements of the Uniate Church that found particular innovations to their advantage—even at the cost of the status quo.

"Today can count as the most terrible (*nayokropnieyszy*) in our lives," affirmed the Uniate Basilian monks of Polatsk in the monastery journal for 16 September 1772 (Julian calendar). For them the implications of the partition appeared, at least at first, to be something truly shocking, like a call to apocalyptic judgment:

We monks, having said matins, were all peacefully in our cells attending to our monastic diversions, when around nine o'clock suddenly an alarm was trumpeted and the cloister bell ordered to be rung, to summon all the monks to gather in the church. Armed troops were parading in front of the church, and two trumpeters preceded them, continually sounding the trumpets . . . When we were gathered in the church in great fear and alarm,

a colonel stood in the center of the church with other officers, and the troops were posted at the church doors.²¹

The frightened monks, feeling that their monastery had become the particular object of Russian military conquest, could not fail to feel with traumatic conviction that they were not in Poland anymore. They were presented with the orders of General Mikhail Krechetnikov for the lands newly annexed by Russia, requiring an oath of loyalty from all of Catherine's new subjects.

The Uniate Basilians were particularly distressed to learn they also were now expected to pray not only for Catherine and her heir the Grand Duke Paul, but also for the Orthodox Synod. Smohozhevs'kyi intervened by writing to Krechetnikov:

Today, only because of the sinister fate of the world, I must remain alienated in this country from the sovereign government of the King of Poland, to whom I have always honestly maintained complete fidelity. So, in accordance with my obligation to my Church and to my sheep, I offer the oath of loyalty and obedience to the new government, and also prayers to God according to the formula given, as honesty and piety require it of me. But since I find in the same formula the duty to pray to God for the Synod, which is not of my confession, and can have no sovereignty over me, and detracts ipso facto from the obedience I owe to the Roman Pope, and thus deprives me of my Catholic faith, and with me so many priests and laymen, I can not make a profession of that nature, and therefore I do not wish to present myself at the cathedral, and on the contrary I will gladly give myself up for arrest.²²

Thus he argued for the strict separation of his political and religious loyalties in the Russian Empire. Smohozhevs'kyi politely suggested to Krechetnikov that this formula was perhaps intended only for Orthodox churches and mistakenly prescribed to the Uniates, but in fact this was surely one of those pitfalls to be found in "the perplexity of that one little word": Catholics. Catherine, in this case, seemed not to recognize the Uniates, with their Slavonic rite, as Catholics, and Smohozhevs'kyi had to underline the fact that the Synod was "not of my confession," that the formula "deprives me of my Catholic faith."

Krechetnikov went so far as to suggest that the most benign solution would be simultaneous prayers for the Synod and the pope, to which Smohozhevs'kyi replied that it would be "obvious foolishness" to recognize "two heads of one Church." After all, the one crucial consideration that made his "sheep" Catholics was the recognition of the absolute hierarchical authority of the pope as their supreme pastor. The Russian authorities gave way, and Smohozhevs'kyi,

enthroned in his cathedral, offered prayers for the pope, the tsarina, and her heir—but not for the Synod. Catherine's concession suggested that she was not, at this moment, fully committed to the harassment of her Uniate subjects. Ironically, Smohozhevs'kyi's tenacious resistance to the proposed formula, with its implicit subordination to the Synod and alienation from Rome, must have owed something to the long experience of the Uniate bishops in Poland, where the Roman Catholic bishops had often plotted to gain hierarchical authority over their Uniate counterparts. Having gained his point, however, Smohozhevs'kyi organized a dinner for Krechetnikov and his officers on 20 September 1772 at the Basilian monastery, a first step toward reconciliation and reassurance after the alarming Russian military manifestation on 16 September. By 3 October the Polatsk monastery was hesitantly participating in the illuminations that marked the anniversary of Catherine's coronation ten years before, and by the end of November, with the arrival of Catherine's name day, the monks could casually report that "all Polatsk" was observing the occasion, including themselves. The Uniates were adapting themselves to the change of sovereignty perpetrated in the first partition.²³

Though Smohozhevs'kyi had to accept certain changes that touched on his own episcopal authority and jurisdiction, the Uniate status quo in Belarus was left intact at the parish level. The archbishop was very much aware of his own focal role as the giver of oaths, leader of prayers, Catherine's first Uniate subject. He wrote of "the vigilance at the place in which I live, the jealousy of the government that keeps its eye on me."²⁴ Catherine's eye was directly upon him when he made his journey to St. Petersburg in 1773 to render homage in person. There at court Catherine rose from cards to ask after his health, and inquire pointedly how he was doing with the Russian language. He must have been doing very well indeed, for his account of St. Petersburg was crammed full of social encounters, and he seems to have devoted himself wholeheartedly to making the connections that might be useful to his Church. He attended many dinners, and was impressed that in the November cold his hosts still managed to serve "the freshest grapes, the tastiest pears, artichokes, and melons." He also was impressed by Catherine's absolute power, and wrote to Rome afterwards to ask if the pope would consider sending her "some famous painting," and another for the Grand Duke Paul, the better to conciliate for Catholicism their invaluable favor.²⁵

While Smohozhevs'kyi felt himself under the eye of an absolute government, he also had to provide an encyclopedic account of his Church for the purposes of enlightened administration. He was "tormented" in 1775 by the government's insistence on figures: the number of children of priests, the rates of parish taxation, all "grave and onerous matters." He felt the pressure of the spotlight again that same year when he celebrated in his cathedral a *Te Deum* for the anniversary of Catherine's victory over the Turks. Members of the provincial government

were present for the occasion, but that was not enough for Smohozhevs'kyi: he was having the sermon translated into Russian and rushed to St. Petersburg. "Everyone there may see that the Uniates know how to respect and honor the throne."²⁶ His performance of the part of the Uniate archiepiscopal subject was a tour de force, and Catherine remained well satisfied with him and his Church in the 1770s. At the end of the decade, however, he was promoted to the metropolitanate in Poland, and the vacancy he left behind, after such an effective performance, turned into the first true crisis for the Uniates of Belarus in the Russian Empire. In 1780 Smohozhevs'kyi begged Chernyshev, with whom he had gotten along so well, to remind Catherine of his past service:

With how much loyalty I always fulfilled the duties of a true Russian subject, with how much commitment I procured the education of the clergy, the institution of the seminary so desirable in that region, with how much expenditure I continued the enterprise of building, of gardens, of hemp, and of agriculture, all for the advantage of my archiepiscopal successors and as an ornament for the Russian land.²⁷

He had learned perfectly the discourse appropriate to a subject of enlightened absolutism; here was an archbishop who measured his service to the state in terms of his educational and economic enterprises. In assuming the metropolitanate, however, he ceased to be Catherine's subject, and lost his claim upon her favor. The vacancy left by such a consummate ecclesiastical statesman was one that Catherine would not be quick to fill, and therein lay the crisis.

Whatever Priest the Community Desires

In 1779 the Uniate metropolitan, Lev Sheptyts'kyi (Leon Szeptycki), died, and Smohozhevs'kyi was the chosen candidate of Stanisław August to succeed to the metropolitan diocese in Ukraine. This promotion to hierarchical supremacy within the Uniate Church was one that Smohozhevs'kyi relished all the more inasmuch as it would extract him from the Russian Empire and restore him to the Commonwealth. Carefully, he negotiated with St. Petersburg for a smooth succession to his own see at Polatsk, obtaining Catherine's preliminary approval for Bishop Ryllo of Chelm. Ryllo, however, had been harassed and arrested by Russian soldiers in Ukraine in 1774, and was not eager in 1779 to seize the opportunity to move to Polatsk. It turned out that he also had been soliciting from Maria Theresa an appointment to the see of Przemyśl in Austria, which he now obtained and accepted in preference to the Polatsk succession that had been arranged for him in Russia. "A bishop cannot follow his own comfort and pleasure," wrote the angry Warsaw nuncio, Giovanni Archetti, "without betraying his promises and obligations to God himself."²⁸ Ryllo, however, could and did.

"I was powerfully surprised," commented Smohozhevskiyi, "and immediately I began to foresee the worst possible effect for my own pastorate here, in view of such an evident contempt for the favors of this sovereign."²⁹ Catherine had been ready to accept Ryllo, and now her acceptance was spurned; he preferred the invitation of Maria Theresa.

Smohozhevskiyi promptly presented for her consideration an alternative candidate to the fickle Ryllo, this time Porfyrii Vazhynskiyi (Porfiriusz Ważyński), protoarchimandrite of the Uniate Basilian order. Catherine declined to be won over so easily a second time. Then Smohozhevskiyi offered himself up to the tsarina, proposing to hold the metropolitanate and the see of Polatsk simultaneously, or at least to remain at Polatsk till a successor could be chosen. He emphasized this in the language of courtship for Catherine: Without an appointed successor, how could he "abandon his first spiritual bride, and marry another."³⁰ He was hoping to make an impression on Catherine personally when she visited Polatsk in the spring of 1780, but, unluckily, he found himself feverishly ill on the one night he was supposed to dine in the imperial presence. He received instead a sickbed visit from the powerful Grigorii Potemkin, who drank chocolate while the ailing archbishop tried to speak persuasively about the succession in the diocese; Potemkin later sent a bottle of absinthe to fight the fever. The archbishop, sick in bed, was unembarrassed about appealing to the man in Catherine's bed, her current favorite, Aleksander Lanskoï—though without results. "The fever has lifted, but weakness still keeps me in bed," noted Smohozhevskiyi that summer, "but in the present circumstances it is not easy to cure a wounded heart."³¹ His condition was medical, of course, but the circumstances were political, and the consequences spiritual; his heart had kept him from meeting with Catherine at a critical moment for the Uniates.

It would not have made any difference. As far as she was concerned, Smohozhevskiyi had ceased to be her subject from the moment he responded favorably to the offer of Stanisław August. "Now that he is a citizen and prelate of a foreign state," reasoned Catherine about Smohozhevskiyi in 1780, "how can he serve two lords at the same time?" This had been one of her fundamental principles from the beginning in Belarus—"that she would not suffer in her estates any bishop who was not her subject"—and now she announced that he would have to refrain in the future from "mixing himself up in the spiritual affairs of our empire."³² Spiritual affairs to one side, there then emerged a highly undignified controversy about some furniture that had been "transported clandestinely" out of the archiepiscopal residence in Polatsk and into Poland along with Smohozhevskiyi. Was it his personal property or did it belong to the diocese? He insisted that the removal had been done by "my subalterns, without my knowledge," but, concerned about his "reputation," he arranged for the disputed items to be returned to Russia.³³ Catherine was insisting on a most

strict separation of the Uniate Church in Russia from the metropolitanate in Poland. She was determined that the archiepiscopal residence in Polatsk should retain all of its furnishings—though she still declined to allow for an archbishop to live in it.

The see remained vacant for four years, until 1783, and throughout that period there was great suspense—and no absence of provocative rumors—as to whom she would choose to fill the position. “Warsaw is full of reports that the Empress has nominated someone to the Polatsk archbishopric—but whom?” wrote Smohozhevs’kyi’s correspondent in the Polish capital in 1780. “I would fervently like to find out!”³⁴ One dreaded possibility was that Catherine would try to install a Uniate who leaned toward Orthodoxy and would tilt the whole diocese in that direction. The Uniate Church was naturally on guard against such a possibility, since it was in similar fashion that some Orthodox dioceses—like Lviv and Przemyśl—had been brought over to the Union within the last century. Alternatively, it was feared that Catherine might subordinate her one Uniate diocese to her one Roman Catholic diocese, making the much-favored *Siostrzeńciewicz* the master of both. This, too, was a familiar menace for the Union, since Roman Catholic bishops had often sought the subordination of their Uniate episcopal colleagues in the Commonwealth. Ultimately, the worst possible outcome to be feared was that Catherine might actually appoint an Orthodox bishop to the Uniate see, and when Pope Pius VI wrote to her in 1780, begging her to fill the vacancy, he did not think it superfluous to specify that it be filled with a Uniate, not an Orthodox, bishop.³⁵

After the partition of Poland, neither the Vatican nor the metropolitanate had been eager to spell out the nominating powers of a non-Catholic sovereign ruling over a Catholic diocese. Catherine’s prolonged refusal to fill the vacancy at Polatsk constituted a sort of investiture conflict inasmuch as she thus emphasized her own absolute authority in her own empire. When the pope wrote to her to plead that she fill the vacancy, the point was made that the see was hers to fill or not to fill. In fact, also in 1779, Maria Theresa, for all her Catholic piety, issued a decree to make a similar point about her rights of nomination in the Uniate dioceses acquired from Poland. In the controversy that raged within the Uniate Church over whether the new bishop of Lviv would be a Basilian monk or a secular priest, the Habsburg empress carefully emphasized her prerogative of choice and strictly disallowed any appeals for arbitration or dispensation from Rome.³⁶

While Catherine refused to name an archbishop, the administration of the diocese for the duration was left in the hands of a three-man consistory of Uniate ecclesiastics. These gentlemen were in no position to exercise strong leadership: “We consult with each other about how we are to save so many souls. We find

no means and even if there were such to be found, we would only bring down greater misfortune upon our necks.”³⁷ They worried over whether to take refuge in the Roman Catholic Church and give up the Union as lost. In the meantime, in the absence of an archbishop, Catherine issued an extraordinary ukaz to provide new parish priests when necessary.

In case a Uniate community should be lacking its priest, or if one should die, the community should be questioned as to which faith they want for their priest, so that the government can install whatever priest the community desires.³⁸

Such an experiment in liberty of conscience, such seeming deference to the community in choosing its own religion, was something rather rare in early modern Europe. It was both dramatically enlightened and at the same time by no means benevolent, for it was obviously designed to apply religious pressure to the Uniates—the paradoxical pressure of pretended religious democracy. For Catherine it was a game: pretending that Belarus was the Rhode Island of Eastern Europe, while knowing that her grand gesture could only harm the institutional Uniate Church—inasmuch as it only could lose communities, but could not possibly gain new ones. In fact, since 1772, the Uniate Church in Belarus had been forbidden by decree to accept converts from Orthodoxy, a decree far more consistent with contemporary notions of religious policy.

Catherine, in thus toying with the peasants of Belarus, using them in her little religious experiment, was demonstrating again that same somewhat nastily scientific curiosity about whether they were really and truly “Catholic.” If she applied the heat of religious freedom to the Uniate amalgam of ritual and dogma, would it separate out into its constituent elements, Roman Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy, and what would be the proportions? While this experiment could only be viewed as a terrible menace by the Uniate Church, it also offered an extraordinary, historically precocious, opportunity to have its peasant believers affirm their faith. Those communities that chose to remain in the Uniate Church passed through the trial of religious self-determination; they became bound and committed to their faith on a whole new, and distinctly modern, level. The circumstances of choice were, of course, susceptible to manipulation, and there were rumored to be Russian Orthodox agents who cleverly intoxicated their Uniate prey before proposing apostasy.³⁹ Smohozhevs’kyi, now in Poland, denounced Catherine’s experiment as a “bloody” one, and believed that the Orthodox Synod was harassing his former flock, by “fomenting trouble among the rough people, with good and with evil, with prayers, persuasions, and intoxication, with exemptions and with bastonades.”⁴⁰ Thus, the Uniate Church faced institutional

pressure from the continuing uncertainty about the vacant archbishopric, while the practice of Orthodox “persuasions” upon “the rough people” suggested the popular implications of Catherine’s experiment with the Uniates.

According to one Uniate estimate in 1782, there were 100,000 souls lost (out of 800,000 Uniates in the Russian Empire); many were lost to Orthodoxy, and some opted for Roman Catholicism. The great majority of Uniates, however, held fast to the Union. Even with this unprecedented freedom of choice, which prevailed for the four years that the Polatsk see remained vacant, the great majority of the Uniates turned out to be “Catholics” after all. There were, to be sure, the most dire predictions from the presiding consistory: “If a supreme pastor is not chosen soon, there will remain no one over whom he can exercise his pastoral office.”⁴¹ This gloomy forecast in 1780 was based on the uncertainty of the future; what no one could know, at that time, was that the crisis was only an interval. In 1783 a new archbishop would take office, and the Uniate Church in the Russian Empire would achieve a new stability for the decade to come.

In the agony of uncertainty the consistory sent its appeals across the border to Poland, and from there new appeals were formulated by Smohozhevskyi at the metropolitanate and Archetti at the nunciature. Though they did not think of the Ottoman sultan this time around, they hoped to influence Catherine by bringing into play the goodwill of Stanisław August and Maria Theresa. The Habsburg empress, to their great regret, died right in the middle of the crisis in 1780, but Smohozhevskyi, recognizing her as “the most special protectress” of the Uniates, still hoped that “with her supremely great merits even in heaven she may defend my poor Uniates.” As for Joseph, now the sole ruler in Vienna, he could easily intercede “with only two little words”: *status quo*.⁴² Aside from the almost comical misapprehension of Joseph as a champion of the *status quo*, the strategy was more fundamentally misguided, since what lay behind the crisis all along was Catherine’s interest in her own imperial authority over Church affairs, and appeals to foreign sovereigns could only aggravate her sensitivity in this regard. The true issues and dimensions of the crisis finally emerged in the course of the remarkable correspondence that ensued between the tsarina and the pope.

When Pope Pius VI personally wrote to Catherine in 1780 to protest the vacancy at Polatsk, a grand gesture from the very summit of the Catholic Church, her reply of 1781 brushed aside his concern for the Uniates and asked the pope to create a Roman Catholic archbishopric at Mahilioŭ (Mogilev) for Sistrzeńcewicz. This peremptory demand from a non-Catholic sovereign for an archbishopric cut to suit her fancy demonstrated that she was determined to establish her own authority over the Catholic Church in her empire. Since she made her demand for a Roman Catholic archbishop in response to the pope’s demand for a Uniate archbishop, the issues became linked, as she intended; it was to be a matter of *quid pro quo*, not *status quo*. Sistrzeńcewicz, however, was no

favorite in Rome, especially because he had, as Catherine wished, encouraged the survival of the Jesuits in the Russian Empire in defiance of the papal suppression of 1773. In a letter of 1781 Pius refused to create the archbishopric Catherine wanted for Siestrzeńcewicz, and she replied in 1782 that she had created it herself by decree; the pope only needed to send the archiepiscopal pallium for a properly ceremonial investiture. Now she had even more flagrantly trespassed on papal authority. Her letter mentioned, by the way, that the Uniates were “just a little flock,” perhaps too few to require an archbishop of their own. The quid pro quo had become a matter of threat, and, as in Ukraine ten years before, the Uniate Church served as a pressure point for Catherine in obtaining other satisfactions. “Powerful sovereign,” she wrote, mockingly, for the pope was not powerful at all, “we do not doubt that our care for the good of the Roman Church in our empire will be agreeable to you.”⁴³

The pope, who had seemed to stress the importance of the Uniates by taking up his pen on their behalf, now found their crisis to be less of a priority when it had to be weighed against other concessions. Furthermore, at this critical moment in the correspondence, Pius suddenly had no attention to spare for Russian affairs, inasmuch as he was fully occupied with the Josephine reforms in Austria and his own papal journey to Vienna to protest. When Catherine had received no reply from Rome by the end of 1782, her sense of self-importance was wounded again, and it was then that she menacingly gave out the word that Catholicism in Russia could be eliminated altogether; the Uniates needed “only the least signal to embrace our Orthodox religion.” In 1783 the pope agreed to all her demands, sending Archetti as legate from Warsaw to St. Petersburg to present her with the pallium for Siestrzeńcewicz, as specified.

Archetti, at the Warsaw nunciature, was far more frightened by the Uniate crisis than anyone in Rome. “Every travail and every pain that I have experienced in recent years, when something sinister happened to the Church,” he wrote in 1780, “seems like nothing in comparison to the affliction which oppresses me now.”⁴⁴ While on the one hand he underestimated the steadfastness of the Uniates, on the other hand he appreciated the innovativeness of Catherine’s assault in the context of the “sinister” age of the Enlightenment. From Warsaw Archetti attempted to mediate the correspondence between Pius and Catherine in such a way as to avoid confrontation, for he feared that the fate of the Uniates in Russia could jeopardize their position in Poland as well: “The tsarina dominates here almost as in Russia.” As soon as Catherine put forward demands of her own, Archetti counseled concession, urging Rome to save the Uniates by accepting Siestrzeńcewicz “as if the Jesuit matter were not at all mixed up in this.”⁴⁵ Above all, from Warsaw, he was in a perfect position to appreciate Catherine’s irresistible power: “If she doesn’t get her way, we will go on losing the souls of that most numerous population (which is not ‘a little flock’), and soon enough they will

all run to their eternal ruin.”⁴⁶ Thus, when Archetti was chosen as legate to St. Petersburg, he was determined to reverse Rome’s futile resistance and to gratify Catherine at all costs in order to obtain the desired Uniate appointment at Polatsk. Rome had grave doubts about whether it was appropriate for a papal legate to kiss the hand of the tsarina; Archetti had none. He stayed in St. Petersburg for almost a year without saying a word to Catherine about the controversial continuation of the Jesuits, and when he left in 1784 he had secured his cardinalate, as well as Catherine’s good opinion (“a thoroughly good child”—she thought he should be pope), not to mention a splendid sable fur coat.⁴⁷ He also left behind him in Russia a new Uniate archbishop at Polatsk.

