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Religion in Postsoviet Ukraine as a Factor in Regional, Ethno-Cultural and Political Diversity

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Introduction

The countries which were formerly republics of the USSR face a number of problems in trying to build nation-states. One problem is the increasing but controversial role of religion and of religious institutions in a transitional society. In all the USSR successor states, seven decades of atheistic communist policy have resulted in a society which is largely secular in nature. Indeed, today the various patterns of evolution of interreligious and church–state relationships in different postsoviet states confirm a fundamental finding of comparative studies on religious involvement across societies, namely that country-specific cultural values and sociodemographic characteristics influence the religiosity of a population more than the level of modernisation of society (Sigelman, 1977; Campbell and Curtis, 1994). Ukraine is an especially interesting case in which to examine the impact of religious differences on intergroup boundary visibility and maintenance and to determine whether there is something of peculiar importance about religion in postsoviet geopolitical space when religious affiliation serves as an element in ethnic, political or regional differentiation.

Postsoviet Ukraine and Russia in a Religious Dimension

Although Russia and Ukraine are both Slavic, mainly Orthodox (Eastern Christian) countries with close historical connections, they differ significantly in their religious composition and in the role that religion plays in each. Surveys show that 63–66 per cent of the population of Ukraine adhere to one religion or another, as opposed to about 50 per cent in the Russian Federation (Table 1; Figure 1), but the differences in actual religiosity, as measured by regularity of religious practice, are much bigger. Of Ukraine's population 14 per cent attend church services weekly, but only 3.6 per cent of the inhabitants of Russia do so (Golovakha and Panina, 1999; VCIOM, 1998). In Ukraine 41 per cent of the population maintain that the country's president must be a religious person, in comparison with 24 per cent in the case of Russia (Survey, 1998b; Rossiya, 1998).

The population of Ukraine is three times smaller than that of Russia, but the total number of all local religious communities in Ukraine is bigger than that in Russia (Table 2). The density of 'religious infrastructure' is therefore four times higher in

Table 1. Religious composition of the population of the Russian Empire, the former USSR, postsoviet Russia, Ukraine and Belarus' (percentage of total population)

	Russian Empire (1897)	*USSR (1991)*	*Russia (late 1990s)*	*Ukraine (1998)*	*Belarus' (1998)*
Population (millions)	125.6	270.0	149.0	50.5	10.2
Orthodox	72.0	22.8	33–40 (50–60 mill.)	50–52 (25–26 mill.)	32.5 (3.3 mill.)
Catholics*	9.2	5.5	0.2 (300,000)	11–12 (5–6 mill.)	5.3 (540,000)
Protestants	3.0	3.0	0.7 (1 mill.)	1.0 (500,000)	3.4 (350,000)
Muslims	11.1	18.5	10–13 (15–20 mill.)	0.7–1.0 (350–500,000)	0.0
Buddhists	0.4	0.4	0.7 (1 mill.)	0.0	0.0
Jews	4.2	0.2	0.7 (1 mill.)	0.5–0.8 (250–400,000)	0.5 (50,000)
Nonbelievers	–	About 50	About 50	34–37	58

Sources of data: Russian Empire: 1897 census of population of the Russian Empire. USSR and postsoviet Russia: sociological surveys: see *Religioznyye ob''yedineniya Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Moscow, Respublika, 1996); *Religiya, svoboda sovesti, gosudarstvenno-tserkovnyye otnosheniya v Rossii* (Moscow, 1997). Postsoviet Belarus': nationwide sociological survey by the Institute of Sociology of the Belarusian National Academy of Sciences, August–September 1998. Postsoviet Ukraine: nationwide sociological surveys carried out between March 1998 and January 1999 by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology and the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences.
*Figure includes both Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics.

Ukraine than in Russia: 485 and 125 places of regular worship per 1 million people respectively (Map 2) (Forma, 2001).

Although at nationwide level the majority of believers in both Russia and Ukraine are Orthodox Christians (Table 1), the countries differ significantly in the religious composition of the population and in the specifics of their confessional geography. According to the well-known expert on religious issues in the former USSR Dr Nikolai Mitrokhin '... the main difference is that in Ukraine there is no single confession with a monopoly on the spiritual nurture of an historically Orthodox population' (Mitrokhin, 2001, p. 173).

In Russia, both nationwide and locally (with the exception of a few scattered areas with a predominantly Islamic population), the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) has achieved *de facto* the status of something like a state church. In Ukraine, however, the religious, ethnic and political features of particular Ukrainian *oblasti* and even *raiony* determine in equal part where a particular church will flourish.

The political changes in postsoviet Ukraine and the aspirations for a new national independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church initiated by a significant number of Ukrainian Orthodox clergy and supported by the new Ukrainian political elite have caused splits and schisms in what was until 1990 the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, uniting all Orthodox parishes and dioceses in Ukraine. By
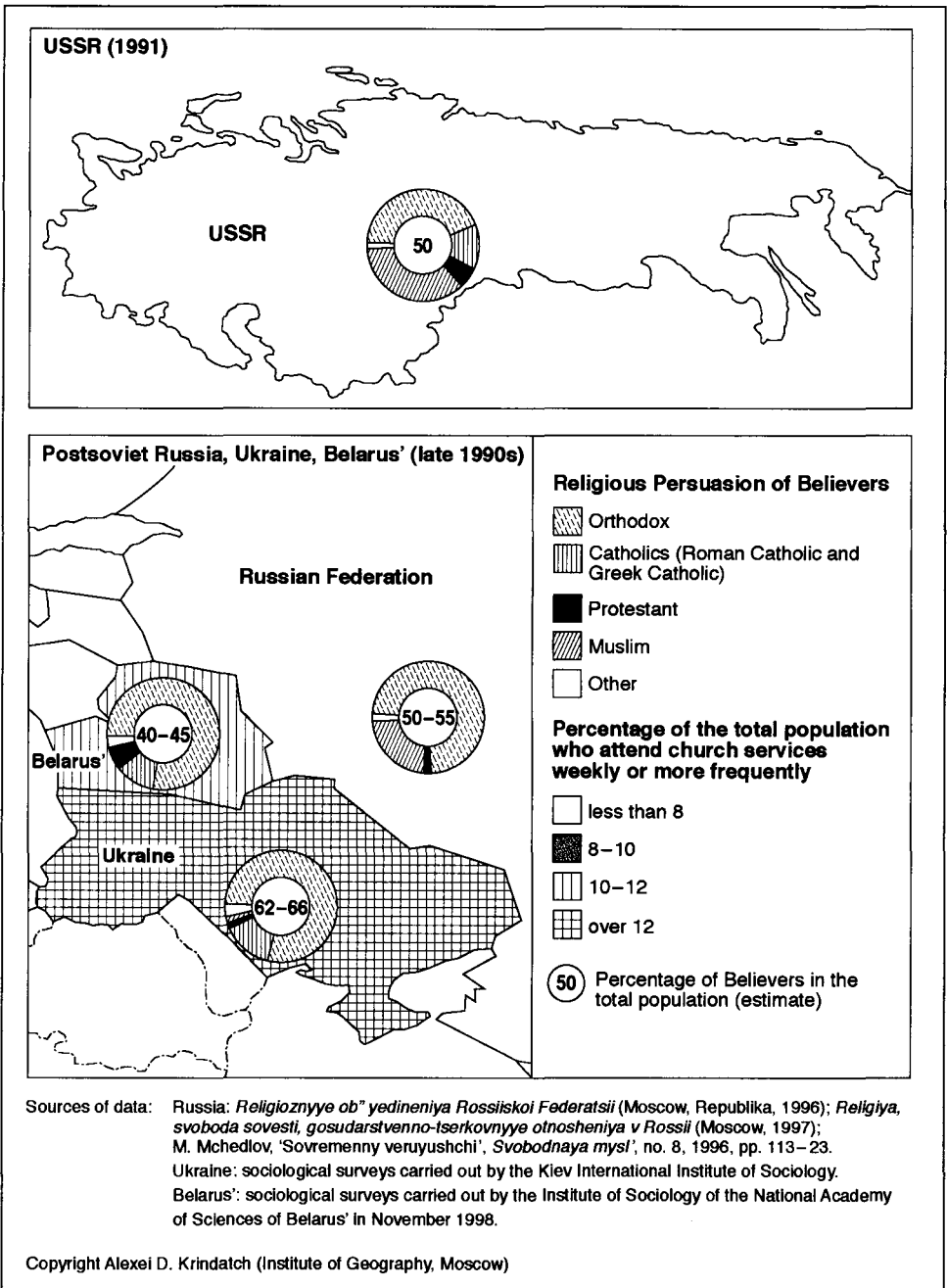
USSR (1991)

USSR

50

Postsoviet Russia, Ukraine, Belarus' (late 1990s)

Russian Federation

Belarus'

40–45

Ukraine

50–55

62–66

Religious Persuasion of Believers

Orthodox

Catholics (Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic)

Protestant

Muslim

Other

Percentage of the total population who attend church services weekly or more frequently

less than 8

8–10

10–12

over 12

(50) Percentage of Believers in the total population (estimate)

Sources of data: Russia: *Religioznyye ob'' yedineniya Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Moscow, Republika, 1996); *Religiya, svoboda sovesti, gosudarstvenno-tserkovnyye otnosheniya v Rossii* (Moscow, 1997); M. Mchedlov, 'Sovremenny veruyushchi', *Svobodnaya mysl'*, no. 8, 1996, pp. 113–23. Ukraine: sociological surveys carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology. Belarus': sociological surveys carried out by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus' in November 1998.

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Figure 1. Religiosity and religious composition of the population: past and present.

the autumn of 1993 three rival Orthodox churches had formed, hostile to one another and competing for the souls of Ukraine's inhabitants. These are the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), which remains under the jurisdiction of the ROC, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church (UOAC). The latter two both claim to be the bearers of a distinctive ethnic Ukrainian Orthodox tradition, and try to outdo each other in efforts to explore the idea of 'one state–one church'.