Catherine had agreed at last, and Archetti, while he was still in St. Petersburg in 1783, hastened to arrange for Heraklii Lisov’skyi (Heraclius Lisowski), a member of the Polatsk consistory, to be installed as the new archbishop. The crisis was over. Of all its remarkable aspects, not least was the ease of its ending. The affair began with Ryllo’s affront to Catherine’s vanity; it ended with Archetti graciously kissing her hand. More important, it began when Catherine wanted to make a point about her absolute authority over Church affairs in her empire, and ended when that had been explicitly recognized. She herself capped the crisis with an ukaz of 1783 that formally removed the archbishop of Polatsk from any shadow of hierarchical subordination to the metropolitan in Poland. Still, what remained the most important message of the whole affair was that Catherine could apply pressure to the Uniates in pursuit of other interests, and release the pressure when she was ready. It had happened in Ukraine at the time of the first partition, and now in Belarus again. The pattern was a menacing one, but the outcome in both cases suggested that Catherine was not fully committed to the elimination of the Uniates. Their religious faith excited her malicious curiosity, while their Church remained a pawn in her game of strategic secular statecraft, according to the conventions of enlightened absolutism.

Josephus II

In 1780 the Uniate Church lamented the passing of Maria Theresa, “most special protectress,” and could only hope that Joseph would not hesitate to invoke those “two little words”—status quo—on behalf of the Polatsk diocese in Russia. In 1782 the pope postponed the urgent business of responding to Catherine about Russian affairs, because he was otherwise preoccupied with Joseph’s unprecedented assault on Church prerogatives in the Habsburg lands. Between 1780, when Joseph took over as sole ruler, and 1782, when he received Pius in Vienna to hear the papal expostulations, an unprecedented religious revolution took place in Austria. The approximately 1.5 million Uniates assigned to the Habsburgs in 1772 found their status quo far more drastically transformed than did the half as many Uniates of the Russian Empire who were, during precisely

these years of the early 1780s, feeling the pressure of the vacancy at Polatsk. In fact, Catherine pursued her religious policy in consultation with a professor of canon law from Vienna, who came to Moscow to teach and brought with him the principles of Josephinism.⁴⁸ Just as Catherine's fundamental concerns were connected to state authority over Church affairs, the Josephine reforms were even more nakedly devoted to precisely that agenda.

Maria Theresa, though certainly a devout Catholic, was herself interested in defining imperial authority with respect to Rome, and in the last year of her reign she did keep the Vatican out of the process of the Uniate succession to the see of Lviv. She would allow no appeal for Roman dispensations in the controversy over who was eligible for the Uniate episcopacy, nor in the equally hot controversy over Uniate transit to Roman Catholicism. It has been argued that in Galicia in particular—a brand new Habsburg acquisition—she cooperated with Joseph in the 1770s to pave the way for the big religious reforms of the 1780s.⁴⁹ Certainly the Uniates themselves appreciated the importance of her central authority in Vienna, and the bishop of Lviv went so far as to keep a representative in the capital to lobby at court in the controversy over creating an ecclesiastical chapter for the Lviv cathedral. As for the bishop himself, Lev Sheptyts'kyi, she permitted him to assume the metropolitanate in Poland in 1778 while retaining the Lviv see in Austria; thus she conceded the international unity of the Uniate Church which Catherine would not countenance when Smohozhevs'kyi sought an analogous position after Sheptyts'kyi's death in 1779. Maria Theresa, however, published a formal imperial rescript in 1778 in order to make perfectly clear that Sheptyts'kyi's joint tenure was a question of her favor:

Since we have learned that your devotion has brought you to the dignity of the metropolitanate, so do we hereby testify to our most gracious satisfaction at this advancement of your devotion, and furthermore confirm with all the more pleasure our most gracious protection. We may have well-founded confidence, based on your devout zeal to carry out our commands, that by these qualities you will bring about all the more quickly and completely whatever appears necessary to us for the improvement of Church discipline and the worldly well-being of our Greek Catholic subjects.⁵⁰

Here Maria Theresa made Sheptyts'kyi's ecclesiastical career very much the business of the Habsburg state, praising in particular his "zeal" in obeying her commands, and presenting his new Polish responsibilities as a mere Austrian convenience—inasmuch as he could use the power of the metropolitanate to advance her subjects in Galicia. The balance between bishop and empress was becoming a delicate one, and was never really tested since Sheptyts'kyi died the next year, and Maria Theresa passed away the year after that. Certainly the

empress was not inhibited about making demands on her Uniate bishops. Even in her legendary act of beneficence, the creation of the *Barbaraicum*, the Uniate bishops were taxed for the support of their seminarians in Vienna—and they strenuously protested the imposition.⁵¹

Joseph would give all his bishops much more reason to protest. Unlike Maria Theresa, he was no pious Catholic. Though he was ten years younger than Catherine they were of the same generation of enlightened absolutism: Joseph joined his mother as co-ruler in 1765, three years after Catherine countenanced her husband's murder in order to ascend the Russian throne. Joseph appreciated Catherine's adherence to the Petrine tradition of state over Church, but his own reforms were so radical as to give her new ideas. Perhaps the most fundamental difference between Catherine and Joseph with regard to the Uniate Church was that the Habsburg religious reforms were directed against all Catholic institutions. Catholicism in Austria was the dominant religion, and the Uniates of Galicia were blown about almost incidentally in a storm that overturned the much vaster edifice of Roman Catholicism. Catherine, on the other hand, when she came to the throne in 1762, found the dominant religion, Orthodoxy, already reasonably well regulated by the state. The Uniate diocese she acquired from Poland in 1772 was quite institutionally independent by comparison, and so her interventions acted upon the Uniates distinctly, becoming inevitably acts of discrimination. Joseph's interventions had the opposite effect: by assaulting the Uniate Church in complete conjunction with his assaults on Catholicism in general, he forced upon the Uniates an irresistible inclusion.

Thus, while it is possible to enumerate individually Catherine's decrees for the Uniates of Belarus, the Uniates of Galicia were affected by all those general reforms that constituted the Josephine revolution. The famous Toleration Patent of 1781 gave protection to the Uniates' traditional rivals, the Orthodox, a minority in Galicia. The secularization of the monasteries and dissolution of the orders, beginning in 1781, sparing only those that provided education and cared for the sick, took a toll on the Uniate Basilians. From 1782 Joseph was redefining and reorganizing the dioceses and all their constituent parishes, ultimately aiming to make Austrian ecclesiastics into salaried civil servants. State seminaries were created to educate the clergy under government supervision. Strict regulation by decree affected every aspect of religious life from the very highest matters of papal pronouncements and relations with Rome to the smallest details of ritual, devotion, and decoration in each parish church.

For the Uniates of Galicia the crucial Josephine institution was the General Seminary in Lviv. It was one of a set of seminaries the emperor established throughout the Habsburg lands in his determination to control the education of the clergy. They were, for the most part, unpopular and unsuccessful, and after Joseph's death they were generally closed down by his successor and brother,

Leopold II. The one exception was Lviv where the seminary met a pressing need for more and better clerical training. The price for the General Seminary was the *Barbaraeum*; Maria Theresa's Viennese establishment was closed in 1784, right after Joseph opened his own in Lviv in 1783 by court decree. The other casualty was the Theatine College in Lviv, exactly the sort of seminary Joseph was most eager to displace. In 1787 he further expanded educational opportunities by creating the Ruthenian Institute, which offered clerical instruction in the vernacular language for those who could not study in Latin at the General Seminary.

In 1790, when Leopold was already abolishing the Josephine seminaries in Austria, the Uniate bishops of Galicia petitioned for the preservation of the Lviv institution as an exception—and the emperor, by decree, allowed it to continue. It was not that the bishops failed to appreciate the significance of state control, for they also eagerly petitioned to take over from the government the administration and supervision of the seminary. Leopold, however, would not go that far, and, in fact, the bishops thought it worth preserving the Josephine institution even at the cost of continuing state supervision. For just as Catherine's scruples about foreign bishops in her empire served to extend the authority of her own Uniate bishop at Polatsk, so Joseph's insistence on brand new Habsburg seminaries also allowed his Uniate bishops in Galicia to make themselves more powerful within their Uniate Church. Petro Bilians'kyi (Piotr Bielański), bishop of Lviv, had succeeded Sheptyts'kyi in 1780, chosen by Maria Theresa without reference to the Vatican; at the same time Ryllo came to Przemyśl, insulting Catherine by refusing Polatsk, and thereby causing great distress in Rome. These were new bishops for the Josephine decade, and Joseph, by removing Uniate education from the Viennese *Barbaraeum* and Lviv Theatine College, enabled these rising episcopal powers in Galicia to join with him in shaping the next generation of Uniate clergy. After twenty-five years the General Seminary was finally turned over to complete episcopal control; in 1806 Emperor Francis I put it in the hands of Antin Anhelovych (Anton Anhelowicz), the head of the newly created metropolitanate of Halych. There was, however, one crucial connection that made this a difficult shift to interpret: Anhelovych, some twenty-five years before, had been Joseph's first state-appointed rector for the new General Seminary. Thus, it is not easy to say whether the Uniate Church took over the Josephine Seminary, or whether the Josephine Seminary took over the Uniate Church.

State intervention thus proved favorable or unfavorable for different elements within the Church. The General Seminary and Ruthenian Institute favored the Josephine bishops and created a new generation of priests, while the Basilian order lost its educational edge. Candidates for the order were put through the Seminary along with everyone else, while the Basilians' own schools tottered in the storm of Joseph's aggressive educational interests. The emperor's sweeping assault on the monasteries was even more damaging, and the issue of supreme

authority sealed the downfall of the Basilians. In 1780, the first year of his sole reign, the order recognized the significance of Habsburg sovereignty by making the monks of Galicia into one distinct provincial division. In 1782 Joseph forced them one step further by disallowing the subordination of any monastery in Galicia to the protoarchimandrite in Poland. He did not formally sever the Uniates in general from the Commonwealth metropolitanate, as Catherine did in 1783, but his handling of the Basilians illustrated the same principle. The monks, now cut loose from their general, were placed under the authority of the Josephine bishops in Galicia, whose power correspondingly increased. Furthermore, though these bishops remained, for the time being, subject to the metropolitan in Poland, the idea for an independent Habsburg metropolitan, finally achieved in 1806, was already seriously proposed and considered in 1779 at the death of Sheptytskyi, and then again in 1790 at the death of Joseph.

In general the emperor's assumption of power over the Church also enhanced that of the bishops, since, like Catherine, Joseph built up their authority even while establishing his over them. He bestowed upon Bilians'kyi and Ryllo supervisory consistories of lay officials, and the priests of both cathedrals, along with the consistory officials, were to bear the distinctive honorary insignia of a pectoral cross, Greek style with equal arms. The men of Lviv had images of the Virgin and St. George on their crosses, while the men of Przemyśl had John the Baptist on theirs. In both cathedrals the crosses bore the inscription "Josephus II"—for these were not only the bishop's men, but also the emperor's.⁵²

Patriotic Loyalty and Religious Zeal

While Joseph in the 1780s was already attempting to legislate a revolutionary state Church—a decade ahead of the French Civil Constitution of the Clergy—in Poland the Uniate Church still approached the monarch in the spirit of the *ancien régime*. In 1781 there took place in Warsaw a ceremonial laying of the first stone for a new Uniate church. Under that stone the nuncio laid five Roman medallions honoring the pope, while Stanisław August, present for the occasion, added a silver medallion with his own effigy.⁵³ This underground emblematic conjunction of pope and king (in the imbalanced ratio of five to one) was a far cry from labeling the churchmen of Galicia with the tag "Josephus II." In Poland the Uniate Church was still seeking the patronage of the state, whereas in Austria the state had gone far beyond patronage in its overwhelming impositions.

In 1783, two years after the first stone, Smohozhevskyi was already expecting great things from the project, which he placed in the context of the Uniates' tribulations in Ukraine ten years before:

I have directed all my cares to that vast province of Ukraine, which forms the greater portion of the metropolitanate. In that time I have established

myself in those parts, where until now no other metropolitan has ever made his residence, and I am procuring with my presence and my live voice to retain in the Holy Union those many populations that, after being seduced by the violence and fraud of the schismatics in the recent most unhappy turbulence of Ukraine, have now spontaneously returned in great number to the Catholic faith, and I go on recalling to the breast of the Church those most obstinate apostates who still persist in schism. The Lord blessing my pastoral cares, the Holy Union increases its numbers more and more in Ukraine, while I seek also to increase its splendor in every place, and particularly in the capital of the kingdom where many Uniates permanently reside. Therefore, for their ease, and for the decorum of our rite I have had constructed in Warsaw a spacious and elegant church, where in the future all the holidays shall be celebrated with the greatest solemnity.⁵⁴

Here Smohozhev'skyi gave a very clear idea of his program for the Uniates in post-partition Poland. He had assumed the metropolitanate just three years before in 1780, but his predecessors had never been able to think programmatically. Felitsian Fylyp Volodkovych (Felicjan Filip Wołodkowicz), who lived until 1778, had had his competence questioned too often and too controversially to be able to lead his Church into a new era after 1772. His successor Sheptyts'kyi survived only a year in the office, and even in that time retained his ties to Lviv and Maria Theresa. When Catherine refused to allow Smohozhev'skyi to keep one foot in Polatsk, she gave wholly to the Commonwealth an extremely effective ecclesiastical statesman, one who had just graduated from an arduous political training in her own empire. At last in 1780 the Uniates of Ukraine would see their "spontaneous" recovery, which began in 1775, consolidated by thoroughgoing episcopal leadership.

The hallmark of Smohozhev'skyi's statesmanship was his recognition that the flock required not only his pastoral leadership in Ukraine but, at the same time, his political influence in Warsaw. The man who had traveled to St. Petersburg to wait on Catherine at her card table knew well the importance of a royal capital in an age of enlightened absolutism. He had enjoyed the patronage of Stanisław August before 1772, before his diocese was partitioned from the Commonwealth, and so in 1780 he returned to the royal favor of a monarch less treacherous to court than Catherine had been. In 1781 Stanisław August was there for the laying of the first stone of the Warsaw edifice; its "elegance" and "decorum" would impress upon the royal government the importance of the Uniate Church. Until his death in 1788, Smohozhev'skyi pursued this dual policy of pastoral presence in Ukraine and political presence in Warsaw.

The year of his death was also, coincidentally, the year that his careful courting of the monarchy became almost irrelevant, for 1788 was the first year of the Four-

Year Sejm, introducing a period of revolutionary upheaval in the Church affairs of the Commonwealth. At the Sejm the great bulk of the Uniate Church would finally feel the force of that state intervention which the Uniates of Belarus had first felt in the 1770s and the Uniates of Galicia still more deeply in the 1780s. The most celebrated act of the Sejm with regard to the Uniate Church redeemed a promise made two centuries before at the time of the Union: the metropolitan was admitted into the Senate of the Commonwealth, and thus permitted to join the Roman Catholic bishops. The Uniate parish clergy also had reason to praise the beneficence of the Sejm when it repealed the statute of 1764 that made the sons of Uniate priests liable to serfdom.

These gestures were intended to strike down the discriminatory barrier that had made the Uniate Church into a secondary stepsister of Roman Catholicism through two centuries of Polish history. Every bit as important, however, were those legislative measures that affected both forms of Catholicism and reordered their relations to the state. The crux of the matter was the clergy's inability to shelter its property from the revenue needs of the newly assertive state, especially as the Sejm sought to raise a great army for the future defense of Polish independence. In the spring of 1789 the ecclesiastical estate gave in to pressures for a doubled tax contribution, but far more important in principle was the act of July 1789 whereby the Sejm approved a formula for confiscating the property of the bishops and compensating them with state pensions. Under the unassuming title "Funds for the Army," debated and voted even as the French revolutionaries were storming the Bastille, each diocese was scheduled for economic liquidation at the death of its present bishop, though that was modified in 1790 to allow for the retention of some episcopal property.⁵⁵ This legislative claim upon the dioceses naturally encouraged further interventions in their affairs, including a program of administrative rationalization and the envisioning of state seminaries on the Josephine model. The interest of the Sejm in a new Uniate diocese at Minsk came from the need to provide for those parts of the Polatsk diocese remaining in Poland since 1772. Catherine in 1783 formally forbade her archbishop of Polatsk any connection to the metropolitanate in Poland, and now the Sejm, reciprocally, sought to sever all relations between Uniate parishes in Poland and the see of Polatsk in Russia.

These measures of the Sejm were intended to bind the Uniates to the Commonwealth under the new constitution of 1791. Such concerns naturally emerged at a moment when Poland was declaring its independence from Russia, and Catherine, after she invaded Poland in 1792, then overturned every act of the Sejm. While enlightened absolutism in Russia and Austria, as far as the Uniates were concerned, would be judged according to the historical consequences for future generations, in Poland it could only be judged on its own terms—for the Commonwealth really did not have a future. The stillborn reforms of the

Sejm were perfectly illustrative of the values and concerns that the Enlightenment brought to matters of Church and state. Furthermore, not since Garampi's unheeded *Exposé*, at the Partition Sejm twenty years before, was there such an advanced discussion of religious affiliation and political loyalty as there was at the Four-Year Sejm.

While the constitution of 3 May 1791 left Catholicism, Roman and Uniate, as the dominant religion of the new regime, and the admission of the metropolitan to the Senate lent credibility to that dual dominance, at the same time the Sejm legislated the establishment of a state-sponsored Orthodox Church in the Commonwealth. Just as Catherine had insisted on a Uniate see at Polatsk fully independent of the metropolitanate in Poland, so the Sejm now reciprocally mandated an Orthodox hierarchy in Poland with no ties to Moscow, directly subordinate to the Greek patriarch in Constantinople. This was, however, no mere abstract exercise in assertive sovereignty, but rather a carefully considered response by the Sejm to eruptions of violence and counterrevolutionary conspiracies in Ukraine in 1789. This dangerous instability of the southeastern lands of the Commonwealth forced the Sejm to pay special attention to the Uniate and Orthodox populations of those lands, and to consider their institutional and sentimental relations to the Commonwealth state.

The religious unrest in Ukraine in 1768, promoted by Haidamak violence, had facilitated Russian intervention in the Commonwealth. Now in 1789, with the new unrest in Ukraine, the Sejm immediately instituted an investigative commission to get to the bottom of the matter. To no one's surprise, they uncovered the activity of Russian agents, found stocks of weapons hidden away in Orthodox monasteries, and soon saw reason to arrest the Orthodox bishop, Viktor Sadkov'skyi. The commission, however, also heard reports that Uniate priests were involved in the same conspiracies against Poland. Indeed, Uniate priests denounced other Uniate priests for collusion with Russian agents; the whole consistory of the diocese of Lutsk fell under suspicion, many others were arrested, and a few were even executed in the hasty justice that sought to squash incipient disorder. To be sure, the final report of 1790 blamed the Orthodox Church. Furthermore, the Lutsk ecclesiastic, Teodosii Brodovych (Theodosius Brodowicz), wrote a scathing indictment of the commission's readiness to believe the worst about the Uniates on the weakest evidence; he contemptuously cited the ignorance of the commissioners who mistook the Slavonic prayers to the "Tsarytsia," the Virgin Queen, for devotion to the "Tsarina" in St. Petersburg.⁵⁶ Brodovych himself was from suspect Lutsk, and his self-justification pointed to the problematic persistence of some Polish suspicion of the Uniates, on the one hand, and some Uniate ambivalence about their own religious and political affiliations, on the other.

The Four-Year Sejm was concerned to ease religious tensions in the hope of

reconciling the peoples of the Commonwealth in a common Polish patriotism. A declaration of the Sejm concerning religion in 1790 denounced “fanaticism” and urged the cause of “enlightenment” (*oświecenie*). The Sejm called upon “bishops of both rites to order the clergy, in a manner appropriate to every intelligence, most often and most particularly to illuminate (*oświecać*) the people concerning these important truths, which are very well known to elevated knowledge, that, on the strength of God’s religion, loyalty to their own country is the most holy obligation.” Thus Roman Catholic and Uniate bishops were particularly singled out and charged with bringing this patriotic message to their flocks. The Sejm offered an even broader vision of religious reconciliation, based on a policy of official toleration, such that all those differentiated by religion “should be joined in love of country, loving one another, and living together in unity.”⁵⁷ Freedom for Protestant and Orthodox worship would be protected, but Roman Catholic and Uniate populations were clearly regarded as the dual and principal targets for establishing patriotism through religious mobilization and illumination.

A special deputation of the Sejm reported on the state of the Union in Poland, beginning with the most elementary observations: “The Union in Poland forms part of the dominant religion. Neither in their dogma nor in their supreme head do the Greek Catholics differ from the Latin Catholics.” This had to be set clearly before the Sejm, even two hundreds years after the Union of Brest, as if these points might have failed to register on the government of the Commonwealth. “Through the negligence of the government the higher Uniate clergy was excluded from participation in the government and the lower clergy from its protection.” This could now be rectified—by bringing the metropolitan into the Senate and protecting the children of parish priests from serfdom—and such attentions were justified by certain complex political considerations. “The neglect of the Uniates,” the deputation remarked, “can only bind them to the Orthodox in insidious deceptions, and cause harm to the fatherland.”⁵⁸ This was very close to the political appreciation of the Union that Garampi had attempted to publicize twenty years before. Now, a revolutionary constitutional regime, founded on the premise of national reform in defiance of foreign domination, necessarily weighed with new seriousness the affections and disaffections of its population. A broader conception of citizenship went hand in hand with a more intense interest in patriotic identity, marking a milestone in the emergence of modern nationalism. Traditional suspicions of the Uniates lent urgency to the question of how they would “bind” themselves, religiously and nationally.

The recently deceased Smohozhevs’kyi was hailed in the report of the deputation as a Polish national hero, demonstrating the perfect combination of “patriotic loyalty and religious zeal.”⁵⁹ He had stood up to Catherine during the years when the Commonwealth was prostrate, when the government of Poland had no

attention to spare for the Uniates. No mention was made of the fact that he had conciliated Catherine quite as much as he stood up to her, though the deputation concluded that Smohozhevskyi “might have been able to achieve greater success, if he could have participated in the Senate of the Commonwealth.” Therefore, “what he could not be, his successor will become.” The deputation actually recommended the admission of all the Uniate bishops to the Senate, but the Sejm voted for the metropolitan alone, Teodosii Rostotskyi (Theodosius Rostocki), and assigned him, in spite of his archiepiscopal status, a place of lesser precedence behind the Roman Catholic bishops. His admission was explained in the Sejm as a vindication of past promises, and also a “proof of favor to the clergy of that rite, who have distinguished themselves by unshakable loyalty to the king and the fatherland.”⁶⁰ Actually, the encouragement and confirmation of that loyalty was the reason for Rostotskyi’s inclusion, but the continued exclusion of all the other Uniate bishops made the proof of favor less completely persuasive. By admitting the metropolitan alone, the Sejm showed itself, in fact, fully attuned to contemporary enlightened policy toward the Uniate Church. Catherine, too, had insisted on one archbishop alone to govern her Uniate subjects, while in Austria the possibility of a metropolitan for Galicia was already under consideration. The Uniates’ ambiguous position between the worlds of Catholicism and Orthodoxy made it seem all the more urgent that there be one hierarchical head to speak for them clearly before the secular state—and relay its requirements clearly back to them.

In establishing political prerogatives over religious institutions, governments valued ecclesiastical structures that encouraged rational integration and organization. An emphasis on hierarchical authority was one aspect of this, while the rationalization of the dioceses and parishes was another, in Poland after 1788 as in Austria after 1780. The proposed establishment of a new see at Minsk was fully in accord with these principles. The deputation of the Sejm reported:

The bishops assigned to foreign lands should have no jurisdiction in our land, and likewise our bishops should have none in neighboring states. They should be able to operate as officials, together with the civil government, and thus become witnesses to the intentions of the government.⁶¹

The first point of jurisdiction was almost a conventional one by that time, but the second point that followed from it, envisioning bishops who “operate as officials,” represented the more radical implications of Josephinism and the French Constitution of the Clergy. This was very much a part of the religious policy of the Sejm, with its interest in appropriating diocesan property and paying salaries to the propertyless bishops. Such invasive policies were considered for

Catholicism in general, but they were especially interesting in the case of the Uniate Church, since new paths of political reflection revealed the urgency of binding the Uniates to the doomed Commonwealth.

A Few Signatures from the Community

The issue of Poland's political sovereignty stimulated the Four-Year Sejm to reconsider relations between the state and the Uniate Church, and, after Catherine's cancellation of the Sejm and violation of Polish sovereignty, she, too, attempted to transform state relations with the Uniates in the Russian Empire. Interventionist sponsorship of the Uniates in Poland never had time to take effect, since the Commonwealth expired in 1795, while interventionist harassment in the Russian Empire also failed to have its full effect, since Catherine died in 1796.

In fact, the whole interval from 1788, the first year of the Sejm, until Catherine's death in 1796 was one of rollercoaster turns in Russian-Polish relations. Just as in the previous period of unsettlement and reorientation from 1768 to 1775, now again the Uniate Church was buffeted about in conditions of political instability, and served as a convenient pressure point for Catherine as she found herself once again reconsidering her Polish policy. The Uniates in 1772 found themselves divided among three states, no longer united under the protection of the Commonwealth; after 1795 the Commonwealth ceased to exist altogether and the Uniates were vulnerable survivors of the state that had helped create their Church exactly two centuries earlier. At the same time, a radicalization of ideas about religious policy throughout Europe, already evident at the Polish Sejm, encouraged Catherine to try to handle her Polish crisis in the 1790s by pressuring the Uniate Church even more aggressively than she had at the time of the first partition.

In 1787, one year before the opening of the Sejm, Smohozhev'skyi still tended the Uniates of Poland in the good graces of a benignly aloof government; he could boast of a great new church in Warsaw. In the same year, Lisov'skyi, appointed to fill the Polatsk vacancy four years before, found himself happily favored by his Russian sovereign. It was the year of Catherine's magnificent Dnieper regatta procession to the Crimean peninsula. Lisov'skyi and Siestrzeńcewicz were also summoned to the Crimea in June 1787, and while the latter was rewarded there with a new Roman Catholic church—an ancient Greek temple that the Muslims had used for baths—the former received for the Uniates a mosque to be converted to Christian worship. In June 1788 the Propaganda Fide in Rome believed that Russian rule was no imminent menace to the Uniate Church. On the contrary, after the bestowal of the Crimean mosque, and with the outbreak of a new Russian-Ottoman war, Rome entertained “the most flattering hopes, with the benediction of the Lord, for the further propagation of Catholicism in those regions, should the outcome of the war be favorable to Russia.”⁶² Here was a

total reversal of perspective from that of Catherine's first Russian-Ottoman war. In 1774 Rome had been counting on a Turkish victory so that the sultan might protect the Uniates from Russia.

It was the unsettling of the political status quo between Poland and Russia after 1788 that consequently unsettled the religious stability of the preceding years. When the Russian-Ottoman war finally did end in 1791, there was little cause to persist in the "flattering hopes" that Rome had once entertained. In 1792 Russian armies were free to invade Poland, putting an end to the Four-Year Sejm, and in 1793 Catherine, together with Frederick William II, imposed upon the Commonwealth a second partition. Thereby she significantly increased her population of Uniate subjects, acquiring a large part of Ukraine, including most of the metropolitan diocese. In the partition treaty of 1793, Catherine once again bound herself to the religious status quo for Catholics of both rites in her new lands. In that same year Catherine let one of her ministers raise for discussion the question of how the Uniates could be converted to Orthodoxy. Ludwig Pastor, in his classic *History of the Popes*, basing his account on that of Pelesh, noted Catherine's insincerity and flatly concluded: "Catherine II, the destruction of Poland accomplished, prepared to deal the death-blow to the Greek Union, this being the second object of her Polish policy and one which she had pursued all along." Madariaga comments that "in common with most contemporary Orthodox officials and with subsequent Orthodox historians, Catherine regarded the Uniate religion as an unhappy marriage of the dogmas of one faith with the ritual of another, an artificial creation, specially invented to seduce the Orthodox population of Belarus from their allegiance to Moscow."⁶³ Certainly, Catherine was sensitive to the political implications of religious allegiance, and after the second partition she regarded with concern the increased number of her Uniate subjects.

In 1794 Russia inaugurated a missionary campaign directed at the new Uniate populations. That same year witnessed the Kościuszko insurrection in Poland, the outbreak of full-scale revolutionary war against Russia. In fact, the Kościuszko insurrection began in March, while the missionary campaign opened with a great pastoral appeal in May—accompanied by Russian denunciations of the Uniates for participation in the insurrection. Five years before, the Uniates had been denounced in the Commonwealth for participating in seditious conspiracies against the Sejm, and now Russia, too, insisted on the significance of religious affiliation for political loyalty. In 1794 the violent disordering of Catherine's Polish policy coincided with the aggressive assault on the Uniates. In 1768 Catherine's military response to Polish political defiance in the Confederation of Bar had been accompanied by harassment of the Uniates of Ukraine, and in 1794 she acted similarly at the moment of the Kościuszko insurrection. Once again religious pressure was her response to political instability, but the lessons

of the intervening generation, as well as the greater territorial rearrangements of the second and third partitions, ensured that this time the pressure would be more radically applied.

In 1793 Catherine consulted the Orthodox Synod concerning the Uniates, and the Synod in turn consulted the Greek churchman Evgenios Voulgaris. He had served in Russia since the 1770s, and now prepared a memorandum "On the Best Means for Reunification of the Uniates with the Orthodox Church." Voulgaris, in many ways a man of the Greek Enlightenment, rejected violence as a means of reunification, and emphasized instead exemplary pastoral appointments and a comprehensive system of religious education for "correct instruction in the faith."⁶⁴ Though the ensuing campaign was less pacific than Voulgaris envisioned, the consultation of 1793 suggests that Catherine herself may not yet have decided upon her means or her ends.

At the head of the missionary campaign in 1794 stood Viktor Sadkovs'kyi, who had represented Orthodox interests within the Commonwealth since the first partition, initially as the chaplain of the Russian embassy in Warsaw, then as archimandrite of the monastery at Slutsk, and finally as Orthodox archbishop of Minsk. Sadkovs'kyi had recently been released from arrest in Poland, under suspicion of sedition since 1789, and now he aggressively made the case for Orthodox victimization in the Commonwealth. The commitment of the Russian state to Sadkovs'kyi was expressed in an annual fund of 20,000 rubles for his missionary work and the promise of cooperation from the Russian army. In the inaugural pastoral appeal of 1794, Sadkovs'kyi lamented past persecution of the Orthodox in Poland, and called upon all those "whose grandparents, fathers, or themselves were brought by fraud or by fear from Orthodoxy to union with the Latins, to return without fear to the arms of the Orthodox Church."⁶⁵ This appeal was read in the Uniate churches of Catherine's new lands, and the conclusion made explicit the political concerns of the whole campaign.

Arise, children of the Church, and find satisfaction in the freedom of the Orthodox confession that inspired your ancestors and many of yourselves. The persecution has ceased, the storms have subsided. Hurry into the arms of the Church, your mother, so that the peace of conscience may make you happy, so that you may proceed along the path of truth that leads us to grace and glory. And may each of you, according to his condition, besides avowing the truths of the Orthodox religion, also fulfill his duty of loyalty to the supreme ruler and the state.⁶⁶

Twenty years before, it had been enough for Smohozhev'skyi and his clergy to render publicly their oath of loyalty to Catherine in the Polatsk cathedral. Now, a more modern conception of political duties and loyalties required a more

profound affirmation of loyalty from a more complete domain of the population. Religious conversion was to be both proof and guarantee of the change in sovereignty.

This radicalization of religious harassment was revealed in the conduct of the campaign of 1794. At the time of the first partition, Uniate priests in Ukraine had served as focal points for Russian pressure; they were bullied, arrested, and replaced. Now, when a team of Orthodox priests and Russian soldiers arrived in a Uniate village, they assembled the entire community and applied pressure to everyone. There was missionary preaching followed by dark threats and even beatings in church. Above all, there was an appeal for signatures, and conversion to Orthodoxy was confirmed by the signing of individual names. This was persecution conceived in a modern spirit, initiated in the culminating year of the French revolutionary Terror, and appropriately aimed at terrorizing the Uniate Church as an aggregation of individuals, not just as a religious corporate structure. Furthermore, it was these signatures that provided the fig leaf of justification invoked by state authority. According to the protests of Metropolitan Rostotskyi:

Wherever priests and people, in spite of threats and terrors, remained steadfast, then, even when they [the persecutors] had obtained only a few signatures from the community, they confiscated the church with all its furnishings, took the whole village under their spiritual administration and drove out the Uniate priests.⁶⁷

Thus, the collection of signatures preceded the usurpation of property and priesthood. Churches were appropriated either by crude thuggery, with Orthodox missionaries climbing in the windows, or by more refined legal harassment as foundation papers were carefully examined for evidence of Orthodox possession as far back as the Union of 1596.

The great institutional blow to the Uniate Church was delivered by Catherine in 1795, just at the time of the third, final, and complete partition of Poland. She dismissed the half-dozen Uniate bishops who now fell under her sovereignty, including the metropolitan, and sent them into retirement on state pensions. Their dioceses, which since the previous year had been locally assaulted, signature by signature, church by church, were now effectively abolished by decree from St. Petersburg, and all the Uniates of the Russian Empire were hierarchically subordinated to the one remaining Uniate spiritual authority, the archbishop of Polatsk. This was Lisovskiy, who had been chosen by Catherine herself after so much suspense in 1783, and his preservation, indeed his aggrandizement, clearly explained the dismissal of his colleagues. They were all the appointments of Stanislaw August, a king now forced into ignominious abdication

and retirement himself; they were all subjects of the Commonwealth, a state that no longer existed on the map of Europe. Catherine's long cherished policy of diplomatic domination in Poland had failed absolutely, and she now faced the more complex challenge of political annexation and administration. The Kościuszko insurrection in 1794 gave some idea of how difficult and perilous this challenge might prove to be in an age of increasingly emphatic national sentiment. Catherine responded by targeting the Uniates and applying the now practiced techniques of enlightened absolutism—expropriating, consolidating, pensioning, subordinating—the techniques of sovereign authority in religious affairs. At the same time she sponsored a missionary campaign, conceived in an aggressively modern spirit, to meet the modern challenge of national integration. The relationship between Church and state would no longer provide the only political key to government in the region; Catherine had begun to recognize the importance of the relationship between religion and nationality.

She died in 1796, with the ramifications of the abolition of Poland still unresolved, and with the missionary campaign against the Uniates still unabating. In nineteenth-century Catholic historiography, it was assumed that Catherine had always intended to destroy the Uniate Church, and the campaign of her last years was interpreted as positive proof of that intention, the ultimate revelation of her malevolence. The historian Likowski supposed that she would have eradicated the Union altogether in Russia, anticipating Nicholas by half a century, "if God had extended her life by several years."⁶⁸ By this interpretation, her death was nothing less than an instance of divine intervention. It is true that the succession of Paul brought a respite for the Uniates, but Catherine's deathbed intentions remain difficult to estimate. Such estimation ought to be based on the facts of the campaign of 1794–1796, but also on the whole record of her reign in Uniate affairs. An important aspect of the last campaign, in this regard, was the preservation of the archbishop of Polatsk when all the other bishops were being sent into forced retirement. At the same time, while missionary harassment was both intense and efficacious in the newly annexed lands of the second and third partitions, the Polatsk diocese remained relatively immune. This at least suggests that Catherine may not have been committed to the complete extermination of the Union.

In fact, her missionary intentions were focused on the newly acquired lands, and especially Ukraine. There the effects were devastating; the Uniates lost more than two thousand parishes, and were in many areas almost institutionally eliminated. The imbalance of the assault, however, the targeting in particular of the Uniates of Ukraine, suggested a government policy more subtle and specific than simple crusading. Catherine had unleashed an Orthodox campaign in Ukraine once before, between 1768 and 1775. At that time the religious pressure

had ceased as soon as Catherine was satisfied with the outcome of the Polish Partition Sejm. Between 1794 and 1796 she applied the same pressure in the same place at the time of another partition crisis. As for the pensioning of the Uniate bishops, Catherine also had applied pressure at the episcopal level once before, between 1779 and 1783 when the archbishopric of Polatsk lay vacant, and finally she had named a new bishop after clearly establishing her own imperial authority in religious affairs.

Catherine's persecution of the Uniates in 1794 was the evolutionary product of a thirty-year reign. Interpreted in the light of her previous dealings with the Uniates, especially during the menacing interludes of 1768–1775 and 1779–1783, the final campaign may well have been intended as an expression of political pressure and sovereign authority. In fact, her techniques and principles of authority came not only from the context of her own previous policy, but were also related to Josephine policy toward the Uniate Church in Galicia. That her injuries to the Union were not irreversible was demonstrated by the reversal that soon followed under Paul. In December 1796 Rostots'kyi already was saluting Paul in St. Petersburg:

The voice of your persecuted and oppressed subjects, great monarch, has reached the throne of your majesty and has been heard. You restore freedom and happiness to a people who were oppressed only because they honored God according to the faith of their fathers . . . King of kings, you saw our misery, and now you see our happiness bestowed upon us by a good monarch.⁶⁹

Sadkovs'kyi in 1794 proposed to restore the Uniates to the fold of their Orthodox ancestors; Rostots'kyi in 1796 looked to the more recent past when he welcomed them back to the faith of their Uniate fathers. The reversal of policy was already under way as soon as Catherine died and Paul succeeded her. Rostots'kyi, in fact, came very close to openly denouncing Catherine for her oppression of the Uniates, something he could only dare to do when addressing the son who hated her.

In 1797 Lorenzo Litta, the last Warsaw nuncio, went to St. Petersburg as papal legate, and proceeded to negotiate the reestablishment of a Uniate hierarchy of three dioceses in the Russian Empire. These were no longer the remnants of old Polish dioceses, but a new hierarchy tailored to the new Russian borders. In 1797 Russia, Prussia, and Austria agreed by secret treaty "to abolish everything which could revive the memory of the existence of the Kingdom of Poland."⁷⁰ When Pope Pius VI ratified Litta's diocesan arrangements in 1798, he accepted at the same time the sovereignty of the Russian state over those former lands of

the extinct Commonwealth. As political uncertainties were resolved, religious pressure was lifted. The Uniates were free to return to the Union in Russia, and they proceeded to do so.

In 1805 Rostotskyi, "Metropolitan of Kyiv, Halych, and Rus'," the last metropolitan of Stanisław August, died in retirement in St. Petersburg. The dethroned king also had passed away in St. Petersburg, seven years before in 1798, and the Commonwealth itself was already ten years gone since 1795. In 1806 Tsar Alexander I reactivated the metropolitanate by appointing an active successor, but the post itself was really a new one, designated with a new title to erase any shadow of a connection to the old Commonwealth: "Metropolitan of the Uniate Church in Russia." Alexander chose Lisov'skyi, Catherine's archbishop of Polatsk. In that same year the Habsburg emperor Francis I approved the creation of another new metropolitanate for the Uniates of Austria. The post was entitled "Metropolitan of Halych," thus distinguishing Habsburg Galicia from the defunct Commonwealth, and the chosen churchman was Antin Anhelovych, who had once been Joseph's rector at the General Seminary in Lviv. Thus, in 1806 the Uniates of the Habsburg and Romanov territories faced the nineteenth century with two distinct hierarchies, each with a metropolitan of its own, both cut off from the old Commonwealth hierarchy that had constituted the Uniate Church for two hundred years. It was no coincidence that the new metropolitanates were assigned to clerics who made their careers in the 1780s: Lisov'skyi, Catherine's man, and Anhelovych, Joseph's man. Enlightened absolutism had transformed the Uniate Church in Austria and in Russia, and, although the Uniate experience was hardly identical in those two states, in both cases relations between Church and state were reordered according to enlightened principles of authority. These institutional parallels left the Uniates of both territories far more susceptible to the power of their respective sovereigns. That power would be exercised very differently by the Habsburgs and the Romanovs in the nineteenth century. The former would sponsor a religious and cultural revival, while the latter would adopt a policy of persecution and demolition. These nineteenth-century divergences, however, should not retrospectively color the historical appreciation of the characteristic structural transformations imposed upon the Uniate Church by enlightened absolutism in the eighteenth century.

PART II: RITUAL AND IDENTITY

For Love of the Jesuits

From November 1772 to January 1773, Smohozhev'skyi was in St. Petersburg, courting his new sovereign and attempting to attain assurances of the security of his Uniate diocese of Polatsk, now incorporated into Catherine's empire. His conscientious courtiership allowed him not only to sample the artichokes and

melons supplied to the imperial table, but also to make the acquaintance of the great ladies who attended the court of the tsarina. His sociability was sufficiently successful to attract a bevy of countesses from the grandest families—Golitsyn, Razumovskii, Naryshkin—to the liturgies that he celebrated in the Catholic church of St. Petersburg. He reported with satisfaction to Rome that these ladies “left convinced that there exists no essential difference between my masses and those of Russia.” Afterwards, in conversation, he was repeatedly asked about different details of the ceremony—vestments, missals, bells, the Eucharist—and he replied, “joking with modesty,” in such a way as to convince the ladies that any variations did not “damage the essence” of the Greek rite. After these replies, he reported to the Warsaw nuncio, all objections “vanished.”⁷¹ This report made the demonstration in St. Petersburg into a double-edged declaration, teaching suspicious and curious Russians that the Uniate rite was reassuringly familiar, while at the same time reminding the Vatican that the Uniates were ritually distinct from Roman Catholics. From its creation in 1596, the mixed nature of the Union—combining Catholic authority and theology with an Orthodox clergy and ritual—was troubling to aggressive purists in both the Catholic and Orthodox camps. In 1772, the partition of Poland and ascension of Russian power made it all the more important that the Uniate Church unequivocally affirm its own mixed construction, as a condition of independent identity and survival. If such self-identification was first practiced in 1772 at the highest levels of the episcopal hierarchy—addressed to the Vatican or the courts of St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Vienna—over the next generation its urgency would be experienced at every level of the Uniate Church, in all its social contexts, as village communities were invited to choose their own priests and individual peasants were solicited for their signatures.