Table 2. Religious communities* in Russia and Ukraine (1 January 2001) (figures in brackets show percentage of the total)

	Russia	*Ukraine*	*Changes 1991–2001 (1991 = 100 per cent)*	
			Russia	*Ukraine*
All religious communities	**20,215** *(100.0)*	**25,405** *(100.0)*	**304**	**235**
Orthodox Churches	**11,399** *(56.3)*	**13,283** *(52.3)*	**302**	**220**
including:				
– Russian/Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate	10,912 *(54.0)*	9248 *(36.4)*	317	184
– Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate	10 *(0.0)*	2878 *(11.3)*	n/a	n/a**
– Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church	0 *(0.0)*	1045 *(4.1)*	n/a	418**
– Old Believers	278 *(1.4)*	70 *(0.3)*	105	123
Roman Catholic Church	**258** *(1.3)*	**896** *(3.5)*	**760**	**284**
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church	**5** *(0.0)*	**3437** *(13.5)*	**n/a**	**172**
Protestant Churches and Denominations	**4436** *(21.9)*	**6231** *(24.5)*	**239**	**293**
including:				
– Baptist and Evangelical Christian	1215 *(7.9)*	2616 *(10.3)*	123	230
– Pentecostal and Charismatic	1490 *(7.4)*	2361 *(9.3)*	497	354
– Adventist	563 *(2.8)*	870 *(3.4)*	304	383
– Lutheran	213 *(1.1)*	63 *(0.2)*	121	3,150
– Reformed (Calvinist)	3 *(0.0)*	107 *(0.4)*	300	120
– New Apostolic Church	86 *(0.4)*	n/d	n/a	n/d
– Churches of Christ	19 *(0.1)*	n/d	n/a	n/d
Islam	**3048** *(15.1)*	**402** *(1.6)*	**333**	**2871**
Judaism	**197** *(1.0)*	**207** *(0.8)*	**579**	**828**
Buddhism	**193** *(1.0)*	**53** *(0.2)*	**1206**	**n/a**
Other Religious Organisations	**679** *(3.9)*	**896** *(3.6)*	**571**	**5270**
including:				
– International Society for Krishna Consciousness	106 *(0.5)*	54 *(0.2)*	1178	600
– Baha'i World Faith	19 *(0.1)*	n/d	1900	n/d
– Jehovah's Witnesses	330 *(1.6)*	668 *(2.7)*	357	236
– Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints	33 *(0.2)*	58 *(0.2)*	n/a	n/a

Sources of data: 1991: annual report of the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR. Russia, 2001: Ministry of Justice of Russia, statistics of legally registered religious organisations. Ukraine, 2001: statistics (Forma 1) of the Ukrainian State Committee for Religious Affairs. n/d = no data available; n/a = not applicable (i.e. no communities of this religion existed in 1991, so comparisons with 2001 are not possible).
*'Religious communities' include places of regular worship, administrative centres of religious organisations, monasteries and missions, and theological educational institutions.
**Note that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate did not exist as a separate entity in 1991. The UOAC existing at that time split later into the UOC-KP and the UOAC. Thus the ratio of growth of 418 per cent refers to both churches.
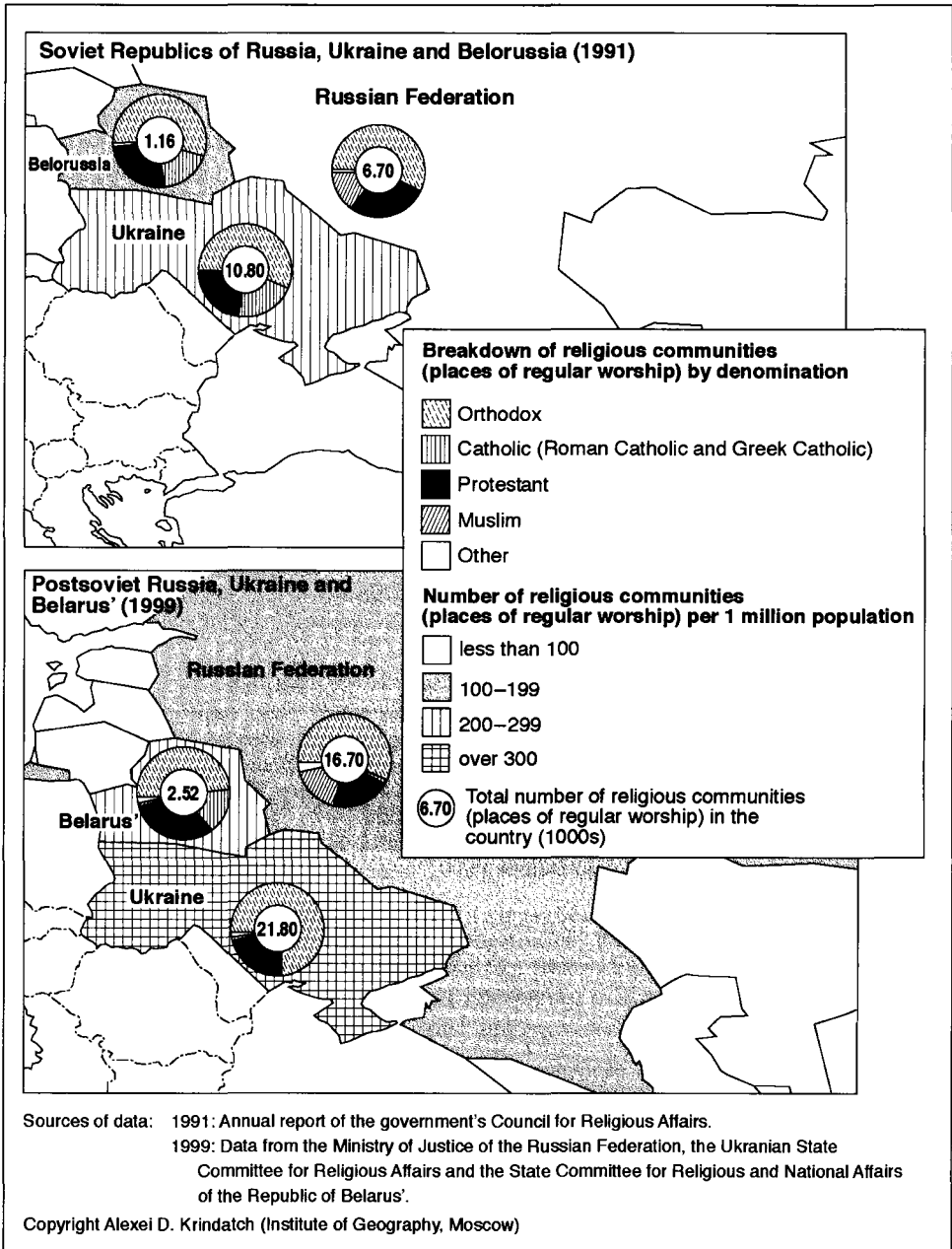
Figure 2. Religious infrastructure in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus' (1991–99).

The situation is further complicated by the dominance of Catholicism in Galicia in Western Ukraine (Galicia comprises L'viv, Ternopil' and Ivano-Frankivs'k *oblasti*). The vast majority of Ukrainian Catholics are Greek Catholics of the Byzantine rite ('Uniates'), members of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC).

Mention must be made of another two religious groups in Ukraine which have serious social and political influence either at regional or local level:

(1) The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) is one of the fastest-growing churches in

Table 3. Religious identity and religious practice in Ukraine: regional differences

Table 3.1. Religious composition of the population of Ukraine (percentage of respondents)

	1994, 1996, 1997, 1998 (A)	Nov. 1996, Jan. 1998 (B)	2001 (C)	2001 (D)
Not religious	37.8, 34.8, 30.2, 32.8	38.2, 34.3	25	38
Believers	62.2, 65.2, 69.8, 67.2	61.8, 65.7	75	62
'Believers in God' without particular religious affiliation	15.7, 14.8, 18.7, 16.0	19.3, 25.6	20	25
Orthodox Churches (OC), including:	38.3, 40.8, 42.5, 43.4	33.5, 31.0	40	30*
Ukrainian OC – Moscow Patriarchate	10.7, 7.3, 8.0, 9.3	11.4, 10.7	n/d	8
Ukrainian OC – Kiev Patriarchate	25.9, 33.0, 33.7, 32.4	19.1, 18.7	n/d	13
Ukrainian Autocephalous OC	1.7, 0.5, 0.8, 1.7	3.0, 1.7	n/d	2
Greek Catholic Church	6.6, 7.2, 7.0, 5.6	6.5, 6.2	9.5	4.5
Roman Catholic Church	n/d n/d 0.1 n/d	0.8, 0.7	2	0.7
Other religions, including:	1.9, 2.4, 1.7, 2.2	1.7, 2.2	4.5	1.8
Protestantism	0.6	0.6, 0.6	2.5	n/d
Islam	0.5	0.4, 0.3	0.8	n/d
Judaism	n/d	0.1, 0.1	0.5	n/d
Other	0.6	0.6, 1.2	0.7	n/d

Sources of data: (A) Surveys by the Institute of Sociology of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences; (B) Surveys by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology; (C) M. Tul'sky, 'Religiozny sostav naseleniya Ukrainy', *NG-Religii*, 14 February 2001; (D) Survey by the foundation 'Sotsys i Deminitsiativi', Kiev, September 2001.
*In this survey 7 per cent of respondents defined themselves as 'simply Orthodox' with no affiliation with individual Orthodox jurisdictions.