Smohozhevskiy in St. Petersburg was not always in female company. He often visited with three members—“learned and humane”—of the Orthodox Synod, to discuss privately the points of division between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and even the possibilities of general reunion. These discussions were friendly even in disagreement, allowing for “intimate little disputes” (*famigliari disputarelle*). They culminated in a seven-hour informal symposium on issues of ritual and theology, with serious debate over the nature of the Eucharist. “Heated by such a long conversation,” Smohozhevskiy had to take to his bed with fever for four days, “diverting” himself by reading Greek authorities on Eucharistic forms. Fully recovered and returned to society at the home of Count Chernyshev, he was provoked in company—by an outspoken Russian theologian—to pronounce publicly upon the possible union of the Churches. His listeners appeared “strongly surprised” to learn that “the pope seeks nothing but dogmatic Union, and, in the rest, regarding the sacred rites and truly pious and honest customs, as well as ecclesiastical liberty, he is accustomed without difficulty to condescend to the

desires of nations (*alle brame delle Nazioni*)”—as demonstrated in the case of the Ruthenian Uniates themselves.⁷² Again the declaration cut two ways, offering the Russian Empire the Uniate Church as a model of ecumenical unity, while informing Rome of the precise terms in which the Uniate archbishop would construe and defend the Catholicism of the Uniates.

The message to the Vatican was underlined by the extraordinary exclamation, addressed to the Warsaw nuncio Garampi, that followed at this point in the dispatch. For the “surprise” of the company, like the questions of the ladies after mass, confirmed for Smohozhevs’kyi that in the Russian Empire there prevailed the most damaging misimpressions of the Uniate compromise. Yet he did not blame either St. Petersburg or Orthodoxy:

Ah! my Reverend Monsignor, now I understand how much has been contributed to the stubbornness (*cocciutaggine*) of the Orthodox (*disuniti*), and to the present disasters of Poland, by that selfish (*interessato*) zeal of the Jesuit fathers, and also of some Latin bishops, exercised most damagingly for more than a hundred years, to render despised (*vilipeso*), ridiculous, and also abhorred the sacred rite of these Uniates, in order to occupy the property of their churches, to transfer so many villages, so many cities, and so many noble families of the Greek Catholic rite to the Latin rite, having in this manner debilitated the Church and the condition of the Uniates, and reinforced that of the Orthodox.⁷³

In short, for the suspicion he encountered in St. Petersburg as a Uniate in 1772, he blamed a long history of Roman Catholic contempt and despoliation in Poland, especially by the Jesuits. The Uniate Church, from its founding in 1596, depended upon a negotiated compromise between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, and that balance seemed more urgently threatened by Latin forces in Poland right up until 1772. Suspicion of Rome lingered through the next generation, and even acquired additional force from the need to demonstrate in the Russian Empire, as Smohozhevs’kyi did, that the Uniates preserved their Greek rites.

Smohozhevs’kyi was a carefully political prelate, and just as he underplayed any anxiety about Russian Orthodoxy while at the court of Catherine, so he could hardly denounce Roman Catholicism without qualification in a report to the Warsaw nunciature for relay to the Vatican. The blaming of the Jesuits was the solution to this political awkwardness, and they came to serve as a focus for Uniate resentment against the high-handedness of Roman Catholic sponsorship. There was a certain historical injustice in this, for it was a sixteenth-century Jesuit, Antonio Possevino, who played a leading role in the creation of the Uniate Church, while seventeenth-century Jesuits, as in the case of the Chinese rites, had advocated precisely the sort of open construction of Catholicism that

Smohozhev'skyi described in St. Petersburg as the key to religious union. The Jesuits in the eighteenth century, however, were natural scapegoats, denounced across Europe in a spirit of both Jansenism and Enlightenment, and finally abolished as an order by the Vatican itself in July 1773, the very same month that Smohozhev'skyi wrote his report on the visit to St. Petersburg. In 1770 he already complained from Polatsk that he could devote more time to the defense of the Uniates, "if I were not disquieted and persecuted by the Jesuits of this College." In 1772 he protested against "Jesuitical usurpations and persecutions," warning Rome that "for love of the Jesuits it is not fitting to keep in ignorance the secular clergy of the Uniates, nor to leave open the door to transit *ex Ritu ad Ritum*, and now what use can I have from my poor and ignorant priests?"⁷⁴ Thus, the Jesuits represented that privileged part of Roman Catholicism, privileged in property and in education, that underlined by contrast the poverty and ignorance of the Uniate clergy. At the same time, their worldly advantages made them appear as religious predators, undermining the Uniate Church by drawing off its members in transit to the Roman rite.

After the suppression of the Jesuits by the Vatican, they continued to exist insubordinately in Russia with the encouragement of Catherine, and Smohozhev'skyi gave emphatic expression to his resentment in denunciations to Rome. The Jesuits had been ordered to divest themselves of their "habits," the distinctive costumes of their order: "but I believe that changing habit will not change the hide—on the contrary, Jesuitism hidden and everywhere dispersed will be dangerous, so it will be necessary to see to it that no two of these Venerable Members should ever find themselves together in the same place." Such paranoia was consistent with the most conventional eighteenth-century anticlerical myths of Jesuit plotting and conspiracy. Indeed, Jesuit insubordination in the face of the suppression of the society highlighted the crucial and defining issue of Catholicism for the Uniates: their own hierarchical subordination to the pope, in spite of their un-Roman rites. Smohozhev'skyi took satisfaction in reporting himself "horrified" to hear an angry Jesuit theologian "vomiting" his opinion, regarding the suppression of his order, that "Luther left the Roman Church for less reason."⁷⁵ By 1774 the Uniate bishop achieved an even cruder intensity of expression, denouncing the supreme "bestiality" of Jesuit writings (*bestialissime irriflessioni*), at which point his outrage almost seemed to partake of the anticlerical fervor so favored by the age of Enlightenment. That same year, in the house of a Polish woman from a Jesuit family, herself rather crudely characterized as *grandissima Gesuitessa*, he encountered a "pseudo-Jesuit" (*Gesuitino*) and warned him against trying to celebrate any masses in Uniate churches. The *Gesuitino* "ran" to complain to his "pseudo-Rector" (*Rettorone*), and the Uniate archbishop feared they would attack him at court in Warsaw.⁷⁶ Evidently, his fear was not so great, or he would not have spoken so plainly, but the fury of his comments on the Jesuits

during these years of their misfortune suggested a spiritual liberation from past intimidations.

Such seemingly gratuitous vehemence must be taken as an important symptomatic manifestation of the Uniate hierarchical mentality in the 1770s. These odd outbursts reflected more than resentment about the Jesuits preying upon the Uniate Church or about the symbolic juxtaposition of privileged and under-privileged within the Catholic world. Anger at the Jesuits reflected a whole historical perspective on the purpose and direction of the Uniate Church, from its foundation in 1596 to its new exigencies after 1772. The date of the Union of Brest in 1596 lends itself to alternative interpretations. Was the Union a triumph of the Counter-Reformation, ten years after the failure of the Spanish Armada, a Jesuit conquest in Eastern Europe whereby millions were converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism? Or was it a late Renaissance compromise, in the same spirit of religious conciliation that characterized the contemporary reigns of Elizabeth I in England and Rudolf II in Prague? Smohozhevskiy in St. Petersburg in the late eighteenth century clearly considered it an important point—of external policy toward state authority and of religious identity within the Church—to insist on a spirit of compromise presiding over the foundation and development of the Union. It was thus that he himself held forth upon the nature of religious union, concluding with historical references that revealed his interest in the Renaissance. The pope, he explained at the home of Chernyshev, was “accustomed without difficulty to condescend to the desires of nations, just as Eugenius IV condescended to the Greek propositions at the Council of Florence, and Clement VIII to the demands of the Ruthenians of Poland.”⁷⁷ Thus, linking the reigns of Eugenius IV (1431–1447) and Clement VIII (1592–1605), and comparing the Council of Florence (1439) with the Union of Brest (1596), the eighteenth-century archbishop implicitly assigned the creation of the Uniate Church to an age of Renaissance union and compromise.

The Jesuits, with their Ignatian religious militancy, with their reputation for cleverness and machination, represented for Smohozhevskiy the alternative and false interpretation of the Union in terms of the Counter-Reformation. If the Union was no sincere compromise, but a simple victory for Catholicism, then the Ruthenians had fallen for a Jesuit trick and changed their religion solely to serve the purpose of Counter-Reformation self-aggrandizement. In fact, this was the Orthodox perspective on the Union, the reason that Smohozhevskiy encountered Russian “surprise” when he explained the true nature of his Church; he attributed this to Jesuit contempt for the Uniates and Jesuit preying upon Uniate properties and populations. That contempt and those appropriations were the signs of an interpretation of the whole Union that Smohozhevskiy would not accept and sought to refute.

This historical concern was all the more relevant in the late eighteenth century, because the proper work of the Counter-Reformation remained still to be completed in the age of Enlightenment. Jean Delumeau has argued that the fundamental achievement of the Counter-Reformation in Western Europe was the "Christianization" of a clergy that previously showed a rather weak standard of piety and dedication, so that priests might in turn Christianize a hitherto deeply superstitious and ignorant population.⁷⁸ The "ignorance" that Smohozhevs'kyi frankly noted in his own parish clergy called for Christian education, so that the likewise ignorant peasant laity might also achieve that level of religious identity necessary to the survival of the Uniate Church. He did not hesitate to propose that confiscated properties of the suppressed Jesuits should fund the education of the Uniate clergy: "Good God, such properties from their most antique foundations should belong to my clergy, needful of education more than anything else, the security of the Catholic religion depending upon this."⁷⁹

His denunciations of the Jesuits, even his interest in confiscations, allowed the archbishop's religious program to be curiously conditioned by eighteenth-century enlightened values. Even his concern about ignorance and education, combined as it was with hostility to the Jesuits, involved the spirit of both Counter-Reformation and Enlightenment. When he left Russia in 1780 to bring those same values to Poland as the metropolitan, he reminded Catherine of his educational and economic enterprises as evidence of his good service to her. Above all, it was his unrelenting attitude toward the Jesuits that allowed him to make the idea of religious union into an ideological connection between Renaissance and Enlightenment, effacing or revising the values of the problematic Counter-Reformation. His spirited speech, on behalf of a union that would allow "ecclesiastical liberty" to the "desires of nations," took on some of the rhetorical coloring of Lessing or Voltaire. After all, his hyperbolic hatred of the Jesuits in itself brought the archbishop of Polatsk into peculiar alignment with the philosopher of Ferney. By his rejection of the Jesuits and his celebration of their suppression, Smohozhevs'kyi signaled a certain modernity of purpose, which may be observed at every level and location of the Uniate Church during the last decades of the eighteenth century. With the passing of the ancien régime, a specifically Uniate identity was cultivated in ritual and disseminated through education, to adapt an early modern religious experiment to forms and standards of piety consistent with the conditions of modern society.

Insolent and Malignant Transit

In 1773, at the height of his outrage against the Jesuits, Smohozhevs'kyi also found energy to denounce the activities of certain local Carmelites who were converting Uniates within his diocese to Roman Catholicism. He declared him-

self “scandalized by these Carmelite fathers, discalced but rich enough”—thus sounding the note of resentment against privilege—and lamented that “they weaken the Church of the Uniates, inflame the Orthodox, and scandalize even the Jews.”⁸⁰ The issue of Uniate “transit” to Roman Catholicism was one that came up as well with regard to the Jesuits, not just as a contemporary problem of Uniates passing *ex Ritu ad Ritum*, but also as an historical reflection upon the seventeenth-century Polish assimilation of the Ruthenian nobility—“so many noble families of the Greek Catholic rite”—with Jesuit schools exercising a certain cultural magnetism upon Uniate boys. It was striking that the Uniate Church in 1773 should have interested itself so acutely in the scandal of “transit” to Roman Catholicism at precisely the time that Russian armies in Ukraine facilitated widespread and ongoing “apostasy” to Orthodoxy. In fact, these issues were perceived as interlocking parts of the same problem, inasmuch as Roman Catholic contempt bred Orthodox contempt, and any pressure from the Roman side was dangerously inflammatory in Russia. For Smohozhevskyi in St. Petersburg, the key to preserving the Union within an Orthodox state was to demonstrate the sincerity of its founding compromise. Such demonstration was not simply political in purpose, for compromise was also the key to internal viability and vitality, enabling the Uniate Church to satisfy the ritual and spiritual concerns of its members.

Smohozhevskyi had studied in Rome as a young man from 1734 to 1740, and it was there that he acquired not only his richly expressive command of Italian, but also the learned expertise to pronounce upon the fateful importance of the transit issue for the Uniates:

During the time of my stay in Rome, I digested all the material on transit, and I am absolutely persuaded that the ruin of the Catholic religion here continues as the consequence of such insolent and malignant transit. I have spoken and written enough about this, but the singularly Jesuitical arrogance, by means of calumny, has impeded the holy effects of the apostolic prohibition established even in the years 1624, 1636, and 1742. Now is the time that the Holy See should show the world that in fact it desires the integrity of the Greek Catholic rite, that it censures, abhors, and condemns whoever weakens it, derides it, discourages it, and finally whoever, with a thousand arts, under the pretext of sanctity, seeks to extinguish it.⁸¹

Typically, the specific transgressions of the Carmelites were absorbed into the more general malignancy of Jesuitical arrogance, as Smohozhevskyi called upon Rome to protect the Uniates by complementing the suppression of the Jesuits with a prohibition against transit. In fact, he managed to obtain at this time the full support of Rome for that prohibition, achieving for his diocese within the

Russian Empire that affirmation of Uniate distinctness that was withheld through two centuries in the Commonwealth.

In 1624, right after the Orthodox lynching in 1623 of the Uniate bishop of Polatsk, St. Josaphat, Pope Urban VIII issued a decree against the transit of Uniates to Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholic influences around King Sigismund III, however, managed to obstruct the publication of the decree in Poland, and attrition among the Uniate nobility continued apace. There was a renewed interest in this issue in the middle of the eighteenth century, in the aftermath of the papal bull of 1742 "Etsi pastoralis," addressed to the Uniate Greeks of Sicily and Calabria. The bull attributed general "precedence" (*praestantia*) to Roman Catholicism over the Greek rite, provoking concern among Uniates as far afield as Poland. In 1744 Pope Benedict XIV sent a message to the Warsaw nuncio on the subject of transit; the Jesuits of Poland were to be reminded that Rome did not approve of encouraging Uniates to embrace the Latin rite.⁸² The Roman Catholic and Uniate hierarchies were polarized through the following decade over "Etsi pastoralis" and the transit issue, with the Uniate bishops gathering at Dubno in 1745, the Latin bishops at Hrodna (Grodno) in 1752, and the Uniates again at Vilnius in 1753. In 1752 Pope Benedict XIV queried the king of Poland, Augustus III, on the issue of transit, but the king preferred not to declare himself, and therefore eventually declined to involve the state in this Church affair. In 1755 the pope himself, in the constitution "Allatae sunt," expressed a commitment to the preservation of Oriental rites within the Roman Catholic Church, and a concomitant opposition to transit, but this could not be enforced in Poland without the support of the state and against the opposition of the Latin bishops.

The controversy reached such a pitch in the 1750s that the Roman Catholic bishop of Przemyśl, Waław Sierakowski, did not hesitate to turn the tables in a sensational fashion with a denunciation of Uniate priests who somehow surreptitiously baptized Roman Catholic children to force them into the Greek rite.⁸³ Uniate countercharges were sometimes of a similar nature, especially with regard to the influences exercised upon young pupils in Jesuit schools. The level of terror and malice that emerged when the transit issue became one of protecting children from abduction and seduction, suggests that the polarization of Roman Catholics against Uniates in early modern Poland could feed upon social tensions more often associated with superstitious anxiety about Jews or Gypsies. At the same time, the fever pitch of charges and countercharges between these two Catholic rites over "transit" in the 1750s was strikingly analogous to the intensely mutual recriminations over "apostasy" between Uniates and Orthodox in the 1760s. It was this context that explained how Smohozhevs'kyi could enter Catherine's empire in 1772, still worried that Roman Catholics were plotting to "ruin" and "extinguish" the Union through transit. For Uniate survival over the

past generation had depended upon a two-front struggle to define its identity and preserve its numbers against the aggressive intentions of both Polish Roman Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy.

In 1773, the Basilians of Polatsk registered the news from Warsaw of the humiliating treaties of partition, which separated Polatsk from Poland and confirmed its new place in the Russian Empire. Under these unprecedented and unsettling circumstances the monks examined their own Uniate identity in recalling the story of a teenage novice, Adam Miszun, who had to defend his vocation against the objections of his parents:

The mother repeatedly said to her son, "Adalku, Adalku, don't you remember when you were little and cried in your cradle, and I went to you, by day and also by night, and now you have forgotten your mother, so that my tears don't move you." The son replied: "When I was little, I cried because I was stupid, but now you have sense but you cry without reason." And the Father remonstrated with his son: "Adalku, to whom will I leave my fortune, my money, et cetera." The son replied: "There is my younger brother, there is my sister." The mother again applied herself to other persuasions saying, "Adalku, what do you gain by becoming a Ruthene (*co tobie potym ze zostaniesz rusinem*) and wearing a russet cloak (*siermiega*) like a peasant." The son replied: "That doesn't matter at all, that I will be a Ruthene, because a Ruthene is just as good as a Roman."⁸⁴

In 1773, stranded in the Russian Empire, the Uniates needed to affirm their identity by rejecting absolutely the presumptuous claims of Roman precedence.

Smohozhev'skyi in 1773 was reflecting upon the seductive persuasions of transit to Roman Catholicism. It seemed altogether fitting that Clement XIV, the pope who abolished the Jesuits, should also at long last bring about the full formal publication of the Vatican's prohibition against transit. Thus Smohozhev'skyi appealed from Polatsk in October 1773:

I know for sure that the Jesuits, unable to increase in Poland except upon the ruins of the Uniates, therefore made Urban VIII, of immortal memory, fear that the publication of the prohibition against transit would not be permitted by King Sigismund III. I know also, that in spite of these oppositions extorted by false supposition, the Apostolic See in the year 1636 validly decreed "not to have rescinded the decree of His Holiness" with which Urban VIII in the year 1624, under the gravest pains, forbade any transit by the Uniates without special dispensation of the Apostolic See. The affair was decided, and the death of the great Pope Benedict XIV impeded its publication. Divine

Providence has left it to the present Supreme Pastor, born and elevated to overcome the greatest difficulties, and to unravel the truth from the pretexts, that his paternal feelings should move him to act that the above decree be finally notified to the bishops, the priests, and to the monastic communities in the former and modern dominion of Poland, with precise orders never again on this point to stir up the poor Ruthenian Uniates, afflicted from all sides, and more attached than anyone else to the Holy Religion, the Apostolic See, and the Vicar of Christendom.⁸⁵

In fact, Clement XIV acceded to the petition from Polatsk, after more than a century of papal hesitation, partly because the new situation of the diocese in the Russian Empire, after the partition, meant that transit to the Latin rite had now become politically problematic.

One year later, in October 1774, Smohozhevs'kyi finally received the long-awaited word from the prefect of the Propaganda Fide and replied with gratitude: "I have never in my life had a sweeter moment than that in which I received from Monsignor Nuncio of Poland the most precious lines with which Your Eminence favored me on 16 July and accompanied by the most clement brief of Our Lord, truly glorious and eternally adorable hierarch of the Church of Christ."⁸⁶ Between the posting in July and delivery in October, however, Clement XIV, that adorable hierarch, had died on 22 September, amid rumors that he was poisoned by the Jesuits for his role in their suppression.

This attention of the dying pope to the Uniates of Belarus could hardly have loomed large for him as he looked back upon his traumatic reign. In Polatsk, however, it was sweet indeed, as an affirmation too long deferred through the history of early modern Poland. It enabled Smohozhevs'kyi and his successors to turn their full attention to the problems of survival in an Orthodox state, though they were never able to discount altogether the possibility of danger from the Latin quarter. The precedent of confirming the prohibition against transit was important in itself, and it would be extended to the Habsburg monarchy in 1777 with the support of Maria Theresa. In 1778 the Propaganda Fide was still debating whether the confirmation of prohibition, issued for the Uniate Church in the Russian Empire, might be extended to what remained of Poland.⁸⁷ Smohozhevs'kyi in 1774 cherished that confirmation, not so much as an obstacle to defections as a declaration of identity and clarification of history. He rejoiced that now at last, "everyone, of whatever state and confession, will have to be fully convinced about the calumny, malignantly disseminated since 1596 and obstinately believed, that the Apostolic See, in desiring and promoting the ecclesiastical Union of the Ruthenians, never had anything else in mind but the weakening and then the extinction of their rites."⁸⁸ He made this same point,

regarding the sincerity of the Union, in dealing diplomatically with his hosts in St. Petersburg the year before, and it was also this clarification, beyond its diplomatic significance at court, which made the Union into something for the Uniates worth fighting to save.