Table 3.2. Religious composition and regularity of religious practice: regional differences (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
Not religious	34.3	8.3/3.6	39.1	36.2/52.6
Believers (by self-identification)	65.7	91.7/96.4	60.9	63.8/47.4
Attend church services weekly*	14.0	44.1	13.1	9.3
'Believers in God' without definite church affiliation	25.6	9.8/7.7	28.5	35.3/16.1
Orthodox Churches (OC), including:	31.0	29.2/30.9	26.6	26.0/30.4
Ukrainian OC – Moscow Patriarchate	10.7	1.9/3.0	4.8	14.5/16.6
Ukrainian OC – Kiev Patriarchate	18.7	19.0/14.7	21.5	11.5/12.9
Ukrainian Autocephalous OC	1.7	8.3/13.2	0.3	0.0/0.9
Greek Catholic Church	6.2	50.3/56.0	0.2	0.5/0.0
Roman Catholic Church	0.7	1.1/1.0	0.3	0.0/0.2
Other religions, including:	2.3	1.3/0.8	5.3	2.0/0.7
Protestantism	0.6	0.4/0.4	1.6	0.5/0.2

Source of data: Survey by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998 (column 'Jan. 1998' in Table 3.1).
*These data give an average for Ternopil'/L'viv and Donets'k/Luhans'k *oblasti*; in the case of Kiev they refer to Kiev city only (without Kiev *oblast*').

Table 3.3. Importance of religious values and social impact of religious organisations: regional differences (percentage of respondents)*

	Nationwide	West	West–Central	East–Central	South	East
Believers, percentage, November 1998 (self-identification)	62.8	89.7	65.0	54.1	48.4	54.6
Trust (don't trust) the church as a social institution, percentage, November 1997	50.6 (22.4)	77.7 (9.1)	53.8 (20.7)	44.5 (20.4)	48.2 (23.3)	29.7 (36.7)
Prefer to have a religious person as president of Ukraine, percentage, March 1998: 'yes' ('no')	41.2 (14.0)	65.1 (5.8)	37.6 (17.1)	48.3 (14.9)	33.6 (15.8)	19.8 (16.8)

*West: L'viv, Ternopil', Ivano-Frankivs'k, Rovna, Zakarpattia, Volynia, Chernivtsi *oblasti*; *West-Central*: Zhytomir, Khmel'nyts'kyi, Vinnytsa, Kirovohrad, Kiev, Cherkasy *oblasti*; *East-Central*: Chernihiv, Poltava, Sumy, Dnipropetrovs'k *oblasti*; *South*: Mikolaiv, Odesa, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson *oblasti* and the Crimea; *East*: Donets'k, Luhans'k, Kharkiv *oblasti*. *Source of data*: Sociological surveys by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology.

Ukraine. Although nationwide Roman Catholics represent a tiny minority of no more than 2 per cent of the population (Table 3), the presence of the RCC has had a serious social and religious impact in Khmel'nyts'kyi, Zhytomir, Vinnytsa and L'viv *oblasti*.

(2) Islam has become an important political and cultural factor in Crimea since the return to the peninsula in 1989–93 of about 300,000 Crimean Tatars who had been deported to Central Asia in 1944.

The relatively high level of religious participation in Ukraine (in comparison with that of Russia) combined with the authority that religious organisations enjoy in society has resulted in the blending and interlacing of the major Ukrainian churches with national and regional political elites and even, to a certain extent, with the state authorities.

Conflicting Regional Identities as a Background to Religious Tensions in Ukraine

The complicated religious situation and tense interchurch relations in Ukraine are connected with the process of Ukrainian statebuilding after the breakup of the USSR. Five objective factors contribute to the identification of a group as a nation: territory, state (or similar political status), language, culture and history. The precondition which decides the issue of national identity is the subjective factor of national consciousness (Krejci and Velimsky, 1981).

The current Ukrainian state borders were established only after the Second World War. Previous centuries saw Ukrainian territory – especially Western Ukraine – divided and redivided between the political and cultural influences of Poland and Romania, the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires, and subsequently the USSR. As far as religion was concerned, the country was at the crossroads of influence of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions. Today, as a result, Ukraine's linguistic,

cultural, political and religious divisions separate not only different ethnic communities (Ukrainians, Russians, Poles, Jews, Tatars), but also ethnic Ukrainians living in different geographical parts of Ukraine.

Eastern and Western Ukraine are very different. Ukrainian political commentator Dmitri Kornilov describes the spiritual distance between them as follows:

> One can travel from Vladivostok to Rostov [i.e from East to West in Russia – AK] and, apart from differences in geography, no one will dispute that this is one country and one people. Travelling, however, from Luhans'k to L'viv [i.e. from East to West in Ukraine], everybody will be astounded how much the people, their language and culture change during this journey .... The 'builders' of the new nation [i.e. Ukrainian nationalists] have a difficult task. They must convince the people who live to the West and to the East of the line dividing the regions of Rostov, Donets'k and Luhans'k [i.e. the state borders dividing Russia from Ukraine] that the inhabitants of this border zone belong to different peoples. In order to achieve this purpose they apply a certain set of arguments and proofs. But the 'nation builders' are not able to stop the inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine from meditating on this question. The 'Easterners' apply the same system of arguments to the two Ukrainian sub-ethnicities, to peoples living in Galicia and in Eastern Ukraine. The result seems to be very sad for nation-builders, since in accordance with their own argumentation not only the populations of Russia's Rostov and Ukraine's Donets'k but also inhabitants of Ukrainian Donets'k, L'viv and Crimea belong to absolutely different nations (Kornilov, 1996).

Data from the 1989 USSR census (Table 4.1) and the results of sociological surveys in 1995 (Table 4.2) and 1998 (Tables 4.3 and 4.4) allow us to trace the changing relationship between ethnic identity and actual linguistic composition of the population nationwide and in Western and Eastern Ukraine.

Between 1989 and 1998 the proportion of those equally fluent in Russian and Ukrainian declined from 58.9 to 14.5 per cent of the population of Ukraine. This process was much faster in Western Ukraine, the proportion in L'viv diminishing from 59.8 to 1 per cent. During the same period the proportion of predominantly Ukrainian speakers in L'viv increased from 90.1 to 96.1 per cent and that of mainly Russian speakers in Donets'k from 67.6 to 92.1 per cent. The first decade of Ukraine's independence resulted in a linguistic polarisation between West and East. Public attitudes towards the status of the Russian language in Ukraine confirm this: in L'viv more than 50 per cent of the population support the gradual ousting of the Russian language from Ukraine, while in Donets'k 30 per cent of respondents prefer to have Russian as a second state language (Table 4.5). Language is an important factor for national unity: this growing linguistic discrepancy divides the inhabitants of Western and Eastern Ukraine even more than it did ten years ago.

In contrast to the changing linguistic situation, the proportion of people who consider themselves either ethnic Ukrainians or ethnic Russians remained almost stable in both L'viv and Donets'k (Tables 4.1 and 4.4): 47.5 per cent of the population of Donets'k today regard themselves as ethnic Ukrainians, but only 2 per cent are more fluent in Ukrainian than in Russian.

There are marked differences between the geopolitical orientation and political preferences of 'Easterners' and 'Westerners' (Table 5.1). In 1995 more than three-quarters of respondents in L'viv identified themselves with newly independent

Table 4. Ethnic and linguistic identity in postsoviet Ukraine: regional differences

Table 4.1. Ethno-linguistic composition of the population of Soviet Ukraine (1989, percentage of total population)

Population by ethnicity and language	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
Bilingual speakers of Ukrainian and Russian	58.9	59.8/53.1	69.7	52.5/49.2
Ukrainians:				
(a) who consider themselves Ukrainians	72.7	90.3/96.8	79.7	50.7/51.9
(b) whose mother tongue is Ukrainian	64.7	90.1/97.3	70.8	30.6/34.9
Russians:				
(a) who consider themselves Russians	22.1	7.2/7.3	15.6	43.6/44.8
(b) whose mother tongue is Russian	32.8	8.8/2.5	28.1	67.7/61.9

Source of data: *Natsional'ny sostav naseleniya SSSR. Po dannym vsesoyuznoi perepisi naseleniya 1989 g.* (Moscow, Finansy i Statistika, 1990).

Table 4.2. 'Which language do you speak at home?' (1995, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv city	Kiev (city)	'East': Donets'k city
Only Ukrainian	31.9	63.2	16.1	1.5
Only Russian	32.8	17.3	38.7	78.6
Both languages depending on situation	34.5	19.5	45.2	19.4

Source of data: 'Four Cities Survey' carried out by 'Democratic Initiatives Center', Kiev, May 1995. Data presented in a paper by Jose Casanova, *Religious Pluralism and Civil Society in Ukraine*, at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, San Jose, California, November 1997.

Table 4.3. 'In which language are you more fluent: Russian or Ukrainian?' (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
Ukrainian	41.4	96.1/99.0	47.1	2.0/2.3
Russian	44.2	2.8/0.3	38.4	92.1/81.0
Both equal	14.5	1.0/0.9	14.3	6.0/16.8

Source of data: Sociological survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998.

Table 4.4. 'What is your ethnic identity?' (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
Ukrainian	69.3	90.9/96.0	80.3	47.5/47.0
Russian	19.7	4.4/1.2	13.8	41.8/37.3
I feel equally Ukrainian and Russian	5.9	3.1/1.5	2.5	4.7/12.3
Other	5.1	1.6/1.3	3.2	6.0/3.4

Source of data: Sociological survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998.

Table 4.5. 'What should be the state policy on the status of the Russian language in Ukraine?' (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	*'West':* *L'viv/* *Ternopil'*	*Kiev* *(city and* *oblast')*	*'East':* *Donets'k/* *Luhans'k*
Gradual ousting of Russian	10.2	52.2/49.0	12.2	1.6/4.3
Russian should be a second official language	60.9	43.1/40.8	66.3	66.7/58.5
Russian should be a second state language	21.1	2.8/1.5	13.2	29.7/29.6

Source of data: Sociological survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998.

Ukraine. Although the notion of a strong Galician regional identity is widespread, only 8 per cent of respondents in L'viv see themselves first of all as Galicians. One can assume that for a person from Galicia, where pro-Ukrainian sentiments are strong, to be a genuine 'Galician' today equates to being a good citizen of independent Ukraine. In other words, the particular Galician identity, based in communist times on antisoviet sentiments, has been transformed recently into a new Ukrainian state identity. 'It was those coming out of Galicia who played a fundamental role in the dissemination of the idea of Ukrainian statehood and were the main driving force behind attempts to realise these ambitions ... and western Ukraine had once again become the standard-bearer of Ukrainian identity ...' (Mitrokhin, 2001, p. 176).

Significantly, in Donets'k the group of respondents who identified themselves with Ukrainian society was 2.5 times smaller – only 30 per cent. The relative majority (42 per cent) of the population here still considered themselves to be inhabitants of the former Soviet Union and for many (20 per cent) the particular Eastern regional identity was the most important to express their distinct position within contemporary Ukrainian society. In other words, the experience of living in a country where one was born without feeling at home there was characteristic of almost two-thirds of the population of Donets'k.

Consequently, there are sharp differences between East and West in how people see future relations between Russia and Ukraine (Table 5.3). In 1998 56.9 per cent of the population of Donets'k still supported the idea of the reunification of Russia and Ukraine (32.9 per cent nationwide, 2.1 per cent in L'viv). In contrast, almost half the population of L'viv took the view that relations between Russia and Ukraine must be no more than just 'the same as between any other two countries' (10.3 per cent nationwide and 0.3 per cent in Donets'k).

As for political preferences (Table 5.4), current realities are not inaccurately reflected by the stereotypes 'Nationalistic West' and 'Procommunist East'.

These differences between Western and Eastern Ukraine in religiosity, religious composition and the role of religious identity are fundamental for the understanding of current interchurch tensions in the country as a whole.

In 2001 Ukraine had 25,405 registered and unregistered religious organisations. This number includes 24,500 local places of regular worship (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches, Islamic mosques, etc.), 277 monasteries, 214 religious missions and 126 theological educational institutions. The number of professional clergy was as high as 19,312 (RISU, 2001b).

Unlike the statistics for local religious communities of various churches and

Table 5. Political identity and orientation in postsoviet Ukraine: regional differences

Table 5.1. Geopolitical identity: 'To which community or population group do you feel most closely related?' (1995, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv city	Kiev (city)	'East': Donets'k city
Ukraine	48.3	75.4	64.9	29.6
Russia	2.0	0.5	0.2	2.0
CIS or former Soviet Union	27.2	12.3	20.1	42.0
Home region and local community	14.5	8.0	8.0	20.4

Source of data: 'Four Cities Survey' carried out by 'Democratic Initiatives Center', Kiev, May 1995.

Table 5.2. Perception of political freedom: 'What is your estimation of the status of political freedom (speech, conscience, etc.) in Ukraine now?' (1995, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv city	Kiev (city)	'East': Donets'k city
Sufficient	38.7	46.1	39.5	33.6
Insufficient	18.1	17.8	17.5	27.6
I have no interest in this question	17.3	11.3	18.9	12.4
Hard to say	26.0	24.8	24.1	26.4

Source of data: 'Four Cities Survey' carried out by 'Democratic Initiatives Center', Kiev, May 1995.

Table 5.3. Attitudes towards Russia: 'What type of relations between Ukraine and Russia would you prefer?' (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
The same as between any other two countries	10.3	44.4/48.8	14.0	0.3/2.6
Ukrainian–Russian relations must be specially friendly	52.1	51.3/42.5	67.2	40.8/50.9
Ukraine and Russia must be reunited	32.9	2.1/2.0	16.3	56.9/44.2

Source of data: Sociological survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998.

Table 5.4. 'Which political force can extricate Ukraine from the current crisis?' (1998, percentage of respondents)

	Ukraine	'West': L'viv/ Ternopil'	Kiev (city and oblast')	'East': Donets'k/ Luhans'k
Communists	14.2	2.4/2.0	15.3	17.4/21.9
Social Democrats and/or Liberals	7.9	10.3/3.9	12.4	4.6/12.6
National Democrats and/or Radical Nationalists	6.6	20.8/24.1	8.7	1.2/2.2
President Kuchma	5.6	13.8/8.7	7.5	2.8/2.1
None	24.7	23.3/16.4	33.2	26.4/28.7
Don't know	41.0	29.4/44.9	22.9	47.6/32.5

Source of data: Sociological survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, January 1998.

religions, the data on the religious composition of the population is approximate. It is based on various surveys (Table 3.1), which show that about one third of the Ukrainian population are not religious, between one fifth and a quarter believe in God but do not belong to any particular religion or church, one third are Orthodox
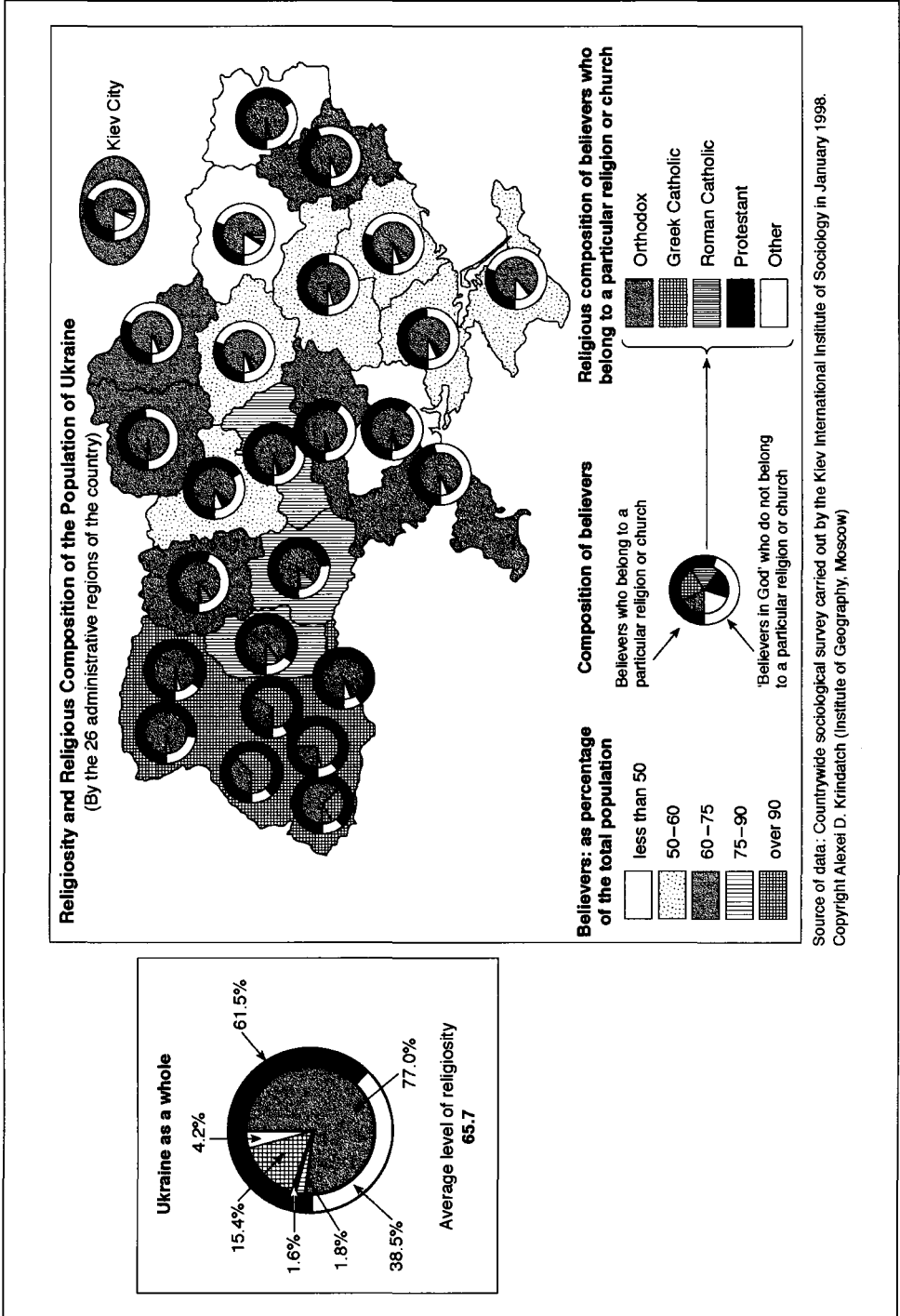
Figure 3. Religiosity and religious composition of the population of Ukraine (1998).