The most likely Latin predator upon the Uniates of Belarus was none other than Siestrzeńciewicz, Catherine's highly favored Roman Catholic bishop at Mahilioŭ (Mogilev), who caused such embarrassment to Rome by protecting the Jesuits in the Russian Empire. In 1774 he was on his way home from St. Petersburg to Mahilioŭ, and stopped at Polatsk to visit Smohozhevs'kyi for half an hour. Siestrzeńciewicz ominously confided that in St. Petersburg people spoke of forcing the Uniates into Orthodoxy after the death of Smohozhevs'kyi, but also insisted, in apparent contradiction to this intention, that he himself had the government's permission to bring the Uniates over to the Latin rite. Smohozhevs'kyi believed in the Latin menace more readily than the Orthodox one, and immediately suspected some sort of Jesuit maneuver (*qualche politica de' Gesuiti*). He was confident that the government in St. Petersburg would respect the Uniates as long as the Roman Catholic clergy did not proselytize among them. Above all, he reported his concern that Siestrzeńciewicz was influencing that government against the urgently requested Vatican confirmation of the transit prohibition. "Eh!" exclaimed the Uniate archbishop of Polatsk with outrage against the nearby Roman Catholic bishop of Mahilioŭ, "let him exercise his zeal in the conversion of those who are not Catholic, and leave in peace the Uniates, faithful to Christ and to his Vicar, the Roman Pope." When the Vatican confirmation finally came, Siestrzeńciewicz was predictably obstructive about registering, publicizing, and communicating it to his clergy, revealing his dedication, according to Smohozhevs'kyi in 1775, to "the ulterior destruction of the Uniates."⁸⁹ The role of Siestrzeńciewicz as Latin nemesis of the Uniates in Russian Poland was paralleled by that of Sierakowski, Roman Catholic archbishop of Lviv, in Austrian Poland. As the bishop of Chełm in Poland in the 1750s he had made inflammatory accusations about the Uniate menace to Roman Catholic children, and in the 1770s, promoted to the archbishopric at Lviv, he used his influence in Vienna and throughout Galicia against the Uniates.

It was in Belarus, however, that Uniate transit to Roman Catholicism actually became a significant social reality, not just a symbolic issue of sincerity. During the four years from 1779 to 1783, when Catherine declined to fill the vacancy at Polatsk left by Smohozhevs'kyi's promotion to the metropolitanate, when Uniates were encouraged to choose freely "whatever priest the community desires," even the commitment of the Propaganda Fide in Rome was not enough to prevent some passage to the Latin rite as well as to Orthodoxy. One of the three members of the governing consistory, Innokentii Malynovs'kyi (Innocent Malinowski), wondered whether it would be better to try to convert the whole

diocese to the Latin rite as a refuge from Orthodoxy. In fact, Siestrzeńcewicz was conducting an active campaign of Roman Catholic proselytism during these years, welcoming thousands of Uniates, and the nineteenth-century historian Likowski vindicated this activity: "However much we may personally wish well to the Ruthenian Uniate Church, in the case of a Uniate who had only the choice between schism and the Latin rite we would without hesitation advise him to join the Latin Church."⁹⁰ An eighteenth-century Uniate churchman like Smohozhevs'kyi, however, refused to see the alternatives so starkly, and in fact three-quarters of the Uniate population in Belarus remained constant through these years. From within the Uniate hierarchy, the predations of Siestrzeńcewicz, Roman Catholic bishop of Mahilioŭ, as much as those of Heorhii Konys'kyi, Orthodox bishop of Mahilioŭ, appeared similarly deleterious. Records from the diocese of Chełm suggest the active nature of Roman Catholic efforts, for when Uniates in transit stated their reasons for changing rites, most spoke of receiving "advice" from Latin priests, especially Piarists and Jesuits.⁹¹

Smohozhevs'kyi believed after the partition that the prohibition of transit to Roman Catholicism was the best guarantee against provoking the aggressive intentions of Russian Orthodoxy. His reasoning was dramatically confirmed in 1786 in Poland, where he himself then presided as metropolitan. In that year, while the Sejm was meeting in Warsaw, an anonymous appeal to the Polish representatives was published, calling upon them to abolish by law the Uniate Church and incorporate its members into Roman Catholicism. The author cited pastoral reasons, alleging the ignorance and immorality of the Uniate clergy, and especially economic reasons—for the different religious holidays of the Latin and Uniate rites complicated economic life wherever the populations coincided.⁹² Such an appeal to standards of education and economy appeared to be motivated by social values of the Enlightenment, all the more so in the presumptuously Josephinist suggestion that the Sejm should have any power at all to legislate, or even propose, such a course.

The only consequence of this anonymous piece of provocation was a magnificent propagandistic opportunity for the Orthodox bishop Konys'kyi, which he exploited in a powerful open letter to the Uniate bishops of the Commonwealth. His was precisely that calumny that Smohozhevs'kyi had fought to refute—that the Union was a mere trick, and that the Roman Catholics of Poland had long intended to extinguish the Greek rite of the Uniates. No less interested in the history of the Union than Smohozhevs'kyi himself, Konys'kyi recounted that at the Sejm of 1717, seventy years earlier, there also had been advocates for an assault on the Uniate Church. The Silent Sejm of 1717 had consummated the triumph of Peter I over the Commonwealth, and then, too, Polish fear of Russia had engendered suspicion of the Uniates. Now, in 1786, Konys'kyi recalled the Polish inclinations of 1717: to speak with contempt of Uniate religious practice,

to deny the Uniates education and give them uneducated priests and bishops, to subordinate Uniate bishops to Latin bishops, to conspire with Jews to displace Uniates from the towns and reduce them to feudal dependence. Konys'kyi then appealed to the Uniates from the perspective of 1786: "Now you say yourselves whether everything contained in the project was not carried out in the following years right up to the present moment."⁹³ By the same token, the project of 1786 for the abolition of the Uniate Church could not be disregarded as the nastiness of an anonymous crank, but had to be studied instead as seriously programmatic.

With scathing sarcasm Konys'kyi warned the Uniates against any religious union that was sponsored in Rome and consummated in Poland:

Look at the beautiful and tempting example for the Greeks, to bring about union with the Roman Church! For Ruthenia a very appealing union of the Uniate Ruthenian with the Roman clergy in all liberties and privileges! A truly apostolic method and manner for spreading the Catholic faith, when by such measures one transforms the Ruthenian Catholics into Roman Catholics!⁹⁴

It was to undermine precisely such charges as these that Smohozhevs'kyi had sought to demonstrate the sincerity of the Union. Now Konys'kyi appealed to Smohozhevs'kyi himself, "reverend metropolitan," and his bishops, taunting them: "You flattered yourselves with the conviction that you were the true image of the original Greek Catholic Church, through the inseparable bond of faith and Christian love united with the Roman Catholic Church and amalgamated into one essence—look how your Roman Catholic brothers think about dealing with you." Konys'kyi assured the Uniates that neither the Roman pope, nor the Polish king, whatever their intentions, were powerful enough to protect the Uniate Church from destruction, and urged them to consider instead the protection of "the invincible empress of Russia." In Konys'kyi's view, this represented the only real road to religious union: "When you have laid aside the imaginary prejudice and antipathy against the Orthodox implanted by your annihilators, then you may be an instrument and fortunate means toward the encouragement of unity and of that union which rests upon the love and peace of Christ."⁹⁵ There was a certain convergence of discourse between Konys'kyi and Smohozhevs'kyi, as they addressed the same historical and theological issues with even a measure of agreement in substance, but yet with that illusively unmeasurable gap in perspective that totally inverted each other's messages. They contested the contemporary identity of the Uniate Church according to their different confessional perspectives, by interpretively reviewing and revising the history of the Union.

According to the Custom of the Oriental Church

Kony's'kyi's sarcastic tribute to the "union of the Uniate Ruthenian with the Roman clergy in all liberties and privileges" played upon longstanding tensions over a perceived inequality of rites. Papal rulings of the early seventeenth century protected the Uniate Church by guaranteeing its equality with the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, culminating in the 1643 declaration of the Propaganda Fide that "Ruthenian ecclesiastics should enjoy the same canonical privileges, immunities, and liberties as the Latin ecclesiastics." Yet, already in 1643 and 1644, Roman Catholic synods in Poland were revising the pronouncements of Rome, and whittling away at the supposed equality of rites. Latin priests were forbidden to celebrate mass in Uniate churches or to make their confessions to Uniate priests, while Uniate bishops were spitefully denied the title of "Illustrissimus."⁹⁶ Roman Catholic pretensions in Poland acquired new energy in the eighteenth century when in 1742 "Etsi pastoralis" assigned *praestantia* to the Latin Church in Sicily and Calabria. The Latin bishops in Poland laid claim to hierarchical superiority over the Uniate episcopate. In 1784, when Smohozhevs'kyi as metropolitan sought a suffragan bishop to assist him in the pastoral care of his vast diocese in Ukraine while he attended to politics in Warsaw, he warned the Vatican that the promotion would have to be handled with the utmost discretion: "so as not to alarm the Latin bishops, always jealous (*sempré gelosi*) of whatever advance in the Ruthenian clergy."⁹⁷ Not until 1792 at the Four-Year Sejm, with the Commonwealth on the brink of extinction, was the Uniate metropolitan Rostots'kyi brought into the Senate as a gesture toward the long obstructed equality of rites.

The Uniates of Poland, after two centuries of putting up with second-class status, were targeted by Kony's'kyi as potentially malcontent, but this same issue of equality operated quite differently in Russian Poland and Austrian Poland after 1772. In the Russian Empire it was less important, for neither Catholic rite could enjoy the privileges of dominance in an Orthodox state. In Austrian Poland, on the other hand, where the Habsburgs had neither personal nor historical commitments to the disputation of privileges and rites within the early modern Commonwealth, the partition virtually reestablished the Uniate Church upon a new foundation of guarantees. In 1774 Maria Theresa officially ordered the Roman Catholic bishops of Galicia to instill in their clergies a spirit of "love and friendship" toward the Uniates.⁹⁸ That such love had to be imperially commanded was strongly suggestive of its absence hitherto. The Roman insinuations of Sierakowski, who traveled from Lviv to Vienna to urge upon the empress the attractions of *praestantia* and transit, were countered by the presence of the Uniate priest Ivan Huts' (Huc), sent by Sheptyts'kyi from Lviv to Vienna to act for ten years as a sort of Uniate ambassador to the Habsburg capital.

In 1782 Joseph II further elaborated upon the principles of equality governing the relations of the different Catholic rites in Galicia. He took up the “love” motif suggested by his mother in 1774, and developed it into an enlightened allegory of religious coexistence:

Since in Galicia the Catholic religion consists of three rites, namely the Latin, the Greek Uniate, and the Armenian Uniate, it is especially important to see to it that these three daughters of one mother should live in sisterly love, and among the peoples as well as among the clergies of these confessions all discord is to be avoided. All three rites must be maintained in the same regard and no one rite permitted to take precedence over both others, which are just as venerable. All religious disputes between these three united religions or contempt for their customs of worship and priests are to be carefully avoided.⁹⁹

Maria Theresa’s eleven children included seven daughters, so Joseph knew something of the intricacies of sisterly coexistence in family life. The allegory of the rites as three equal sisters was even suggestive of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s parable of the three brothers and their three identical rings of religious truth in *Nathan the Wise*, the enlightened drama of 1779. Though many of Joseph’s laws and principles were reconsidered after his death, his brother Leopold II specifically confirmed the equality of Catholic rites in Galicia in 1790, the year of his succession.

When Maria Theresa commanded love of the Uniates in 1774, the same order also insisted upon certain significant points of terminology. The term “Greek Uniate” was to be dropped in favor of “Greek Catholic,” so that the Latin Church could not disdain the rite as less than fully Catholic. Also, at the suggestion of Sheptyts’kyi, other pejorative designations were forbidden: a Uniate priest was not to be called *pop* (the Polish term used for an Orthodox priest), and Uniate churches were not to be referred to as “synagogues.”¹⁰⁰ These were distinctions intended to allow the Uniates equal dignity with the Roman Catholics, but at the same time they were inevitably also interpretations of the Union, affirming that the Uniates were actually Catholic, that their priests were not in fact Orthodox. Just the year before, in 1773, Konys’kyi, on the Orthodox side, had given the opposite interpretation, insisting that the Uniates “preserved the Greek-Russian faith in their hearts and very often secretly went to Orthodox churches.”¹⁰¹ Catherine almost quoted him in 1782 when she wrote to the pope that the Uniates “await only the least signal to embrace our Orthodox religion, which they abandoned with regret, and of which they retain many traces and vestiges in their hearts.” These exercises in identifying the Uniates, in designating them by their true names or in reading their hearts, were undertaken in these years by

the Propaganda Fide and the St. Petersburg Synod, by Catherine and by Maria Theresa. Such interest from without, however, made it all the more urgent that the Uniate Church carry on its own self-analysis from within, and seek to define the terms of the Union compromise.

Early in the eighteenth century, at the Uniate Synod of Zamość (Zamostia) in 1720, an ordering of the Uniate Church according to the concerns and ideals of Tridentine Catholicism initiated a significant Latinization of the rite. The most conspicuous reform was the introduction of the *filioque* into the credo, in opposition to the Orthodox theological doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the father alone. There followed in the 1730s a thorough revision of the liturgy, rendering it distinct from that of the Orthodox.¹⁰² The construction of magnificent new Uniate cathedrals in the episcopal centers, St. George's in Lviv (finished in 1764) and St. Sophia's in Polatsk (finished in 1765), followed the architectural spirit of Roman Baroque, in marked contrast to the traditional Ruthenian wooden churches. St. George's, designed by Bernard Meretyń, actually attempted to unite Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox architectural conceptions; the basic cruciform plan allowed for four slightly domed chapels around the great central dome, thus hinting at the five-domed Orthodox model. There was also an extravagantly Baroque Uniate church at Berazvechcha (Berezwecz), that of the Basilians, where the facade was constructed of nine convex and eight concave surfaces.¹⁰³

Resistance to Latinization within the Uniate Church found encouragement in the papal constitution of 1755, "Allatae sunt," with its assurance that Rome never intended "to cause any damage to the venerable Oriental rites" of the Uniates in Europe and the Middle East.¹⁰⁴ The linked Uniate concerns about Roman Catholic *praestantia*, Latin transit, and the Romanization of ritual acquired new urgency in the period that followed the partition of 1772. When Smohozhevskiy assured the ladies of St. Petersburg that "there exists no essential difference between my mass and those of Russia," he asserted identity had not been generally true for the last fifty years, since the Synod of Zamość. His commitment to that position, in the context of eighteenth-century controversy over the rite, was probably one reason why after his stay in St. Petersburg he found himself denounced in some quarters as a "most corrupt schismatic."¹⁰⁵

In 1778 the Uniate bishops of Poland, in a memorial to the pope, not only called for the prohibition of transit, but also insisted that "the Greek rite be maintained most exactly, on account of its holiness, and also because of the temperament of the Greeks, most tenacious about their institutions."¹⁰⁶ The insistence on exact preservation in Poland matched Smohozhevskiy's commitment in Russia, and the explanatory reference to "tenacious temperament" very explicitly justified ritual practice by popular custom. The Uniate Church could not tolerate the Latinization of its rite because, with the decline of the Commonwealth, religious

survival became all the more dependent upon meeting the spiritual needs and expectations of the social base. When Siestrzeńcewicz attempted to welcome Uniates into Roman Catholicism during the Polatsk vacancy of 1779–1783, he discovered that they could not accept the abrupt transition from the Greek to the Latin rite, and so he became himself the sponsor of a remarkable experiment in ritual. The Uniate clergy did not know enough Latin to celebrate a Latin mass, and so Siestrzeńcewicz ended up in the awkward position of allowing the Slavonic mass with just a few words of Latin, and calling it the Latin rite. Naturally, he had to allow the Uniate priests to keep their wives. The most important ritual concession that he demanded of his ex-Uniates as the sign of their transit was taking communion with unleavened bread. In short, he intended to eliminate the Greek rite of the Union and instead found himself creating a new union within the Latin rite, basically renegotiating the terms of the compromise. He even found himself publishing a special missal for the rite that he had invented.¹⁰⁷

The Uniates could not be simply roped into the Latin rite, and the disorientation of the Uniate at a Roman Catholic mass was still worth noting two hundred years later when Andy Warhol, the American Pop artist of Carpathian-Ruthenian descent, attended mass in Manhattan in 1984. “I always cringe when it gets to the part of ‘Peace, peace be with you,’ and you have to shake hands with the people next to you,” wrote Warhol in his diary. “I always leave before that. Or I pretend to be praying. I don’t know how long they’ve done it because I went to the Greek Catholic church when I was young.” Art criticism has noted the “Byzantine” quality in Warhol’s famous silk-screen portraits of Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley.¹⁰⁸

The great Uniate liturgical reform project of the 1780s was undertaken by Heraklii Lisovs’kyi, who finally filled the vacant archbishopric of Polatsk in 1783. His appointment, as the choice of Catherine and Potemkin, immediately cost the life of another Uniate bishop, Hedeon Horbats’kyi (Gedeon Horbacki), who had to rush across Belarus in the winter from Pinsk to Polatsk, to consecrate Lisovs’kyi before Catherine changed her mind about filling the vacancy; Horbats’kyi fell sick, and died soon after performing the consecration.¹⁰⁹ Lisovs’kyi became the most important Uniate in the Russian Empire through the next generation, the only Uniate bishop during the hard years from 1795 to 1798, and the new “Metropolitan of the Uniate Church in Russia” after 1806. During the vacancy in Polatsk from 1779 to 1783, one member of the three-man consistory, Malynovs’kyi, considered bringing the whole Uniate Church over to the Latin rite; Lisovs’kyi, who also was on that consistory, afterwards attempted as archbishop of Polatsk to bring the Uniates closer to the rituals of Orthodoxy. In 1787 the Propaganda Fide was presented with Lisovs’kyi’s proposal for a comprehensive reform of Uniate ritual: “He believes it is necessary that all those ceremonies which destroy the antique Greek rite should be extirpated,” thus eliminating the “censurable

mix and affected imitation of Latin ceremonies” introduced after the Synod of Zamość.¹¹⁰ Just as Smohozhevs’kyi had challenged Rome in the 1770s to demonstrate the sincerity of the Union by prohibiting transit, now in the 1780s Lisovs’kyi demanded another demonstration of sincerity in the preservation of the rite.

Lisovs’kyi proposed revisions from the most invisible details of administering the sacraments to the most ostentatious ceremonies of public worship. He protested that Uniate sacraments and prayers had come to constitute a “corrupt mishmash” (*vizioso miscuglio*) of the Greek and Latin rites, but his arguments for reform were not based on purism and historicism alone. He wanted to restore certain introits to the Uniate mass for the reason that “this ceremony in the Oriental Church is quite antique, and very magnificent, and also well adapted to excite devotion in the hearts of those present.” His reform was intended to attract the spiritual commitment of the Uniate population. Magnificence alone, however, was not a sufficient criterion for revising the rite, and he rejected organ music as a “ridiculous imitation of the Latin rite,” as “extraneous” to the Oriental liturgy and “the custom of the nation.”¹¹¹ Lisovs’kyi’s attention to his position within the Russian Empire was also evident in his concern lest the Orthodox be “scandalized” by the Uniate “mishmash,” and in his proposal to reduce the number of Uniate holidays to satisfy the economic interests of the Russian state. His reduction of the religious festivals was certainly not random, since, in choosing the most important days to be observed he decided “according to the custom of the Oriental Church.” The Propaganda Fide was troubled to see these did not include the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29—while allowing for a holiday on December 6, the feast of Saint Nicholas, patron of Russia.¹¹²

The Propaganda Fide in 1787 rejected Lisovs’kyi’s reform, ordering him “not to innovate at all, and especially not to permit the use of the ritual that serves the non-Uniates.”¹¹³ The two perspectives were poles apart, for Lisovs’kyi saw himself as the enemy of innovations, and regarded the forbidden “ritual that serves the non-Uniates” as none other than the Uniates’ own Greek rite. Rome denied Lisovs’kyi’s affirmation that, according to the terms of the Union compromise, the Uniate rite and the Orthodox rite should be one and the same. In rejecting his reform, the Roman Congregation did not hesitate to cast aspersions upon Lisovs’kyi’s character and piety, especially for his sensitivity to the concerns of the Russian state and the “scandalized” Orthodox:

It is quite extraordinary that a Catholic, an ecclesiastic, and much more a bishop, should bother himself about the criticism of the heterodox regarding rites that are in themselves not at all reprehensible, and even if they differ from antique custom have been authorized by subsequent use. This weakness will give courage to the non-Uniates to attack also the dogmas that do not

please them, and it is to be feared that he who has not faced up to sustaining the less important observances, may feel that he lacks the courage to resist in matters of greater consequence.¹¹⁴

Lisov'skyi, even more than Smohozhev'skyi in the 1770s, found himself suspect in the eyes of Rome for his interpretation of the Union. He would prove very disappointing to Rome when it came to defending the Uniates against Catherine in the crisis of the 1790s, but the mistrust of the Propaganda Fide helped to fulfill its own prophecies. Whereas Rome obviously felt that Lisov'skyi had demonstrated a deficient commitment to the Union in 1787, from his perspective he had every reason to attribute that deficiency to Rome.

When Lisov'skyi's proposals were rejected, the Propaganda Fide suggested instead that he await the new missal that Smohozhev'skyi had promised in 1780 when he assumed the metropolitanate. If Lisov'skyi were to reform his own liturgy in Belarus, without reference to the Uniate Church in Poland, he would be causing undesirable "disorder." Smohozhev'skyi was known to be "most committed" to publishing a revised missal, and had blocked the publication of any other Uniate missals until his own was ready, but unfortunately the work was not yet complete.¹¹⁵ The abortive dialogue on liturgical reform between Lisov'skyi and the Propaganda Fide is strongly suggestive of the tensions and obstacles that Smohozhev'skyi might have encountered in trying to produce his missal; little wonder that it was not yet ready after seven years. However, the fact that Lisov'skyi in the Russian Empire and Smohozhev'skyi in Poland were both working on revisions of ritual and liturgy in the 1780s was evidence of how important the issue had become for the Uniate Church.

While the missal remained unfinished, Smohozhev'skyi had presided over the completion of an important new Uniate church in Warsaw in 1784, and in its architectural style the church illustrated the importance for the Uniates of defining their cultural and religious identity. It was the same church the foundation stone of which in 1781 had been honored with the deposit of royal and papal medallions. The Basilians' Church of the Assumption of the Virgin in Warsaw was designed by Domenico Merlini, the moving spirit of Neoclassicism in the capital of Stanisław August and the architect who created the king's marvelous palace and park at Łazienki. Smohozhev'skyi boldly built his Warsaw church in the modern style of the decade, and put behind him the Counter-Reformation Baroque with all its troubling historical associations for the Uniates. "I have had built in Warsaw an elegant and spacious church," he wrote in 1783 to Pope Pius VI, himself a patron of Neoclassicism. This emphasis on "elegance" was almost ecumenical in its worldliness. Indeed, according to the architectural historian Zbigniew Dmochowski, from the outside "only an Eye of Providence surrounded by golden rays in the pediment indicated that the building was intended for

religious purposes,” while “the interior, similarly, was more in the character of a palace chamber than a church.”¹¹⁶ The facade of the Church of the Assumption, with its Neoclassical pointed pediment atop four stately pilasters, matched in spirit the historical evocation of Renaissance and Enlightenment by which Smohozhevskiy attempted to finesse the implications for the Union of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation.

Throughout this period, history played an important part in exploring and defining the Uniate identity. In 1775 Smohozhevskiy was collaborating with a Basilian monk in collecting documents for a history of the Uniates. In the upheavals surrounding the partition he had put the project aside “for lack of time and quiet,” but he was no less committed to “putting before the eyes of the public the facts and the circumstances of the most antique Union of the Ruthenians.” He reflected that “if this little work should see light in the present circumstances, it would illuminate the former and confirm the latter”—that is, illuminate the public and confirm the Uniates.¹¹⁷ Smohozhevskiy thus sought to clarify the religious identity of the Uniates in the eighteenth century by documenting, interpreting, and publicizing the historical record of the Union; he was sufficiently modern in his approach to imagine the discourse of Uniate identity taking place in some sort of public sphere. In 1790, two years after Smohozhevskiy’s death, the Propaganda Fide recommended to the Basilians that they carry on with the unfinished history project, and “the most intelligent and erudite monks” were assigned to collect documents for that purpose.¹¹⁸ With the shaking of the ancien régime across Europe and the revolutionary reform of the Commonwealth in the Four-Year Sejm, it became all the more urgent for the Uniates, on the threshold of modern European history, to appreciate the early modern history of the Union.

Agitated by Scruples

In 1793, as the Uniates faced the daunting Orthodox campaign that accompanied the second and third partitions of Poland in the last years of Catherine’s reign, there occurred an embarrassing incident within the Uniate episcopate. Ioakym Horbatskiy (Joachim Horbacki), bishop of Pinsk, requested permission from the pope to abdicate his bishopric and adopt the Latin rite. Papal provision was required not only for the abdication but also for Horbatskiy’s “transit,” an issue that had become highly sensitive over the previous half century. Horbatskiy had, in fact, been originally ordained as a Roman Catholic priest, and then entered the Uniate Basilian order with the special understanding that he might preserve his Latin rite. As a Basilian monk he went on observing that Latin rite for twenty years, until “without his knowledge and without exploring his will,” his superiors obtained permission from Rome to switch him to the Greek rite in 1777, in order to promote him to an abbacy and then to a bishopric. He became bishop of Pinsk in 1785, soon after the death of his brother Hedeon Horbatskiy, the

fatally unlucky traveler who braved the winter weather to consecrate Lisovs'kyi in Polatsk. After eight years as a Uniate bishop, Ioakym Horbats'kyi still claimed to have adopted the Greek rite "out of pure obedience and contrary to will," and admitted to great spiritual uneasiness about his "total ignorance" of the "Ruthenian language." This probably reflected a dual ignorance on the part of the Polish bishop, both of the Slavic vernacular appropriate to the pastoral care of his diocese and of the Church Slavonic necessary for his liturgical responsibilities. In Rome it was registered as something "monstrous" that a bishop should not know the language of his own rite.¹¹⁹

The investigation of this monstrosity led the Propaganda Fide to hear testimony from Bishop Vazhyns'kyi of Chełm, who as protoarchimandrite of the Basilians had arranged for Horbats'kyi's transit and promotion. Vazhyns'kyi had been Rome's candidate to fill the Polatsk vacancy in the early 1780s, until Catherine insisted on Lisovs'kyi; then Vazhyns'kyi in 1787 helped Rome find reasons to reject Lisovs'kyi's liturgical reforms. In 1794 Vazhyns'kyi would be the Uniate bishop most involved in the Kościuszko insurrection against Russia, while Lisovs'kyi was credited with an altogether too cautious, if not downright halfhearted, resistance to Catherine's campaign against the Uniates. Vazhyns'kyi thus represented both a Polish political and Latin liturgical interpretation of the Union, and, consistent with that perspective, he sponsored the promotion of the Latin-leaning Horbats'kyi to a top position in the Uniate hierarchy. When questioned by the Propaganda Fide in 1793, Vazhyns'kyi neither apologized for the promotion nor sympathized with the abdication. He testified thus:

Now then, he complains that he doesn't know the Ruthenian language, and that he is agitated by scruples. I pity my confrere with all my soul, but if we consider well: who is that bishop who does not feel the weight of his bishopric and his weakness to bear it? And therefore I believe that the origin of his pusillanimity is his being a lover of solitude and a certain hypochondria generated by scruples.¹²⁰

Vazhyns'kyi's confidence in the ecclesiastical ancien régime made his colleague's spiritual anxiety incomprehensible, except perhaps as psychological debility. In fact, Horbats'kyi's "scruples" were symptomatic inklings of a more modern religious consciousness.

Vazhyns'kyi did not see Horbats'kyi's linguistic incapacity as a meaningful motive for resigning, and neither was he shocked by the discovery of this crypto-Latin in the Uniate episcopate. "I know many in the Basilian order," he reported to Rome, "who were accepted coming from the Latin clergy, both secular and regular, and were then accustomed to retain perseveringly until death their Latin rite." This frank admission was appended with the following awkwardly defen-

sive note by the Propaganda Fide: "The custom of receiving into the Ruthenian Basilian order many of the Latin clergy, both regular and secular, who further retain constantly within that order their Latin rite, cannot be said to be properly approved by the Holy See."¹²¹ The Propaganda Fide thus had to acknowledge that the Basilian order was a bastion of Roman Catholic influence within the Uniate Church, and this rendered the Horbats'kyi case as awkward in Rome as in Pinsk; it cast doubt upon Vatican assurances of Uniate ritual independence just as Catherine was inaugurating her campaign against the Uniates. In fact, while Rome was concerned about the "scandal" of a Uniate bishop who knew nothing of the Greek rite, Vazhyns'kyi thought even greater scandal would come from allowing Horbats'kyi the desired transit to return to Roman Catholicism. He recommended that Horbats'kyi be retired to the privacy of a Basilian monastery, and not be allowed transit unless he decided to resettle in Rome—"where he could pick up again the Latin rite without scandal." In the final decree, he was permitted to celebrate the Latin mass, but only "in Oratorio privato."¹²² The story of Horbats'kyi would have had some propaganda value in the Orthodox campaign then under way, so the whole affair was disposed of as discreetly as possible. It was Catherine who really spared Rome the embarrassment of negotiating an episcopal succession—by abolishing the Pinsk diocese in 1795.

The promotion and abdication of Horbats'kyi clearly suggests the critical issues of clergy and culture in the internal development of the Uniate Church at the end of the eighteenth century. The competing influences of the Latin and Greek rites were reflected in the internal organization of the Church itself, in the separation and alienation of the privileged Basilian order, with its crypto-Latin elements, from the ritual values of the secular clergy and peasant laity. The compromise that created the Uniate Church—between Roman authority and Greek ritual—was both supplemented and subtly undermined by the *de facto* internal compromise between monastic privilege and peasant society. After 1772, attention to the terms of the greater compromise, from without and from within, put revolutionary pressures upon the lesser compromise, and ultimately reordered the balance of power and privilege within the Uniate Church. The "scruples" of Horbats'kyi in 1793 reflected those pressures, for it was becoming harder and harder to ignore the disparities between ecclesiastical privilege and popular piety in an age of revolution. His self-reproach on account of "ignorance" was particularly interesting, inasmuch as it echoed a common preoccupation of the time, at all levels of the Uniate Church, combining the concerns of Counter-Reformation and Enlightenment. Horbats'kyi's self-proclaimed ignorance was at once linguistic and ritual, and though he was an educated churchman, not at all ignorant in the popular sense of the word, his particular ignorance disqualified him in his own opinion from being a Uniate. Nothing could indicate more clearly that there was indeed emerging at this time a clearer conception of Uniate identity,

one that would challenge both clergy and laity to accept or deny their affiliation according to a new religious standard.

At the Synod of Zamość in 1720, at the same time that a degree of liturgical Latinization was introduced into the Uniate Church, the Basilian monks consolidated formally their remarkable ecclesiastical power. The crucial point was the synod's decision that Uniate bishops had to come from the Basilian order, and the justification was that bishops had to be celibate. Within the Uniate Church the secular parish clergy were permitted to marry, like the Orthodox clergy, while the Basilian regular clergy took a vow of chastity. Any secular priest who aspired to the episcopate would first have to seek entry into the Basilian order, and then wait within the order for one year and six weeks. Convening at Dubno in 1743, the Basilians further magnified the power assigned to them at Zamość by organizing themselves under the authority of a single protoarchimandrite, and asserting in that organization their independence from the bishops—who were anyway chosen from the Basilian ranks. Such power manifested itself in the Basilian appropriation of the richest benefices in the Uniate Church, and the most prestigious educational opportunities, especially in Rome. There were more than a thousand Basilian monks in the Commonwealth in the eighteenth century, possessing wealth, influence, and learning that dramatically contrasted with the condition of the parish clergy. John-Paul Himka has remarked that “while the Basilians flourished, the Ukrainian secular clergy languished.”¹²³

The Vatican inevitably felt ambivalent about the Basilian monopoly of power and privilege among the Uniates. As demonstrated in the case of Ioakym Horbats'kyi in 1793, the Basilians represented a distinctly Latin force within the Uniate Church, and it was no mere coincidence that their consolidation of power at Zamość should have coincided with the commencement of eighteenth-century Latinization. While the Uniates deplored the transit of the laity to Roman Catholicism, ambitious Roman Catholic priests were entering Uniate monasteries, which offered excellent chances for ecclesiastical advancement. Vazhyn'skyi claimed to know “many” Basilians of Roman Catholic origin, while one estimate suggested that they constituted almost half the monks. Their monopoly on higher theological training—not only at the Greek College in Rome, but even in Jesuit and Piarist institutions—meant that they also were the only Uniates who wrote about theology, naturally with sympathy for the Latin perspective. It was Vazhyn'skyi as protoarchimandrite who counseled the Propaganda Fide to reject Lisov'skyi's reform of Latin liturgical intrusions in 1787, and the Basilian order gathered in 1788 to express its collective rejection of Lisov'skyi. This Latin bias did not, however, make the Basilians any more militantly resistant to Russian Orthodox pressures during this period. Instead, their vested economic interests favored a cautious conciliation of Catherine.¹²⁴

In the first half of the eighteenth century the Basilians rose to the peak of

their power and influence, but in the second half they found themselves seriously embattled and ultimately vanquished. In 1747 the secular clergy in the dioceses of Lviv and Przemyśl submitted a memorial to Pope Benedict XIV protesting against the monks' appropriation of all the richest benefices for themselves. In 1749 Lev Sheptyts'kyi became archbishop of Lviv, and, though himself a Basilian, he refused to accept that his appointment required the permission of the protoarchimandrite; Sheptyts'kyi even excluded the monks from the procession that celebrated his episcopal installation. Furthermore, he proceeded to engage in a long conflict of property with the Basilians for possession of rich estates and important churches, including the cathedral of St. George in Lviv itself.¹²⁵ The coincident timing of the Latin assertion of *praestantia* in "Etsi pastoralis" (1742) and the Basilian self-assertion at Dubno (1743) made possible a dual resistance: to Latin predominance from outside and to Basilian predominance within the Uniate Church. These concerns fed upon each other quite plausibly, inasmuch as many Basilians were in fact Latin-leaning Uniates.

In 1771 Sheptyts'kyi inaugurated the campaign that would continue through the decade and for the rest of his life, to break the power of the Basilians by creating a cathedral chapter of secular priests in Lviv to assist in the administration of the diocese. His intention was to establish an institution that would give ecclesiastical power to the secular clergy and end the Basilian monopoly. It was most revealing that the champion of the Uniate monks was none other than the Roman Catholic archbishop of Lviv, Sierakowski, the same who represented the causes of transit to the Latin rite and Roman Catholic episcopal predominance. By entering the lists against Sheptyts'kyi, Sierakowski matched himself against his Uniate counterpart in Lviv and posed the question of predominance in the form of personal combat. The partition of Poland in 1772 assigned Lviv to Austria, and so Sheptyts'kyi's challenge to the monks was carried on under the more favorable auspices of Maria Theresa. The breaking of Basilian power in this period was unmistakably related to the collapse of the Commonwealth and the emergence of new political circumstances. For Maria Theresa the principle of equal rites meant that the Uniate bishops were just as entitled to cathedral chapters as the Latin bishops. In 1774 she issued a statement to that effect: "Regarding the erection of a Greek-Uniate chapter in Lemberg [Lviv], the reception of the Union can not be more excellent than when one observes between the Uniate and the Latin rites a perfect equality in externals, and on the other hand seeks to put aside all that could make the Uniate people believe they are thought worse than the Roman Catholics."¹²⁶ State confirmation of the Lviv chapter was frustrated, however, by the deaths of Sheptyts'kyi in 1779 and Maria Theresa herself in 1780. Joseph created not chapters but consistories of lay officials who were marked as the emperor's men, not the bishop's, by their inscribed pectoral crosses. The Lviv cathedral chapter was not finally achieved until 1813, after the city became the

seat of the new metropolitanate for Galicia. In fact, resistance to the establishment of the metropolitanate itself in 1806 was conducted by an alliance of Basilians and Roman Catholic clergy.

By that time the Basilians were in serious decline, for the campaign of Sheptyts'kyi in the 1770s, though it fell short of actually obtaining the chapter, was nevertheless effective in rallying Uniate forces and sentiments against the monks. In the year of his death, 1779, he decisively won his property dispute with the monks over control of St. George's in Lviv; in that same year the Propaganda Fide in Rome censured Basilian presumption, and Maria Theresa affirmed her right to nominate a bishop who was not a Basilian. This she promptly proceeded to do when Sheptyts'kyi died, for, in spite of the stipulation of the Synod of Zamość, Maria Theresa chose as his successor a man of the secular clergy, Petro Bilians'kyi, thus shattering the Basilian grip on the Uniate episcopate. Furthermore, the empress, in the last year of her life, refused to allow even a token concession to the violated Basilian privilege, and forbade Bilians'kyi to seek any special dispensation from the Vatican for his appointment. Giuseppe Garampi, transferred to the Vienna nunciature from Warsaw, conspired in vain with Maria Theresa's confessor to alter her resolution. In thus affirming the sovereignty of her own selection, the empress attacked the keystone of Basilian power in the Uniate Church. Sheptyts'kyi was not the only Uniate bishop to rise from the Basilian ranks and turn against his former brothers; Smohozhevs'kyi, as metropolitan in Poland, consummated the ecclesiastical revolution by giving episcopal consecration to Bilians'kyi.¹²⁷

In 1780 the Basilians convened to try to adapt themselves administratively to the post-partition political order. They divided into four provinces—Poland, Lithuania, Austrian Poland, Russian Poland—all theoretically under one protoarchimandrite, Vazhyn'skyi. The illusion of adaptation, however, was shattered in 1782 when Joseph II ruled out any subordination of the Basilians of Galicia to the protoarchimandrite in Poland; instead he placed them under the authority of the bishops. With Catherine's encouragement Lisov'skyi sought the same subordination of the Basilians of Russian Poland, and they opposed his liturgical reforms with all the more fervor. When the order convened in 1790, the monks complained to Rome of Lisov'skyi's "despotism." They pleaded desperately with "the greatest urgency" that the Propaganda Fide "apply some brake to the excessive dominion that Monsignor Lisov'skyi, archbishop of Polatsk, exercises over the monks and monasteries of that part of the kingdom of Poland now subject to the empress of Russia." The monks hoped that Rome would "wish to deign to put some dam to the imminent destruction of monasticism."¹²⁸ Whether the metaphor was brakes or dams, it clearly suggested the ongoing, irreversible drive or flow of power and privilege away from the Basilians in the second half of the eighteenth century. The struggle itself endowed the bishops and the secular clergy

with new levels of energy and commitment to the Union. After such assaults the Basilian order was particularly vulnerable to the confiscations and appropriations carried out by Joseph in the 1780s and by Catherine in the 1790s, but the crucial challenge had already been posed from within the Uniate Church.

Asini

In September 1772, just as the partition was consummated, Smohozhevs'kyi in Polatsk requested from the Warsaw nunciature emergency ecclesiastical reinforcements in the moment of crisis, as Catherine became the sovereign of Belarus:

It is supremely necessary that Monsignor nuncio should recommend immediately to the general of the Basilians that he send here as fast as he can to my cathedral erudite and prudent monks, obliged to counsel and aid the faithful . . . so that without resistance, at my disposition and according to my orders, they may visit the parishes, correct the defects that they find there, sustain and confirm the weak in faith, reduce to obedience the suspect, and constrain even rebels with the force of command. Without that how could one avert evil? Behold the effects of the Union depressed. What fruit is to be had from the independent Basilians? There are thirty of them here, and I can't make use of any of them. The prior is distracted by governing the convent, the lecturers by their obligation to teach, the others go to choir, and those that remain are just young students. So what do they serve for? It's impossible to make use of the secular priests, because they are occupied with the care of their parishes, and their families, and for the most part they are extremely ignorant (*ignorantissimi*).¹²⁹

Here in 1772 Smohozhevs'kyi drew clearly the contrast between the *eruditi* and the *ignorantissimi*, between Basilian monks and parish priests. At the same time he posed the problem of episcopal authority, summoning the monks "at my disposition and according to my orders." He even frankly invoked a standard of utility concerning the monks, asking "what fruit is to be had" of them, how to "make use of any of them," and "what do they serve for?" Such expressions called into question the whole *raison d'être* of the order, and were evidently provoked by the shock of the partition crisis with its menacing political implications for the Uniate Church. Smohozhevs'kyi's language was peculiarly close to that of the anticlerical Enlightenment with its mockery of the monastic orders. The next year in Warsaw there was published anonymously an enlightened denunciation of monasticism in general, with a similar refrain: "Why nourish in the stable an animal that does nothing?"¹³⁰ In 1773 the suppression of the Jesuits also presented an alarming precedent to all the orders of Europe.

Right after Smohozhevs'kyi contrasted Basilian erudition with parish clerical ignorance in September 1772, he went on to make the same pointed comparison in October with an interesting variation of terms. "For the love of the Jesuits it is not fitting to keep in ignorance the secular clergy of the Uniates," he wrote, "and now what use can I have from my poor and ignorant priests?"¹³¹ In this case the ignorance and poverty of the parish clergy was emphasized by comparison to the privileged Jesuits, rather than the Basilians, and, considering Smohozhevs'kyi's hatred of the former, one may infer his considerable ambivalence toward the latter. The casting of the Jesuits and Basilians in this same role revealed a Uniate perspective in which Latin forces appeared to monopolize the precious resources of wealth and education without making them available to the urgent work of Uniate adaptation and survival in an age of crisis. The intellectual disparity between regular and secular clergy was addressed as a problem already at Zamość in 1720, and the synod mandated that monasteries should provide theological schooling for local secular priests. The monks, however, did not embrace this mission, and Basilian schools tended to serve the privileged laity; they have been compared to Jesuit colleges.¹³² In fact, after the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 the Basilians were able to take over some of those colleges and run them successfully.

In 1774, half a century after Zamość prescribed the remedy, Smohozhevs'kyi was expressing his dissatisfaction to the Warsaw nuncio:

I am now uniquely tormented by uncertainty about the true love and sincere commitment of the monks, not well disposed to the secular clergy for the good education of its youth; because to despise, to mistreat, and to educate fraudulently would be the same as to cool in the clergy the will to study, and to encourage ignorance for the extermination of the Catholic religion. Therefore, to avoid such enormities and dangers, it would be most convenient if Your Excellency would recommend to the monastic order better affection for the secular clergy and the highest commitment to their most efficacious education.¹³³

At the same time that Maria Theresa was calling upon the Roman Catholics of Galicia to "love" the Uniates, in Belarus it was necessary to solicit the "affection" of the Basilians for their fellow Uniate priests. In the 1770s, of course, the struggle over the Lviv chapter was already under way, and the Basilians had good reason to feel embattled. Smohozhevs'kyi's distrust of their "sincerity," his suspicion of a "fraudulent" education intended to "cool" intellectual aspirations, suggests an awareness of social struggle in which the Basilians could not wholeheartedly teach theology to the parish clergy without compromising their vested interests of power and wealth. It was the Uniate episcopate, seeking to make "use" and have

“fruit” of its clergy that had to insist upon the “dangers” of clerical ignorance and seek its remedy in “efficacious education.” Ignorance and education became the great rallying cries of the Uniate Church in the troubled age of the partitions, and in the meanings that attached to those concepts one may trace the values and strategies that guided the evolution of a modern religious consciousness in the Uniate clergy.