Christians, 7–8 per cent are Catholics and 2–2.5 per cent are followers of other religions and churches. It is meaningless to present this kind of 'average' religious portrait of the country, however, because a distinctive feature of the Ukrainian religious landscape is the dramatic difference between the 'religious' West and the
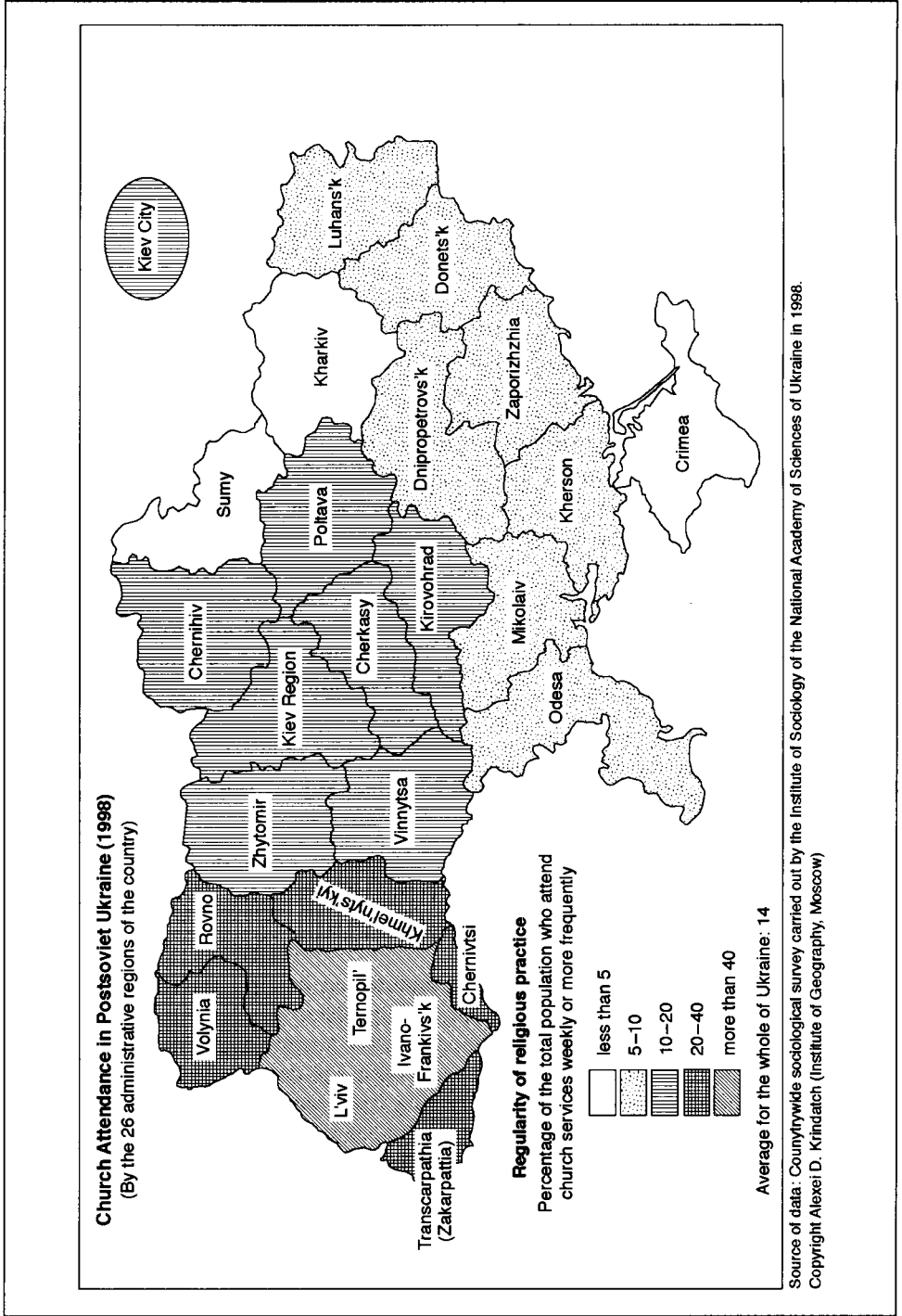
Figure 4. Church attendance in postsoviet Ukraine (1998).

'godless' East (Tables 3.2–3; Figures 3 and 4).

In Western Ukraine more than 90 per cent of the population believe in God, in comparison with 55 per cent in Eastern Ukraine. Whereas in Galicia 44 per cent of the population go to church once a week, fewer than 10 per cent of the population in the provinces located along Eastern Ukrainian borders attend church services on a weekly basis. Whether or not the president of Ukraine is a believer is an important matter for two-thirds of the electorate in the West, but fewer than one-fifth of Easterners are interested in this question (Survey, 1997, 1998a, b, c; Golovakha and Panina, 1999).

The superficial character of religiosity in Eastern Ukraine is demonstrated by the weak denominational affiliation found there. In Donets'k 64 per cent of the population claim to be religious, but at the same time 35.3 per cent define themselves simply as 'believers in God' and do not belong to any particular church (Table 3.2).

There are great geographical disproportions in the density of local religious communities and in the patterns of religious affiliation. Only 11 per cent of Ukraine's population live in L'viv, Ternopil' and Ivano-Frankivs'k *oblasti*, but 22 per cent of all places of regular worship are located here, in Galicia. Donets'k, Kharkiv and Luhans'k *oblasti* have as much as 21 per cent of the total population but only 8 per cent of Ukraine's local religious communities (Table 6). Believers in Eastern Ukraine are predominantly Orthodox (Figure 3, Table 3.2); of all Orthodox parishes here almost 90 per cent belong to one church – the UOC-MP. The population of Western Ukraine is in general much more religious and, as a result, deeply aware of personal religious affiliation. More importantly, the population of Galicia is religiously hetero-geneous (Table 3.2). Consequently, this area is the crossroads where the interests of the five largest Ukrainian 'religious corporate actors' – the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP, the UAOC, the UGCC and the RCC – intersect. In Western Ukraine today, affiliation with one of these churches not only reflects an individual's religious views, but serves also to a certain degree as a badge of ethno-cultural identity and of a person's political orientation.

The Pattern of Interreligious Tensions in Ukraine: Who's Who?

The problem of conflicting regional identities in Ukraine overlaps with the question of the identity of the five largest Ukrainian Christian churches: the UOC-MP, UOC-KP, UAOC, UGCC and RCC. Dr Oleh Turyi, the director of the Institute of Ukrainian Church History in L'viv, suggests that

> The problems of church identity are manifested in three main spheres: government, nationality and ecclesial. This problem of identification is a result of radical changes which have occurred in society and which require appropriate responses the churches, which for decades were on the margins of social life or were forcibly split from society … . The absence of a positive response to the question 'Who are you?' leads to attempts to emphasize self-identity by separation from others with the formula 'We are not them', which often is stated more categorically 'only us and not them' (Turiy, 2000).

In an unstable and transitional society the combination of different regional identities with different church identities has become a source of continuing tension and conflict in interchurch relations in Ukraine.

Table 6. Geographical distribution of religious communities* (1 January 2001)

	Galicia (1)	Three further Western oblasti (2)	Six Western oblasti together	Kiev (Kiev city and oblast')	Three Eastern oblasti (3)	Ukraine Total
Population (thousands)	5372	3548	8943	4493	10,795	50,500
	10.6%	*7.0%*	*17.6%*	*8.9%*	*21.4%*	*100.0%*
Total number of all religious communities	5601	3794	9395	1794	2181	25,405
	22%	*15%*	*37%*	*7%*	*8%*	*100%*
All Orthodox Churches	1857	2087	3944	1001	1037	13,283
	14%	*16%*	*30%*	*8%*	*8%*	*100%*
UOC-MP	202	1576	1778	624	909	9248
	2%	*17%*	*19%*	*7%*	*10%*	*100%*
UOC-KP	898	475	1373	338	95	2878
	31%	*17%*	*48%*	*12%*	*3%*	*100%*
UAOC	756	35	791	33	20	1045
	72%	*3%*	*75%*	*3%*	*2%*	*100%*
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church	2978	323	3301	16	30	3437
	87%	*9%*	*96%*	*0.5%*	*1%*	*100%*
Roman Catholic Church	237	136	373	34	16	896
	26%	*15%*	*42%*	*4%*	*2%*	*100%*
Protestant Churches	505	1221	1726	677	983	6899
	7%	*18%*	*25%*	*10%*	*14%*	*100%*

Note: The top figure gives the total number of religious communities; the figure below (in *italics*) gives the proportion (as a percentage) represented by each area of the total number of communities of each religion or church in Ukraine (Ukraine=100 per cent).
Source of data: 'Religious organisations in Ukraine as of 1 January 2001', *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, www.risu.org.ua.
*'Religious communities' include places of regular worship, monasteries, religious brother-hoods, religious missions, theological educational institutions and administrative (diocesan) centres of religious organisations.
(1) Ternopil', Ivano-Frankivs'k and L'viv *oblasti*; (2) Volynia, Rovno and Zakarpattia *oblasti*; (3) Donets'k, Luhans'k and Kharkiv *oblasti*.

Orthodox versus Greek Catholics

Following the historic meeting between the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the pope in 1989 the Greek Catholic Church was legalised and swiftly reborn across Western Ukraine. The UGCC has a similar liturgical tradition to that of the Orthodox Church, but recognises the supremacy of the pope and is united with the Roman Catholic Church. The UGCC is the heir of the Council of Brest in 1596, when an agreement was signed between the Vatican and a group of Ukrainian Orthodox bishops. This agreement was a political compromise between the Eastern (Byzantine) Christian tradition habitual for Ukrainians and the political realities of those times, when most of contemporary Ukraine was part of the Catholic Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. While Polish secular and church elites attempted to pursue the policy of the full latinisation of Ukrainians in Galicia the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church played the leading role in preserving their cultural and religious independence. As a result the self-consciousness of Galicians is largely based on a

particular type of regional culture, the focal point of which is the Greek Catholic Church.

Following Poland's numerous partitions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and changes of political borders after the Second World War, the traditional area of the UGCC was gradually annexed, first to the Russian Empire and later to the USSR. The Russian Empire pursued a consistent policy of gradual ousting of the UGCC, but it was only after the end of the Second World War that Stalin liquidated the UGCC in 1946–48 (on the formal pretext of UGCC collaboration with the Nazis). UGCC leaders were arrested or emigrated, and UGCC parishes were placed under the jurisdiction of the ROC. This 'ecclesiastical annexation', and the fact that after the Second World War the ROC – which functioned legally – was used by the communist secular authorities to further their own political goals, discredited the Moscow Patriarchate in the eyes many Ukrainian Orthodox clergy. In addition the ROC was heavily criticised by Ukrainian dissidents and the national democratic movement. According to the head of the UGCC, Cardinal Liubomyr Husar, 'For many the Greek Catholic Church was a "home" Ukrainian Church. The Russian Orthodox Church was a church identified with the communist authorities' (Petrushko, 2001).