Iosyf Shumlians'kyi (Józef Szumlański), the bishop of Lviv who brought his diocese with him from Orthodoxy to the Union in 1700, addressed the shortcomings of his clergy in very different terms. “The priest,” he instructed, “should always, and especially when he goes to church for divine service, wear clean clothes, not dirty, have his hair and beard combed, his hands washed, his nails clipped.”¹³⁴ Such a lesson, far from stressing religious standards in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, emphasized the social chasm between the clerical elite and the parish clergy. This chasm was not just a matter of neat nails and clean clothes, for Uniate secular priests were, socioeconomically speaking, close to the peasants. The parish income came from a plot of land assigned to the priest and usually farmed by him with his own hands. Such farm work was spared the elite Basilian monks, with their teaching responsibilities and choir attendance, though Basilian nuns sometimes had to work as servant maids.¹³⁵ The parish priest was not even an absolutely free peasant, since he could sometimes be drafted for compulsory feudal labor. The persistence of this element of villeinage was demonstrated by the fact that it had to be formally forbidden in Galicia by Maria Theresa in 1777. In Poland there was even a feudal regression in clerical status in 1764, when the Sejm inaugurated the reign of Stanisław August by making the sons of Uniate priests subject to enserfment if they did not learn a trade or follow their fathers into the clergy. This, too, had to be legally repealed at the Four-Year Sejm in 1792: “When a priest of this rite comes from the peasant order, and after being liberated by his lord receives ordination, so in consequence of this passage into the ecclesiastical order not only he, but also his descendants of both sexes, will be regarded as free.”¹³⁶

It was sometimes difficult for Roman Catholics to take quite seriously the priestly status of men with wives and children, “descendants of both sexes.” In fact, the Uniate clergy became a virtually hereditary caste in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with sons of priests constituting as much as 85 percent of the clergy in some regions. On the one hand, this created a social separation from the enserfed peasantry, but, on the other hand, the hereditary expectation of a benefice encouraged resignation to ignorance, since there was only limited motivation for study. A Uniate commission of 1765 stressed the importance of encouraging priests to undertake the religious education of their own children, starting at the age of five, since those children were probably the priests of the next generation.¹³⁷

By the middle of the eighteenth century there was already a clearly perceived conjunction of ecclesiastical ignorance and socioeconomic status. In 1747 the secular clergy protested the Basilian appropriation of the best benefices, and in 1748 Floriiian Hrebnyts'kyi (Florian Hrebnicki) assumed the metropolitanate and evaluated clerical conditions. He feared that Uniate priests could not "in good conscience" be proposed for benefices, "because the candidates for the ecclesiastical order are in general so *rudes*."¹³⁸ The Latin term embraced a range of qualities, from wild and ignorant to uncultured and uncivilized. Indeed, taken together with Shumlians'kyi's attention to personal habits, Hrebnyts'kyi's verdict suggests that this eighteenth-century discourse on the Uniate clergy was partly stimulated by the forces of what Norbert Elias has called "the civilizing process," which involved increasing cultural attention to issues of manners between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries.¹³⁹

Yet the ordination of priests in significant number, however ignorant, was absolutely essential to the pastoral care of the Uniate populations. Ludomir Bieńkowski has estimated that in 1772 there were 10,200 parish priests for 9,340 parishes, generally one priest to a parish, with each serving, on average, 800 to 1,000 people.¹⁴⁰ Considering the questionable quality of the candidates, Hrebnyts'kyi thought he might never ordain anyone, "if it weren't a matter of letting the people die without baptism and sacraments." He also appreciated the crucial connection between economic and intellectual factors: "Whoever has a higher education doesn't choose this order, where the benefices are so poor, but looks around for something more lucrative." In 1782 Smohozhevs'kyi made the same connection, explaining the impossibility of finding educated candidates to embrace a life of peasant labors, "persecuted by the Catholic masters and furthermore plagued by the Jews."¹⁴¹ He might have added that the Uniate bishops themselves played a role in the economic oppression of their own parish clergy. They claimed a yearly contribution from the priests of the diocese, and in some cases collected it with extortionate violence. The metropolitan Volodkovych, whose fitness for the episcopate was challenged in the 1760s and 1770s, asserted his dominion over the diocese by collecting from his clergy with the accompaniment of an armed guard. The bishop of Lutsk, Kypriian Stets'kyi (Cyprian Stecki), was apparently even more shameless, and around 1780 his clergy complained to Rome that he was enriching himself by a combination of simony, extortion, and confiscation, having the priests beaten and imprisoned when they resisted the impositions of his "pastoral visitations."¹⁴² Some of his clerical victims apostatized to Orthodoxy, and in fact his methods of episcopal administration were not so dissimilar from the persecutions practiced by Russian troops and Orthodox priests at the time of the first and the last partitions. These instances of episcopal oppression were only the most flagrant manifestations of the social and cultural polarization of privilege in the Uniate Church.

The eighteenth-century memoirs of Adam Moszczyński explicitly rated the Uniate parish clergy as more ignorant than its Roman Catholic counterpart, and noted that the Uniate priests “could scarcely read the psalter and the missal, knew neither moral theology nor religious doctrine, and were full of superstitions and prejudices.”¹⁴³ From his perspective as a non-Uniate layman, Moszczyński was, ironically, better able to put his finger on the precisely religious significance of clerical ignorance. The failings that he enumerated were far from unprecedented in the history of Catholicism, since, according to Jean Delumeau, writing on the Counter-Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church had addressed itself to the same problem in the seventeenth century. St. Vincent de Paul, who died in 1660 and was canonized in 1737, devoted missionary work to remedying clerical ignorance in the French countryside, and discovered priests who did not even know the words of absolution.¹⁴⁴

Smohozhevskyi, in his most quotable comment on the Uniate parish clergy, declared, “I cannot entrust them with the more important posts because they are *asini*.”¹⁴⁵ With casual vulgarity he called them asses, and the word *asini*, taken together with *rudes* from Hrebnytskyi (who preceded Smohozhevskyi at the archbishopric of Polatsk), again revealed the broad assumption of social distance between the clerical elite and the parish clergy. There was even perhaps some significance in the fact that these two grandees of the Greek rite should have chosen to express their condescension in Latin, a language of which their Uniate clerical inferiors were quite excusably ignorant. Smohozhevskyi, upon his return from St. Petersburg in 1773, requested a Basilian monk as his coadjutor assistant, and the job description showed that his time at Catherine’s court had given the archbishop a high standard of ecclesiastical courtliness:

It would be convenient therefore, and necessity requires, that I should be provided without delay with a monk, well known, capable of the courtesy of the century (*della polizia del secolo*), not awkward, not bigoted, well educated, versed in theology, accustomed to working at a desk, of manly age, of upright habits, of amiable conversation . . .¹⁴⁶

It was naturally unnecessary to mention that such a paragon would have neatly combed hair and evenly clipped fingernails. This ideal ecclesiastic appeared to be some sort of descendant of Baldassare Castiglione’s Renaissance courtier; here again the history of the Uniates intersected with the history of manners.

With this ideal in mind, however, Smohozhevskyi went right on in the same dispatch to address the issue of the uncourtly parish clergy and the importance of elevating its standard. He began with the paradox of the size of his diocese, geographically “most vast,” and yet effectively so small, “because it lacks good workers,” effective parish priests:

While with Jesuitical zeal it was despoiled of its own fattest benefices, and without seminaries, it was served by priests hardly adequate, indeed altogether ignorant. Since the first hours of my pastorate, sympathizing with the unhappy situation of this clergy and this Church, I began in the name of God to put aside something every year.¹⁴⁷

He was saving to build a seminary some day, to metamorphose the *asini*. The urgency of this intention was measured by the conjunction of “the universal ignorance of the clergy” and the “dangerous neighborhood,” that is, the Russian Empire. To make up for past Jesuitical despoliation, he sought possession of confiscated Jesuit property for Uniate educational purposes in 1774, and formulated his need in terms of competition with the Orthodox clergy. “I seek nothing for myself,” he began, seeming to fear that some might not believe in his concern for the secular clergy. “I desire only justice, and try to educate better my clergy, for when even the schismatic priests are beginning to study, why must mine rot (*marcire*) in their antique ignorance?”¹⁴⁸ In short, it was the partition, assigning his diocese to the Russian Empire, that made his sympathy into purposeful policy.

He petitioned for educational opportunities in Rome and at the Pontifical College in Vilnius, so that the Uniate priests might “advantageously toil in the vineyard of Christ, here uncultivated (*incolta*) and very much in jeopardy (*periclitante*).”¹⁴⁹ The allegorical reference to toiling in the vineyard was perhaps tactless, considering that these priests did literally labor in the fields, but the concept of “cultivation” emphasized the problem of ignorance. The word *incolta* could signify both an “uncultivated” vineyard and an “uneducated” soul, and it was that lack of cultivation, in parish priests and in their parishioners, which put the whole Uniate Church at risk in the age of the partitions. Smohozhev’skyi was in Belarus, but he recognized the significance of Orthodox pressure and Uniate apostasy in Ukraine. Indeed, even Belarus was not altogether tranquil: “Frightened by the new government, several parish priests abandoned their churches and broke their vows, while others, being provoked, threatened, and even persecuted by the contrary clergy, began to vacillate in the Holy Union.”¹⁵⁰ The idea of “vacillation” conveyed even more clearly the danger of clerical ignorance in the Uniate Church. For the Union, which had been created in compromise between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, was now menaced from both sides by pressures to apostasy and to transit; it could not survive in a condition of ongoing vacillation. Thus, clerical education came to signify something quite specific: not just the general cultivation of the mind, but the inculcation of a Uniate identity. In this sense Horbatskyi, a member of the educated episcopal elite, could characterize himself as “ignorant” for knowing only the Latin rite. Just as the seventeenth-century Counter-Reformation involved teaching the Catholics of Europe to

reject Protestantism, so eighteenth-century Uniates, clergy and laity, ceased to be ignorant when they had learned that they were neither Roman Catholic nor Orthodox.

A crucial obstacle to educating the secular clergy was the very limited number of places open for advanced religious study. There were four places for the Uniates in the Greek College of St. Athanasius in Rome, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century the Synod of Zamość arranged for another ten places at the Theatine College in Lviv that educated both Ruthenians and Armenians. A total of 192 Ruthenian Uniates studied at the Lviv school in the eighteenth century, though some ultimately became Basilian monks rather than parish priests. Because of the limited educational opportunities there were Uniate priests who actually ended up studying in Orthodox schools in Kyiv and Pereiaslav, or even in Moldavia and Wallachia—and this was hardly likely to nourish a commitment to the Union. The Vilnius Pontifical College had been established in 1582, before the Union, for the missionary purpose of educating Russians and Ruthenians, but instead it was Roman Catholic students who largely filled its rosters; only in the eighteenth century was there a concerted Uniate effort to claim the seminary for themselves, beginning with a memorandum to Rome in 1753. Smohozhevskyi, who appreciated the perils of clerical ignorance, was still dickered in 1774 for places at the Vilnius seminary: “So I will not fail to choose two capable youths to send to Rome next autumn, and I will have ready others for whenever there occurs some vacancy in the College of Vilnius.”¹⁵¹ Smohozhevskyi must have worried about the Jesuit tradition at the Vilnius seminary, but in 1774 the society was already formally suppressed.

Above all, the Uniate Church lacked those Tridentine diocesan seminaries sponsored by the Counter-Reformation for the Roman Catholic clergy all over Europe. In 1759 Maksymilian Ryllo managed to open a seminary for his diocese of Chełm. In 1763 Syl’vester Rudnytskyi (Sylvester Rudnicki), bishop of Lutsk, established a seminary there, but after his death in 1777 and a major fire in 1779, the funds were appropriated by his successor, Kypriian Stetskyi, who was actually hostile to clerical education. In 1773 Smohozhevskyi was saving money to build a seminary of his own at Polatsk. In 1774 he had prepared plans for its construction, and submitted them to the Russian government. In 1775 he had still not heard from the government, blamed the ill will of the Orthodox Synod, and suspended his preparations for building, resolving to build across the border in Poland if he couldn’t in the Russian Empire.¹⁵² In 1776 a seminary opened in Zhytomyr for Ukraine, after the Orthodox pressures had ebbed, and in the 1780s Smohozhevskyi worked toward the establishment of a seminary at his metropolitan residence in Radomyshl. In 1774 Maria Theresa gave her Uniates the *Barbaraeum* in Vienna with fourteen places, but the most spectacular breakthrough in Uniate clerical education came in 1782 in Galicia with Joseph’s

program of state seminaries. Thus, paradoxically, the Counter-Reformation came to the Uniate Church under the sponsorship of enlightened absolutism. The Lviv Theatine College and the *Barbaraeum* were eliminated in favor of the Josephine General Seminary in Lviv, which opened in 1783 with fifty-two places, and in 1787 that was supplemented by the Ruthenian Institute.¹⁵³

In Poland the Four-Year Sejm legislated the founding of Uniate diocesan seminaries in 1790, but the final partitions made these no more than good intentions. The enlightened Polish patriot Hugo Kołłątaj observed the educational developments of the Uniate Church with interest, noting that the clergy was still insufficiently “enlightened.” He wrote in particular about the seminary at Lutsk established by Rudnyts’kyi (“an enlightened man,” in Kołłątaj’s judgment) and regretted that there was too much theology taught and too little of other subjects. Yet even comprehensive instruction in theology was an advance for the Uniate clergy, and the commitment to educational improvement was notable enough so that Kołłątaj could evaluate the Uniates according to the contemporary standard of enlightenment. Sophia Senyk, writing about Ruthenian religion in historical perspective, has noted that “the formation of the secular clergy did not vary greatly from the time of the introduction of Christianity in Rus’ in the tenth century until the end of the eighteenth.” Change did come about, however, in the eighteenth century. In the historical judgment of Bieńkowski, “the matter of proper education for the parish clergy was not fully resolved at the conclusion of the existence of the Commonwealth, but progress achieved in this field in the course of the second half of the eighteenth century was indubitably significant.”¹⁵⁴

Short of formal seminary education, Uniate bishops in this period were attempting to achieve a higher standard of religious awareness among their parish priests by imposing examinations. It was in this context of stricter regulation that Vazhyns’kyi, bishop of Chełm after 1790, achieved a certain notoriety for his low standard in ordaining priests. Hrebnyts’kyi and Smohozhev’s’kyi both felt obliged to explain the ignorance of the clergy by reference to the poverty of the posts, but Vazhyns’kyi was said to be untroubled in his easy ordinations. He expected the candidates to know a little ritual, and to pay a fee, but when challenged by another bishop regarding their general ignorance, Vazhyns’kyi is supposed to have airily replied, “*Omnis spiritus laudet dominum*.” (Let every spirit praise the Lord).¹⁵⁵ Sheptyts’kyi, whose commitment to the secular clergy was expressed in his campaign for the cathedral chapter at Lviv, established in his diocese a system of examinations that set a new standard, and made Vazhyns’kyi’s amenability seem irresponsible by comparison. Sheptyts’kyi insisted that his priests be examined quarterly, and that the demonstration of theological competency be the condition of receiving a benefice.¹⁵⁶

Sheptyts’kyi also was interested in decorations to reward those who met new standards of piety, and in 1770 obtained the permission of Pope Clement XIV to

bestow an honorary cross on a gold chain.¹⁵⁷ Joseph II had all the cathedral priests and consistory members decorated with pectoral crosses that bore his own name. The most extraordinary conception of ecclesiastical honors, however, was that which Smohozhevskiy and Stanisław August put before Pope Pius VI in 1784. The purpose was to “decorate the meritorious Ruthenian secular clergy” and “to serve to excite them ever more in the service of religion and in the commitment to conserve and propagate the Holy Union.” The metamorphosis of the *asini* was quixotically envisioned in the foundation of an honorary order of Uniate secular priests, the Cavaliers of the Holy Union. A total of twenty-four such decorations were to be divided among the dioceses, with the metropolitan ceremonially dispatching the crosses and diplomas. The special obligation of the “cavaliers” would be to serve in the parishes and teach Christian doctrine.¹⁵⁸ The survival of the Uniate Church obviously depended upon the competency and fidelity of its parish priests, and they were to be elevated in ecclesiastical standards by the lure of attaining the already almost anachronistic emblems of the ancien régime. The asses would have to recognize themselves as cavaliers in order to appreciate their own identity as Uniates.

All by Themselves

Pelesh in the nineteenth century estimated that there were twelve million Uniates before the partitions of Poland. Likowski calculated that the Union lost to Orthodoxy “at least seven and maybe even eight million” between the first partition in 1772 and Catherine’s death in 1796. “If God had lengthened her lifetime by another several years,” wrote Likowski piously, “she would have probably rooted out the rest (about two million).” This would suggest a total of nine or ten million. However, Emanuel Rostworowski puts the entire pre-partition population of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at twelve million, while Norman Davies suggests eleven. Witold Kołbuk has plausibly estimated the total number of Uniates in the Commonwealth in 1772, on the eve of the first partition, at 4,600,000. Johannes Madey estimates that there were still 1,400,000 Uniates in the Russian Empire in 1804, after Paul had canceled Catherine’s final assault. If one estimates that 1,800,000 Uniates were safe from Catherine in Galicia, then a plausible estimation of the net loss in the Uniate population in the age of the Polish partitions would be 1,400,000.¹⁵⁹

One may attempt to interpret the changes of affiliation in this period by borrowing Smohozhevskiy’s idea of “vacillation,” which he used with reference to the clergy in 1773, and then later in 1785 to describe the general state of the Union in this period: “the Holy Union itself still vacillating (*vacillante*).”¹⁶⁰ The pressures applied by Russian Orthodoxy—from 1768 to 1775 in Ukraine at the time of the first partition, from 1779 to 1783 in Belarus during the Polatsk vacancy, and from 1793 to 1796 through the final partitions—were all closed

intervals followed by periods of recovery and return to the Union. If losses were significantly balanced by returns, then the bottom line of statistical attrition was consistent with Uniate survival. Indeed, the inflation of numerical losses may have derived partly from the same Uniates leaving and rejoining the Union more than once. Furthermore, real losses may have reflected not only the success of Orthodox campaigning but also the weakness of Uniate identity and commitment. Bieńkowski has concluded that “the Union was often accepted by the parish clergy and the Ukrainian population only seemingly, as revealed by events between 1768 and 1773, when a very significant number of parishes returned to Orthodoxy (in truth, partly under compulsion).”¹⁶¹ Especially since Uniate proselytism continued strong through the first half of the eighteenth century, those “lost” in the second half may have been barely Uniate to begin with.

In fact, the quantitative evaluation of gains and losses in this period is probably less important than the qualitative changes that occurred in the Uniate millions. One may consider the relevance of Delumeau’s sociological model of Counter-Reformation Christianization and Enlightenment de-Christianization as “two intersecting curves” in eighteenth-century Europe: “the one expresses a qualitative religion, the other a quantitative adherence.” Such adherence could be almost perfunctory, an automatic matter of default in the absence of other options, but by the eighteenth century this mere “conformism” was beginning to be challenged by the possibility of choice. In the religious sociology of Gabriel Le Bras, the whole notion of “de-Christianization” is presented as a misconception for early modern populations—“since to be dechristianized they must at some stage have been christianized.” By the same token, Uniate “apostasy” to Orthodoxy was an empty lament, if the alleged apostates had been only minimally aware of being Uniates.¹⁶² Yet those who had been pressured to apostatize to Orthodoxy, or counseled to consider transit to Roman Catholicism, whether they stood fast or whether they succumbed and then returned, were not the same Uniates they had been before. The religious ebbing and flowing of this period dramatized for the Uniates an array of religious alternatives, and those who ultimately had to decide whether or not to sign on the line in 1794 were raised to a higher and more modern level of religious consciousness. Vacillation became the crucible of affiliation and identity.

The Union of Brest in 1596 was the work of the bishops. When they left Orthodoxy for Catholicism and rejected their ecclesiastical association with Moscow and Constantinople to submit themselves to the hierarchical authority of the pope in Rome, they theoretically brought their dioceses along with them. Because of the nature of the Uniate compromise—its preservation of the Greek rite and Slavonic liturgy—the reorientation of those bishops did not dramatically affect the millions subject to their pastoral care. Indeed, the Union was all the more of a coup for the fact that it converted those millions by a stroke of the pen,

regardless of their agreement or even awareness. Perhaps not until the Synod of Zamość in 1720 did certain forms of liturgical Latinization make the union into something manifestly perceptible in the religious life of the ordinary churchgoer. Supposedly, Uniates of the Commonwealth who lived near the border with the Russian Empire were known to cross over on Sundays to attend the gorgeous churches of Kyiv. Konys'kyi in 1773 would boast that many Uniates remained Orthodox "in their hearts" and secretly sneaked off to Orthodox churches, but it is just as likely that they attached little importance to the difference between Uniate and Orthodox churches with their similar services.¹⁶³ It became much more obviously important after 1768, when those churches began to change hands violently and then changed back again. At the same time the Uniate Church became a more meaningful concept to the millions who saw it challenged from parish to parish, while those millions attracted the more attentive interest of the Uniate hierarchy, which had to forestall the seizure of its social base. Attention to the religious life of parish priests and their parishioners, as sponsored elsewhere in Europe by the Tridentine Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, now at last became a serious issue in the Uniate Church.

The struggle between the Basilian order and the parish priests was more than just intraclerical combat, because the divisions of the Uniate clergy reflected the tremendous distance and virtual nonrelation between the episcopal apex and the peasant masses at the top and bottom of the Uniate Church. The Latin-leaning Basilians, ever since Zamość, were the elite pool from which bishops were chosen, while the secular priests—working farms, fulfilling feudal obligations, and supporting families—were culturally and socioeconomically close to the peasant laity who attended the parish churches. Those priests were often the sons of priests, carrying on a vocation across the generations without ever rising far above the level of the peasantry they attended. The separation between elite and base was all the starker for the fact that the Uniate nobility had disappeared in the seventeenth century, drawn by the elite attraction of Polish Roman Catholicism with or without the incitement of a Jesuit education; in the eighteenth century the Uniate laity was almost entirely of the peasant class, farming at the miserable level of serfdom in the Commonwealth. This social datum was expressed in the pejorative Polish proverb, "ruska wiara, chłopaska wiara," equating "Ruthenian faith" with "peasant faith."¹⁶⁴ Therefore, when the bishops finally had to look to their base in the late eighteenth century, they had to search right down to the bottom of society. The only possible mediating order was that of the parish priests whose much-lamented "ignorance" was not without its advantages, for it signaled not only distance from elite piety but also proximity to popular culture. Uniate religious mobilization in this period became a point of departure for the evolution of modern peasant nationalism in Belarus and Ukraine. The Synod of Zamość prescribed the publication of a general catechism and a manual for

the clergy in the vernacular language of the Ruthenians; the latter was printed at the Basilian monastery of Supraśl in 1722 as *Sobranie pripadkov kratkoe i duchovnym osobom potrebnoe*.¹⁶⁵

According to Delumeau, the lower classes of Europe were discovered to be deeply superstitious, even pagan, in the seventeenth century—in Brittany, for instance, kneeling to the moon while reciting the Lord's Prayer—and therefore the task of the Counter-Reformation was no less than the thorough "Christianization" of society. Even in the eighteenth century, "it would certainly not be very difficult to gather numerous documents on the religious ignorance of the masses and the survival of superstition."¹⁶⁶ In Josephine Galicia the Uniate bishops addressed themselves to this same problem in the 1780s, and their specific concerns gave some idea of eighteenth-century popular culture among the Uniates. Ryłło, bishop of Chełm, issued a pastoral letter in 1781, warning his diocese against celebrating unauthorized festivals, making religious use of images and herbs to heal the sick, throwing children before the feet of the priest at communion, believing in dreams for prophecy, fearing that extreme unction causes death, lighting candles in church with prayers for revenge, and involving poultry, cattle, and goats in various religious practices. Ryłło urged his clergy to remind the people that "not the saints, and much less their images, are capable of working wonders, but only God alone."¹⁶⁷

Biliński, archbishop of Lviv, issued his own pastoral letter in 1788, specifically addressed to both clergy and laity: "To the secular and regular clergy as well as the people of the dioceses of Lviv, Halych, and Kam'ianets, regarding the elimination of several superstitious uses and abuses." These included putting little pictures or writings under the communion cup during mass, and relying on "prayers in a specific number, performed in a specific way and at a specific time"—but not, apparently, specified by the Church—to cure the ills of humans and cattle. Biliński was aware that "here and there are found springs and streams to which the people go in crowds, in the superstitious opinion that one could be freed of all sickness and unwellness by washing and submerging, if one left behind a piece of clothing." Similarly, there were known to be places where "so-called wonder-working images are found," and where "the people are accustomed to gather in great crowds, and worship and esteem these images so highly as to attribute to them even miraculous power." Such episcopal appeals signaled the sort of movement toward "Christianization" described by Delumeau, and also that religious "reform of popular culture" described by Peter Burke.¹⁶⁸

Though these developments came to the Commonwealth along with the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation, there was a particular reason for their long delay in reaching the Uniate Church. The Union compromise, as Smohozhevskyi explained it in St. Petersburg in 1773, allowed the Uniates to preserve their "sacred rites and truly pious and honest customs." His eighteenth-century qualifi-

cation—"truly pious and honest"—matched the concerns of Ryllo and Bilians'kyi, but he dared not deny the association of rites and customs. The millions could acquiesce in the Union because, by preserving their rites and customs, it affected their religious life so little, but such a commitment to the cultural status quo made any challenge to popular culture both arguably illegitimate and dangerously provocative. Even in 1774, when Smohozhevs'kyi considered proposals for reducing the number of religious holidays, he was in no hurry to take advantage of selective reduction to reinforce the Catholicism of his Uniates. He thought it would be best to wait on the Orthodox Church, and match its reductions, for fear that otherwise "the Catholic peoples could reduce themselves to schism precisely because in the other church they were observing the festivals and being idle." The idleness of festival days reflected for the archbishop the religious passivity of people who consented to be Uniates as long as that did not upset their customs. The pun on "reduction" was his: by the "reduction" (*riduzione*) of holidays one risked provoking the people to "reduce themselves" (*ridursi*) to Orthodoxy. Burke, in his discussion of "the world of carnival," has suggested the importance of festival celebrations for popular culture in early modern Europe.¹⁶⁹

At the same time, indeed in the same dispatch of 1774, Smohozhevs'kyi expressed his characteristically eighteenth-century confidence that education—"instruction in the sciences"—was the key to the Uniates' religious stability: "because deep down (*in fondo*) they are optimal Catholics, and they will be so for certain (*lo saranno per certo*)."¹⁷⁰ His confidence in the future, and in the Uniate souls "deep down," rebutted Konys'kyi's backward-looking insistence in 1773 that the Uniates remained Orthodox "in their hearts." Whatever they had been in the past, Smohozhevs'kyi accepted that education was the key to their future, and popular "ignorance"—the guarantee of religious acquiescence in centuries past—could no longer support the Union in the politically pressured age of the partitions. The most engaged analyst of this state of affairs was Garampi at the Warsaw nunciature, from 1772 to 1776, observing the Orthodox occupation of Uniate churches in Ukraine. "The people blindly follow their pastors," he wrote, "and ignorance makes them blindly obey schismatic priests who intrude themselves." Here "ignorance" was specifically identified as the root of apostasy, though as Garampi might have pointed out as well, that was how those same people had entered the Union to begin with. His particularly condescending Italian Roman Catholic perspective on Uniate ignorance was developed in his *Exposé of the Condition of the Church in Ukraine* in 1773, aimed at arousing the concern of the Polish Sejm. He warned that the Uniates of the Commonwealth, having apostatized to Orthodoxy, would be virtually subjects of the Russian Empire: "Ignorant and coarse, often rough men, sometimes superstitious, almost always stupid—they are certainly incapable of distinguishing civil from religious obedience." The conjunction of ignorance and superstition on the one hand, and

coarseness and roughness on the other, neatly associated the dimensions of popular culture and peasant society as something potentially subversive. The dangers were spelled out in Garampi's 1774 proposal of an appeal to Constantinople, warning that the Russian government would use Orthodoxy to enslave and exploit the people of Ukraine, "a people capable of every transport and barbarism when one proposes to them a pretext or motive of supposed—and always misunderstood—religion."¹⁷¹ Though "ignorance" was a catch-all concept, expressing the nuncio's Italian condescension, there was one fundamental issue at the center of his concerns: the understanding and misunderstanding of religion.

When the abolition of the Jesuits and their Jesuit schools led to the formation of the Polish National Education Commission in 1773, Garampi immediately envisioned new schools that might remedy "the extreme roughness and supine ignorance of the Ruthenian peoples." In 1774, while Smohozhevskyi was hopefully waiting for vacancies in the Pontifical College in Vilnius, Garampi was worrying about funding for that same institution which was said to provide "in the whole Ruthenian nation the only priests who are well instructed and qualified to instruct the people."¹⁷² Thus, he clarified explicitly that the most fundamental reason for educating the ignorant parish priests was so that they could educate their ignorant parishioners. The same point was made by the first Habsburg governor in Galicia in 1773, remarking upon the "stupidity of these miserable people." They were ignorant of the "basic principles of religion," because of "lack of schools and lack of vigilance on the part of the clergy." Joseph in 1784 ordered the establishment of a school in every parish. Starting in 1787 every parish priest was required every year to deliver a special sermon urging attendance at school.¹⁷³ The convergence of political adaptations, religious imperatives, and enlightened conventions made the dialectic of ignorance and education important throughout the partitioned Uniate domain.

In the Commonwealth in the early eighteenth century the founding of a church in the Polissia region occasioned the comment, in 1705, that the villagers scarcely considered themselves Christians, and some preserved the practice of ancient Lithuanian paganism; meanwhile, "the true Christians who find themselves in these villages leave this world without baptism, and without the holy sacraments of penance." In 1765 the founding of a parish church in the Ashmiany (Oszmiana) district near Vilnius was intended for communities that "having no definite parish, and separated by distance from other churches and parishes, often leave this world without proper knowledge of the rudiments of the holy faith and without the holy sacraments, except for holy baptism." In 1766 the magnate Franciszek Potocki established schools at Uman in Ukraine for peasants on the Potocki family estates, explaining that the schools were "not only intended for the education in piety and knowledge of the simple peasants, but also and above all for those who aspired to the clergy of the Greek rite."¹⁷⁴ Thus, on the eve of the religious

crisis in Ukraine, about to erupt with the arrival of Russian troops in 1768, there was already awareness and concern about the religious ignorance of the Uniate population, which was clearly related to the scantness of the institutional infrastructure of priests, churches, and schools in the Commonwealth.

The pastoral visitations conducted in the 1780s in the diocese of Chełm revealed both the depth of the problem and a new level of commitment to undertaking the remedy. A series of catechistic questions to the faithful produced devastating results:

“What is the Trinity?” “The Mother of God.”

“Who is Christ?” “The Holy Trinity.”¹⁷⁵

The proffered explanation for such confusion was that the parish priest taught nothing to his parishioners. In 1783, when a visitation yielded analogous instances of ignorance in another parish, the priest was sent off for a four-week course in basic religion at the Chełm seminary. In 1787 pastoral visitors already noted a generation gap among the Uniates, inasmuch as “especially the younger parishioners know well the rudiments of faith, but older ones know less since the previous priests did not teach them.” The improvement of education among the Uniate clergy was correlated with a diminution of religious ignorance among the Uniate populations. Bieńkowski concludes that there was “significant progress” in the Christianization of the Uniates during the second half of the eighteenth century, though more in breadth than in depth, as basic religious knowledge was extended to a greater percentage of the Uniate population.¹⁷⁶

A traveler in Galicia in 1800 noted that “the piety of the Ruthenian peasants rests more on form than on actual grasping and understanding of religious content.”¹⁷⁷ Though “form” was generally important for early modern piety, providing the basis for what Delumeau notes as religious “conformism,” the significance of “form” was all the more fundamental in the Uniate Church, the *raison d’être* of which was the conservation of ritual and custom. In fact, considering the mass response to religious pressure in the age of the Polish partitions, it appears that the Uniate millions, in spite of their repeatedly deplored “ignorance” and “roughness,” were more committed to the Union than anyone expected. The first to be surprised was Giuseppe Garampi. He, who had trumpeted their supine ignorance and blind subservience, who promoted fantastic appeals on their supine behalf to foreign courts, could not help noting and reporting in 1775 that the apostates were returning to the Union: “The various populations all by themselves (*da se stesse*) are reuniting (*riunendosi*) with us and pleading for their former pastors.” He went so far as to credit the Uniates with returning “spontaneously.”¹⁷⁸ Garampi, who only the year before had asserted as an axiom that “the people blindly follow their pastors,” now found that the religious

impetus was coming from “the people” themselves: “pleading for their former pastors.” This was the Uniate Church turned upside down. The Union created by bishops on the pastoral premise of passive populations, now found the millions actively, “spontaneously,” restoring the Union in Ukraine “all by themselves.” In employing the reflexive verb *reunirsi*—“reuniting themselves”—Garampi even suggested that the act of Union was being recreated, this time from the bottom instead of from the top.

The worst fears of the Roman Catholic nuncio were no more justified than the rosy hopes of the Orthodox bishop, Konys'kyi, who in 1773 reminded the Uniates that “their fathers and ancestors” were Orthodox and appealed to the Orthodoxy hidden “in their hearts.” In fact, almost two hundred years after Brest, the Uniate Church had a history of its own, and most Uniates looked back to Uniate fathers and ancestors. What they held in their hearts was the traditional ritual and popular culture that had been conserved within the Union. Konys'kyi's protégé, Sadkovs'kyi, would make the same appeal in 1794—to “arise” and return to “the Orthodox confession that inspired your ancestors”—but the passing of another generation only made the rhetoric that much more hollow.¹⁷⁹ In fact, the spontaneous returns of the 1770s foretold the returns of the late 1790s, once again as soon as the pressure was lifted. The historian might even look further forward, to the 1990s, and the tremendous resurgence of the Union in independent Ukraine, as modern religious identity asserted itself anew after the removal of Soviet constraints. The Vatican of the 1990s might well have observed, echoing Garampi across the centuries, that “the various populations all by themselves are reuniting with us,” and, unlike Pius VI, Pope John Paul II had the opportunity to witness the fruits of that reunion in person during his visit to Ukraine in 2001.

Smohozhev'skyi in 1774, observing Ukraine from Belarus, did express confidence in the “constancy of the Ukrainians” (*la costanza degl'Ukrainesi*), but he betrayed his uncertainty by going on to suggest that “in my opinion there would be more value in the efficacy of a petition from Vienna,” not to mention the involvement of “other Catholic courts.”¹⁸⁰ Faced with the episcopal impotence of himself and his fellow bishops, he was capable of looking to the local populations, but preferred, like Garampi, to appeal to the courts. His hopes of popular “constancy” were nevertheless insightful as well as predictive, for he seemed to appreciate the dialectic by which constancy could emerge from vacillation. His designation of the “Ukrainians” offered an eighteenth-century territorial usage of what would eventually become the nineteenth-century national name. This reference to the peasant population of Ukraine suggested the importance of early modern religious affiliation for the evolution of modern national identity. The Ukrainian national historian Mykhailo Hrushev'skyi, who came from Orthodox Kyiv to Uniate Galicia in 1894 to teach Ukrainian history at Lviv, argued that the Union had originally been created by the Polish Commonwealth “to weaken the

national culture” of Ukraine. Yet ironically, as Hrushevs’kyi observed, “to the new generation which had been born into the Uniate Church this faith was the national Ukrainian religion,” and as “the Church of the peasants” it became “a mirror of contemporary national life.”¹⁸¹ The Union, in protecting the rituals and customs that constituted early modern popular culture, provided in the late eighteenth century a base for the emergence of modern religious and national identity in peasant society.

Such were the historical consequences of a religious union that respected, as Smohozhevs’kyi insisted it must, “the desires of the nations” as expressed in “sacred rites and truly pious and honest customs.” It was the importance of those rites and customs that undercut any easy assumptions about “blind obedience” on the part of the peasant laity, just as it was Smohozhevs’kyi’s strict interpretation of the union compromise that qualified his own personal assurance of “blind obedience” to the Vatican in 1774. The “blindness” was perhaps exaggerated, literally as well as figuratively, for only two months before he was awaiting “with patience” in Polatsk the delivery of a pair of eyeglasses ordered from Rome.¹⁸² When Smohozhevs’kyi was promoted to the metropolitanate in Poland in 1779, he left behind a budding crisis at Polatsk, but arrived at his new post to find that the recent crisis in Ukraine was basically over. The demonstrated vitality of the Union there encouraged him to try to close the chasm that separated the Uniate hierarchy from its social base, and he planned to divide his metropolitan activity between political business in Warsaw and pastoral concerns in Ukraine with a residence at Radomyshl:

I have directed all my cares to the vast province of Ukraine, which is the largest portion of the metropolitanate. I have established myself in these parts, where until now no other metropolitan has ever made his residence, and I try, with my presence and my live voice (*colla viva voce*), to retain in the Holy Union those many populations, which after being seduced by the violence and fraud of the schismatics in the recent most unhappy turbulences of Ukraine, have in large number returned spontaneously (*spontaneamente*) to the Catholic faith.¹⁸³

His echoing of Garampi’s word—“spontaneously”—confirmed the verdict; a less strictly fair-minded bishop might have been tempted to take more credit for himself in those returns to Catholicism. Smohozhevs’kyi called it “the Catholic faith,” of course, but no one knew better than he how much and how little could be comprehended in “the perplexity of that one little word”: Catholics.¹⁸⁴

In the case of the Uniates of Ukraine, it was not necessary for Smohozhevs’kyi to specify whether their return to the fold was more a matter of Catholic faith or of customary culture. His establishment of a residence in Ukraine adumbrated a

new concern for pastoral proximity; the people had come seeking their pastors, and the pastors would reciprocate with greater attention to their flocks. Above all, it was the unexpected level of popular attachment to the Union, as demonstrated in the “spontaneity” of return from apostasy, that enabled the Uniate Church to survive through the age of the Polish partitions. Those peasants who “reunited themselves” were the unexpected actors in a modern renewal of the Union, at a time when “the body of the Uniates” was “split into so many completely different parts, and subject to diverse heads.”

NOTES

1. Jason Smogorzewski, *Epistolae Jasonis Junosza Smogorzewskyj, metropolitanae Kioviensis Catholici, 1780-1788*, Analecta OSBM, ser. 2, sec. 3, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj (Rome, 1965), 120. All translations in this article are by Larry Wolff.
2. Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); John-Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine: The Greek Catholic Church and the Ruthenian National Movement in Galicia, 1867–1900* (Montreal, 1999); Barbara Skinner, "Borderlands of Faith: Reconsidering the Origins of a Ukrainian Tragedy," *Slavic Review* 64, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 88–116.
3. Eduard Likowski, *Geschichte des allmaeligen Verfalls der unirten ruthenischen Kirche im XVIII und XIX Jahrhundert*, trans. Apollinaris Tłoczyński, vol. 1 (Poznań, 1885), 282.
4. Julian Pelesz, *Geschichte der Union der ruthenischen Kirche mit Rom*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1881), 552; see also Himka, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine*, 15, 112–14, 125–26.
5. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 139.
6. *Acta S. C. de Propaganda Fide: Ecclesiam Catholicam Ucrainae et Bielarusjae Spectantia*, vol. 5 (1769–1862), Analecta OSBM, ser. 2, sec. 3, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj (Rome, 1955), 60.
7. Archivio della Nunziatura di Varsavia, Registro 65 (hereafter ANV 65), "Copia tirata dal Dispaccio originale dell'Imperatrice di Russia al suo Ambasciatore in Varsavia," p. 408.
8. Skinner, "Borderlands of Faith," 109–10; see also Zenon Kohut, "Myths of Old and New: The Haidamak Movement and the Koliivshchyna (1768) in Recent Historiography," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 1, no. 3 (September 1977): 371–74.
9. Pelesz, *Geschichte der Union*, 2:561.
10. Larry Wolff, "Vatican Diplomacy and the Uniates of Ukraine after the First Partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 8, no. 3–4 (December 1984): 404; ANV 57, Garampi, 5 December 1772.
11. Likowski, *Geschichte des allmaeligen Verfalls*, 1:159; Sophia Senyk, "The Education of the Secular Clergy in the Ruthenian Church before the Nineteenth Century," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 53 (1987): 414.
12. Wolff, "Vatican Diplomacy and the Uniates," 409; ANV 58, Garampi, 23 July 1774.

13. Wolff, "Vatican Diplomacy and the Uniates," 414–15.
14. *Ibid.*, 412; ANV 58, Garampi, 16 July 1774.
15. Wolff, "Vatican Diplomacy and the Uniates," 417; ANV 59, Garampi, 22 March 1775.
16. Likowski, *Geschichte des allmaeligen Verfalls*, 1:186; Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great* (New Haven, 1981), 512.
17. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 108–9.
18. *Ibid.*, 85.
19. Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine*, 512–14; John Alexander, *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (Oxford, 1989), 76–77; Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 173.
20. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 91–92.
21. *Arkheograficheskii sbornik dokumentov otmosiashchikhsia k istorii Severo-Zapadnoi Rusi*, vol. 10 (Vilnius, 1874), 365.
22. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 61–62; *Arkheograficheskii sbornik*, 10:365–66.
23. *Arkheograficheskii sbornik*, 10:367–69.
24. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 84; see also John LeDonne, *Ruling Russia: Politics and Administration in the Age of Absolutism, 1762-1796* (Princeton, 1984), 317–25.
25. Smogorzewski, *Epistolae*, 87, 95.
26. *Ibid.*, 173–75.
27. *Ibid.*, 227.
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35. Johannes Madey, *Kirche zwischen Ost und West: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ukrainischen und Weissruthenischen Kirche* (Munich, 1969), 102.
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52. *Ibid.*, 118.
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