The UGCC survived either in exile abroad or underground in the USSR. By the time of its legalisation it numbered ten secret bishops and about 1000 priests (Hotz, 1990). Forty years of suppression were too short to eliminate the UGCC from the life of Galicians. On the contrary, people expressed their opposition to the Soviet regime by retaining their religious traditions (Zhukovsky, 1999). From the first days of its reestablishment the UGCC played an important ideological role in the Ukrainian nationalistic movement and established close links with nationalistic political organisations. After the first free elections to the provincial legislature, the UGCC achieved an influential position within the political elites of L'viv, Ternopil' and Ivano-Frankivs'k *oblasti* (Hotz, 1992).

The massive return to the UGCC of parishes which were formally part of the ROC began in 1990; yet 50 years of leading a double existence and of having Western Ukrainian priests trained in the theological seminaries of the ROC in Moscow and Leningrad left their mark on the religious culture of Galicians. In the conditions of religious freedom a fairly large number of priests decided to remain Orthodox and refused to submit to the pope. The new religious legislation adopted in the Soviet Union in 1990 allowed for the restitution of UGCC property confiscated in 1946–49. Possession of church buildings has become an urgent problem, with many parishes in Western Ukraine divided into hostile factions: supporters of the UGCC and advocates of the Orthodox faith. This resulted immediately in open conflict between Orthodox and Greek Catholics.

According to Cardinal Liubomyr Husar

> People don't know exactly why they are Greek Catholics or Orthodox. They attend the same churches their fathers attended. They are devoted to their churches, but they don't know why. The priest is like a father for the local people. They ask him: 'Are you going to stay Greek Catholic, or Orthodox?' If he has authority, than the people say: 'We shall follow you in your decision' (Petrushko, 2001).

Field studies I have carried out in Galicia tend to support this statement. However the local secular authorities have involved themselves in interchurch disputes by unofficially supporting one of the conflicting groups. Whereas in Volynia or in

Zakarpattia the situation has varied from place to place, state officials in Galicia have mainly favoured the UGCC. Where attempts have been made to implement the practice of alternate Greek Catholic and Orthodox services in the same buildings, they have proved a failure.

My case study on Ternopil' *oblast'* illustrates the evolution of Orthodox-Greek Catholic tensions in Galicia. In 1991–93, at the peak of confrontation, of 977 towns and villages in Ternopil' *oblast'* 220 were involved in open conflict, with church buildings being seized by force. By 1997 the number of 'hot points' had decreased to 80, but only in 30 places was it possible to implement the practice of alternate services. Similarly, according to the head of the L'viv *oblast'* department for religious affairs, Stepan Borutsky, in the early 1990s the state of Orthodox–Greek Catholic conflict was critical in about 800 towns and villages in L'viv *oblast'*; but by 2000 'misunderstandings' over property at parish level were to be found in only two places.

The apparent conflict between Orthodox and Greek Catholics in Western Ukraine is still routinely cited by representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate as the main obstacle to developing dialogue and relations with the RCC (Ukrainian, 2002, p. 18). At the same time, the majority of hierarchs of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches in Ukraine, as well as government representatives, agree that no such conflict exists any more (Fagan and Shchipkov, 2001, p. 207).

By 2001 the total number of Greek Catholic parishes in Ukraine had grown to 3317, served by 1872 priests. The UGCC had 79 monasteries and 12 theological educational institutions. However, almost 90 per cent of UGCC parishes are concentrated in three *oblasti*: L'viv, Ternopil' and Ivano-Frankivs'k (Table 6). In those *oblasti* they constitute 53 per cent of all local religious communities (Table 7).

Table 7. Composition of religious institutions in various Ukrainian geographical areas
(1 January 2001)

	Galicia (*1*)	Three further Western oblasti (*2*)	Six Western oblasti together	Kiev (Kiev city and oblast')	Three Eastern oblasti (*3*)	Ukraine Total
All Orthodox Churches	33	55	42	58	48	52
UOC-MP	4	42	19	35	42	37
UOC-KP	16	13	15	19	4	11
UOAC	13	1	8	2	1	4
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church	53	9	35	1	1.5	14
Roman Catholic Church	4	4	4	2	1	3.5
Protestant communities	9	32	18	38	45	27

Note: This table shows the number of communities of different churches and denominations as a percentage of the total number of local religious communities in each geographical area ('religious communities' include places of regular worship, monasteries, religious brotherhoods, religious missions, theological educational institutions and administrative (diocesan) centres of religious organisations).
Source of data: 'Religious organisations in Ukraine as of 1 January 2001', *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, www.risu.org.ua.
(1) Ternopil', Ivano-Frankivs'k and L'viv *oblasti*; (2) Volynia, Rovno and Zakarpattia *oblasti*; (3) Donets'k, Luhans'k and Kharkiv *oblasti*.

Estimates of UGCC membership vary from 3,000,000 (Survey, 1998a) to 5,000,000 (BRNC, 1996; Tishkov, 1998, p. 708). Consequently Greek Catholics make up between 6 and 10 per cent of the population of Ukraine as a whole, but up to 50 to 75 per cent of the population of Galicia (Figure 3).

The UGCC was and remains a regional church. This means that its sphere of spiritual authority and influence is limited to the area of Galicia, and this fact calls into question the current identity of the UGCC. On the one hand it is widely believed that 'since the middle of the nineteenth century the Greek Catholic clergy in Western Ukraine have been closely identified with the Ukrainian national movement and the struggle for Ukrainian statehood' (Turiy, 2000). In newly independent Ukraine, on the other hand, the UGCC can claim neither to be the only bearer of the genuine Ukrainian religious tradition nor to be a source of national ideology at the country-wide level. Furthermore there are serious divisions among UGCC hierarchs and clergy, between the pro-Byzantine (Studite) and pro-Latin (Basilian) factions.

Recognising the church's identity problem, but attempting to find an appropriate formula to describe the current UGCC position within Ukrainian society, Cardinal Husar has suggested the following.

> It is often said that we Byzantine Catholics should be a bridge between East and West, between the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches. A bridge connects two shores, but it doesn't have its own essence, its own existence. Therefore I think that calling the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church a bridge is not sufficient. I see our church as a mediator. A mediator has its own identity. This is a very important position. Given this background, our church could help these two cultures [i.e. Orthodox and Catholic – AK] to begin to understand one another. This, I think, is where our great strength lies, and our great task (RISU, 2001a).

Splits and Confrontations within Ukrainian Orthodoxy

Today the disputes between the Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches are secondary in comparison with the conflict which has a nationwide impact – the confrontation between three Orthodox jurisdictions: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Moscow (UOC-MP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) and the Ukrainian Auto-cephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC).

The UOC-MP (8950 parishes, 7509 priests, 122 monasteries, 15 theological educational institutions) is the successor to the former Ukrainian exarchate of the ROC. In 1990, on the eve of Ukraine's independence, the Moscow Patriarchate granted its Ukrainian parishes and dioceses the rights of broad autonomy. The UOC-MP, headed by Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), governs itself and is independent in its internal affairs, but remains in ecclesiastical unity with the ROC and prays for the patriarch of Moscow at its services.

From the advent of Ukrainian independence many Ukrainian Orthodox bishops have raised the question of asking the Moscow Patriarchate to grant the UOC-MP the status of a fully independent (autocephalous) national church. These aspirations were broadly supported by the new Ukrainian political elite. Nevertheless, the majority of hierarchs of the UOC-MP remained of the view that ecclesiastical connection with the ROC was important, whereas full separation from the ROC might cause a schism within the UOC-MP, if hundreds of parishes or even entire dioceses chose to be

directly subordinate to Moscow. The UOC-MP Bishops' Councils held in 1996 and 1998 both passed a resolution that the time was not right for the church to receive autocephalous status. Among UOC-MP clergy in Western Ukraine there are additional motivations for keeping ties with the ROC. During my research trips to Ternopil' I frequently heard UOC-MP priests declare emotionally that 'Losing ties with Moscow is like cutting the umbilical cord. We will not survive today in nationalistic Ukraine.'

Under the first Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk (1991–94) the UOC-MP experienced almost open pressure and existed in a situation of forced opposition to the Ukrainian state authorities (Mitrokhin, 2001). After President Kuchma's election the position of the UOC-MP become stable on the nationwide level. But neither this change of approach to the UOC-MP in the Ukrainian capital nor the fact that the UOC-MP remains the largest religious organisation in Ukraine can improve the lamentable situation of UOC-MP parishes and dioceses in Western Ukraine. Further-more, the future of the UOC-MP on the nationwide level is also in doubt. Ukrainian nationalist politicians and the intelligentsia perceive the UOC-MP to be conservative, fearful of any changes, a church with unclear autonomous status, and unwilling to accept the new conditions of religious life in Ukraine. The image of a 'foreign' church which for centuries was an integral part of the power structures of a different nation remains with the UOC-MP in spite of the current multiethnic character of its clergy, its faithful and the language of its liturgy (Turiy, 2000).

Not only the rebirth of the UGCC was seen in 1989, but also the reestablishment of the UOAC in Western Ukraine. The history of the UAOC (1015 parishes, 628 priests, one monastery, six theological educational institutions) is connected with the short period of Ukrainian independence following the revolution of 1917.

In 1919 the government of the shortlived Ukrainian republic passed a law allowing for the establishment of an independent Orthodox Church. Meanwhile, a movement in favour of breaking away from the ROC was growing among Ukrainian Orthodox priests. In 1921 the UAOC was proclaimed at a so-called 'All-Ukrainian' church council; but because no Orthodox bishop took part in this council, the first UAOC bishop was ordained by the laying on of hands by priests and laypeople – a method not recognised by canon law. Consequently the UAOC was never recognised by other autocephalous and autonomous (*pomestnyye*, often translated as 'local' or 'national') Orthodox churches as canonical. By the late 1920s the communist authorities in Ukraine started to see the UAOC as an expression of Ukrainian nationalism and in 1930, under pressure from the authorities, the UAOC declared itself dissolved and integrated into the ROC. During the Second World War the UAOC was revived in Ukraine for a short period by Polish Orthodox bishops, supported by the Nazi military administration. In North America Ukrainian immigrants established two separate Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in the late 1920s, which in 1996 became one under the name of the 'Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA'. This church was received into the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople as an autonomous church, and this removed any questions concerning its legitimacy.

The ecclesial identity of the UAOC was initially linked to reawakened Ukrainian nationalism. Those Galician priests and parishioners who wished to remain Orthodox but not in the Moscow Patriarchate were a very fertile soil for UAOC growth. The growth of the UAOC in Western Ukraine thus resulted not from the foundation of new Orthodox parishes, but from jurisdictional switchovers of former parishes of the ROC and, later, of the UOC-MP. The ideology of the UAOC expresses a clear desire

to differentiate itself equally from Catholicism, the Soviet system, and Polish and Russian cultural influences. Consequently UAOC leaders have pursued a twofold mission: to create an independent national Orthodox Church with a pronounced Ukrainian character and to rescue the Orthodox faith in Western Ukraine from the fast-growing UGCC.

In spite of rapid revival, from its very beginnings the UAOC has faced the problems of internal disagreements amongst its bishops, the absence of one widely-recognised leader, weak administration, and the strong influence of the local 'white' clergy and lay Orthodox brotherhoods (G2W, 1997).

The 'lay' character of the UAOC is demonstrated by the fact that today it has only one monastery (four monks) in comparison with the UOC-KP's 22 monastic communities (113 monks) and the UOC-MP's 122 monasteries (3579 monks) (RISU, 2001b). The 'black clergy', the monks, who by entering a monastery had renounced worldly ideas, including that of national identity, did not approve the idea of creation of a UAOC via schism with ROC, as this way of obtaining church independence was an obvious infringement of canon law.

These weaknesses prevented the UAOC from exploring its potential Ukrainian-wide appeal, which was never the case with the UGCC. Even in the early 1990s, when nationalistic sentiments were not only strong in Western Ukraine but also dominated political life in the capital Kiev, the UAOC was unable to achieve serious nationwide influence.

The first informal leader of UAOC, and the only former ROC bishop to join the UAOC, Ioann (Bodnarchuk), died in a car accident in 1995. Although initially the UAOC was separate from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA, in June 1990 the UAOC elected as its head Metropolitan Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), who was also the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA. He was succeeded in 1993 by a former Orthodox priest from L'viv, Dmytrii Yarema. In 1996 the Bishop's Council of the UAOC deposed Patriarch Dmytrii because of alleged financial improprieties, provoking a split within the UAOC into two factions. After Dmytrii's death in 2000 Metropolitan Mefodi (Kudryakov), formerly priest-in-charge of the cathedral of the ROC in Ternopil', took over as '*locum tenens*' for the patriarch of the UAOC.

The sphere of influence of the UAOC, like that of the UGCC, is limited to Galicia, where almost three quarters of about 1000 UAOC parishes are located (Table 6). Furthermore, today most of the UAOC parishes are *de facto* subordinated only to themselves and this situation of absence of obligation to any vertical church structure suits them perfectly (Mitrokhin, 2001, p. 179).

The strength of the UOC-KP, the second-largest Orthodox jurisdiction and the third-largest religious organisation in Ukraine (2781 parishes, 2182 priests, 22 monasteries, 16 theological educational institutions), resides entirely in the person of its head, Patriarch Filaret (Denisenko). There are very few Orthodox hierarchs in the former USSR whose intellect, administrative experience, network of private contacts and level of influence are comparable with those of Filaret. In Soviet times he represented the ROC at numerous international and ecumenical events, from 1964 to 1966 he served as rector of Moscow Theological Academy, and from 1966 to 1991 he was the head of Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC. He was regarded as one of the most likely candidates for patriarch of ROC, but in the event the election of Aleksi II (Ridiger) in June 1990 deprived Filaret of his chances.

In 1991, in a break with his previous policy of protecting the unity of Orthodoxy in Ukraine against the UGCC and the UAOC, Filaret initiated an appeal by Ukrainian Orthodox bishops to the ROC requesting the granting of independence (autocephaly)

to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Zawerucha, 1992), but at a decisive Bishops' Council of the ROC in Moscow in March 1992 only two Ukrainian bishops stayed firm with Filaret. The Bishops' Council turned down the appeal for autocephaly and removed Filaret from his position as head of the Ukrainian Exarchate. Filaret agreed to abide by these decisions; nevertheless, on his return to Ukraine he initiated a schism within the UOC-MP. In May 1992 the Synod of the UOC-MP, loyal to Moscow, deposed Filaret. He and his followers went on to found the UOC-KP, and in June a church court reduced him to the status of an ordinary monk. Later on he was excommunicated from the Orthodox Church for violations of the regulations of monastic life and for perjury.

Filaret's administrative experience, his personal authority and his longstanding relations with Ukrainian Orthodox clergy have attracted many Orthodox priests to him, especially from Western Ukraine. More importantly, at the start of the 1990s, in contrast to the administratively weak and anarchic UAOC, which was revived on the basis of grass-roots initiative, Filaret's initiative enjoyed the support of the Ukrainian state administration, of the right-wing political organisations which dominated the first Ukrainian parliament, and of the first Ukrainian president, Kravchuk, personally. In 1993 the latter wrote an official letter to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios requesting him to confirm the legitimacy of an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Zawerucha, 1993). In the uncertain climate of the first years of Ukrainian independence the new Ukrainian political elite hoped to find in a forcibly 'national-ised religion' a source of national consciousness and a symbol of national unity.

For a short period Filaret endeavoured to place the spontaneously developing UAOC under his authority and took the title of *'locum tenens'* of Patriarch Mstyslav who had returned to the USA because of health problems. The association of Filaret with the UAOC was disapproved of, however, by the majority of bishops and priests of the UAOC because of Filaret's 'communist' past and his dubious personal reputation (IOC, 1993). After the death of Patriarch Mstyslav in June 1993 the illusory union ended and two separate Orthodox Churches – the UOC-KP and the UAOC – were finally formed in the autumn of 1993. In 1995 Filaret was enthroned as patriarch of the UOC-KP.

The UOC-KP is similar to UAOC with its nationalistic and patriotic programme. The slogan 'an independent church is a fundamental element in building the nation' is central in Filaret's rhetoric (SEIA, 2002). However, unlike the UAOC the UOC-KP promotes the idea of the union of all Ukrainian churches of the Byzantine tradition (including the Greek Catholic Church) in one Ukrainian Patriarchate (Mitrokhin, 2001). Furthermore, the patriotism of UOC-KP means that it expresses unquestioning loyalty to the secular authority, and Filaret's ideal is support from the Ukrainian government and close working relations between the government and a single national Ukrainian church (Turiy, 2000). In other words, Patriarch Filaret is attempting to reestablish under new conditions the old Soviet model of a privileged comfortable relationship between one (reunified) national Eastern Christian church and the Ukrainian state.

The balance of forces amongst the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP and the UAOC has a multidimensional character.

The first element in this balance is the number and distribution of parishes. The UOC-MP has more parishes than the UOC-KP and the UAOC together in all Ukrainian administrative *oblasti* with the exception of Galicia (Table 7). The strong-hold of the UAOC is exclusively in Galicia, but even there the UAOC predominates over the UOC-MP and the UOC-KP in Ternopil' *oblast'* only. The UOC-KP has a

wider geographical distribution than the UOAC. In addition to Galicia (where the UOC-KP predominates in L'viv and Ivano-Frankivs'k *oblasti*) it also has a significant presence in many Western Ukrainian *oblasti* (Volynia, Rovno, Chernivtsi, Vinnytsa, Khmel'nyts'kyi, Zhytomir) as well as in the capital city Kiev and Kiev *oblast'* (in 2001 there were 134 parishes of the UOC-MP, 88 of the UOC-KP and 21 of the UAOC in Kiev city) (RISU, 2001b). The geographical proportions are tending to change, however. The period 1996–2001 has demonstrated: the continuing weakening of the UAOC nationwide and especially in its traditional area in Galicia; the stable position of the UOC-MP on the national level, but its continuing ousting from Galicia; and the dynamic growth of the UOC-KP in Ukraine generally, and especially in Eastern Ukraine (Table 8). Attempts by the UOC-KP to increase its presence in the eastern part of the country have occasioned the spread of conflicts between followers of the UOC-KP and of the UOC-MP into the Eastern Ukrainian *oblasti*.

In May 1999 the administration of Cherkasy *oblast'* organised a meeting of representatives of the largest religious organisations, because of 'the unstable interreligious situation in the *oblast'* caused by the activity of the Orthodox churches which are opposed to each other' (NG-Religii, 1999b). In the same month in the cities of Donets'k and Maryupil' there were armed clashes between adherents of the UOC-MP and the UOC-KP as a result of the opening of UOC-KP parishes (NG-Religii, 1999a).

A second element in the balance of forces amongst the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP and the UAOC is the size of their actual membership, which is not reflected in the number of their parishes. The data on their membership are based on the results of sociological surveys, which are controversial and open to question (Tables 3.1 and 3.2), a major reason for this being the fact that a large proportion of ordinary believers do not have a strong sense of belonging to any particular Orthodox jurisdiction: in other words, for many Orthodox it is important to be simply 'Orthodox'

Table 8. Changes in the numbers of local religious communities* of different religions, churches and denominations in various geographical areas of Ukraine between 1996 and 2001 (expressed in percentages; 1 January 1996 = 100 per cent)

	Ukraine Total	Galicia (1)	Kiev (city and oblast')	Three Eastern oblasti (2)
All local religious communities	141	108	166	195
All Orthodox Churches	143	104	161	182
UOC-MP	139	89	167	169
UOC-KP	208	200	149	413
UAOC	86	68	165	166
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church	109	107	160	231
Roman Catholic Church	124	109	188	200
Protestant Churches	158	119	175	212

Source of data: 'Religious organisations in Ukraine as of 1 January 2001', *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, www.risu.org.ua.

*'Religious communities' include places of regular worship, monasteries, religious brotherhoods, religious missions, theological educational institutions and administrative (diocesan) centres of religious organisations.

(1) Ternopil', Ivano-Frankivs'k and L'viv *oblasti*; (2) Donets'k, Luhans'k and Kharkiv *oblasti*.

(as opposed to Greek Catholic or Roman Catholic or Protestant). The results of surveys vary depending on how the questions were exactly worded in the various Ukrainian regions. In the case of the UOC-MP, for instance, its membership increases noticeably in many regions if the phrase 'Moscow Patriarchate' is removed from the questionnaires; but in Crimea, for instance, the reverse is the case. Furthermore, in some Eastern Ukrainian *oblasti* many Orthodox regard themselves not as members of UOC-MP but of the Russian Orthodox Church (Elens'kyi, 1998).

A third element in the balance of forces is the problem, which faces all three Orthodox churches today, of clergy transferring loyalties and of wavering parishes. The competitive coexistence of several Orthodox jurisdictions in the same regions gives local priests the possibility of easily changing their subordination depending on changing circumstances within their church (their relations with their bishop, for instance) and/or depending on the preferences of the local secular authorities. I know from my own field studies in Galicia that in many rural Orthodox parishes the jurisdictional affiliation is not mentioned in the name of the church at all. Unclarity is compounded further by the fact that there are also many 'fake' parishes which are registered as existing but are in fact just pieces of land bought for future building.

The fourth, and the most important and complicated element in the balance of forces amongst the three Orthodox jurisdictions, with implications for their future, is their relationship with other national Orthodox Churches (especially with the Constantinople and Moscow Patriarchates), with the Vatican, with the UGCC, with the various Ukrainian political forces and, finally, with the Ukrainian secular authorities at national and regional level.

Today, of the three churches only the UOC-MP is recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and by the other local Orthodox Churches (Serbian, Romanian, Greek, Bulgarian, Georgian and the rest) as canonically legitimate. This recognition was reconfirmed in August 2001 at the celebration of the 950th anniversary of the Pechers'ka Lavra (the Monastery of the Caves), the spiritual centre of Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the most important religious site in Ukraine. The official delegations of the other national Orthodox Churches gathered for the event acknowledged the UOC-MP as the only 'canonical' Ukrainian Orthodox Church (SEIA, 2001c). At the same time, however, as noted above, the future of the UOC-MP is uncertain in the political context of Ukrainian society.

The position of the UAOC is gradually weakening because of weak administration and internal disagreements, but from 1997 the UAOC has been enjoying increasing support from its 'sister-church', the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA (Lisyi, 2000).

The UOC-KP, by contrast, has a strong central administration with the almost unlimited power of Patriarch Filaret (Zhukovsky, 1999, p. 11), but in the late 1990s it lost its monopoly on support from the national state administration in Kiev. The current policy of president Kuchma is to demonstrate equal treatment of all Ukrainian Orthodox Churches by the state.

The increasing importance of relations between the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP and the UAOC and the regional authorities was confirmed by the head of the Ukrainian State Committee for Religious Affairs (*Derzhavnyi komitet u spravakh relihii*), Viktor Bondarenko: '... we now see blocs forming, uniting local authorities with the dominant church in the area' (Fagan and Shchipkov, 2001, p. 212). The involvement of political forces in the interorthodox dispute at the nationwide level can be demonstrated with reference to several fractions in the Ukrainian parliament: for example,

For a United National Orthodox Church (*Za yedinuyu pomestnuyu pravoslavnuyu tserkov'*) is orientated towards the UOC-KP, while Towards Europe together with Russia (*Vpered v Yevropu vmeste s Rossiyei*) supports the UOC-MP. In December 2001, at a meeting with the Russian Patriarch Aleksi, the leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine, Petr Simonenko, announced the absolute support of his party for the UOC-MP (Yeliseyev, 2001).

Increasing Tensions between the 'Sister' Churches the UGCC and the RCC

The Greek Catholic–Orthodox conflict and the interorthodox schism have had wide resonance and generated longstanding public interest. By contrast, the worsening relations between two 'sister churches', the UGCC and the RCC, are to a large extent still in shadow.

In today's Galicia only the large number of former Roman Catholic churches testifies to a cultural and religious tradition established during long periods of Polish rule (the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries and the years 1918–39). This tradition was almost entirely destroyed when the Soviet army occupied Galicia during the Second World War and those of Polish ethnicity were deported westwards in 'Operation Wisla'. In the past, the confessional division between the RCC and the UGCC coincided with the national division between Ukrainians and Poles. Sixty years on, resentment of former Polish domination still fuels hostility towards Roman Catholicism. The notion that 'the UGCC is a Ukrainian church and the RCC is a Polish one' defines the character of the relationship between the two churches in spite of their ecclesiastical unity. Meanwhile the secular authorities in Galicia regard the UGCC as a church which contributes consistently to the development of Ukrainian national identity and culture, whereas they still regard the RCC as a 'foreign' church (RISU, 2000).

As early as in 1995 the head of Ukrainian Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Marian Yavors'kyi, gave a reason for unfriendly attitudes toward the RCC: 'Other religious organisations call the RCC a "Polish Church". National-istically orientated Ukrainian politicians take up this pretext in order not to return the RCC its property. They see aliens in the Latin Catholics and fear from them the potential danger of a repolonisation of Ukraine' (Forum, 1995). The former head of the UGCC, Cardinal Myroslav Liubachivs'kyi, has responded as follows to a question about the possibilities for an improvement in UGCC–RCC relations: 'This would be quite difficult. We have lost too many church buildings which we will never get back [he is referring to the churches of Ukrainian Greek Catholics living on the territory of today's Poland]. We handle the Poles here in the same way as they handle our people in Poland' (Christliche, 1993a).

Strong administration and essential support from abroad have assured the rapid institutional development of the RCC in postsoviet Ukraine. In 2001 the RCC had 807 parishes, 50 monasteries and six theological seminaries (RISU, 2001b). During the period 1991–2001 the number of local religious communities of the RCC grew by 284 per cent; this compares with 220 per cent for the Orthodox Churches and only 172 per cent for the UGCC (Table 2). The problem of a shortage of qualified clergy for newly-founded parishes is urgent for all Ukrainian churches, but only the RCC is able to bring in priests from abroad, mainly from Poland. Out of today's 431 Roman Catholic priests 260 are foreign citizens. The RCC pays great attention to religious education and, specifically, to work with young people. Nationwide the RCC averages one Sunday school per 2.0 parishes, whereas the UOC-MP has one per 3.5,

the UOC-KP one per 3.7, the UAOC one per 4.7 and the UGCC one per 4.8 (RISU, 2001b). While the UGCC is largely confined to its Galician enclave, the parishes of the RCC are more widely scattered over Ukrainian territory (Table 6).

The evolution of the RCC in Ukraine during the last 60 years can be demonstrated by reference to its most important archdiocese, that of L'viv, which includes the administrative *oblasti* of L'viv, Ternopil', Ivano-Frankivs'k and Chernivtsi. In 1939 L'viv diocese comprised 475 parishes and 867 priests, with a total of about 1.3 million believers (BRNC, 1996). By 1988 there were only 12 parishes left. In 2001 the archdiocese had 267 parishes (RISU, 2001b) and the number of believers was estimated at about 180,000, or 2.8 per cent of the total population of those four Ukrainian provinces (6,400,000) (BRNC, 1996). The geographical distribution of the RCC in Ukraine today is different from what it was before the Second World War: 367 parishes, or 41 per cent of the total number, are concentrated in three of the 25 Ukrainian *oblasti*, Vinnytsa, Zhytomir and Khmel'nyts'kyi. This number exceeds that in once traditionally 'Polish' Galicia (237, or 26 per cent of all RCC parishes in the Ukraine), which is not surprising in view of the current attitude to the RCC in Galicia.

The data about the total number of Roman Catholics in Ukraine today are controversial. Surveys indicate that about 0.7 per cent of the population, that is about 350,000 people, regard themselves as Roman Catholics (Table 3.2), but the records of the RCC say that the figure is about 900,000 (BRNC, 1996). Some bishops of the RCC claim that there are 2,000,000 Roman Catholics in Ukraine (Christliche, 1993b), while the leaders of the UGCC believe that there are no more than 200,000, in comparison with 2,000,000 before the Second World War (Forum, 1995). These statistical discrepancies have a political colouring and political consequences. From the standpoint of the UGCC the RCC remains an ethnic Polish church, and therefore the membership of the RCC is estimated as the number of people who declared themselves 'Poles' in the last (1989) Soviet census – 219,000 (Natsional'ny, 1990). Recent studies indicate, however, that today most Roman Catholics in Ukraine are from mixed families and that their mother tongue is either Ukrainian or Russian (Turiy, 2000). The Polish and Ukrainian languages are in fact used to an equal extent today in Roman Catholic parishes (Christliche, 1993b). During my field studies in Ukraine I was told by Roman Catholic bishops and priests that a new Roman Catholic parish in Ukraine was usually founded by people of Polish origin, but that within a short time many Ukrainians would start joining the new parish.

In the USSR the processes of cultural assimilation produced a large number of 'Ukrainian-speaking Poles', who lost their Polish mother tongue but were able to retain their cultural identity and some traditions of daily life solely through their close links with the RCC (although it was forbidden in Soviet Ukraine to worship in Ukrainian in Roman Catholic churches). At the same time, as a consequence of political realities in the USSR, by the time of the 1989 census many 'Ukrainian-speaking Poles' and members of mixed Polish-Ukrainian families preferred to identify themselves not as 'Poles' but as 'Ukrainians'.

The obvious decrease in the size of the Roman Catholic community in Galicia is widely used by the Galician secular authorities as a pretext for not restoring to the RCC the church buildings confiscated in communist times. In L'viv, the cultural capital of Western Ukraine, of 36 former Roman Catholic churches only two have been returned to the RCC, and other church buildings have been given to the UGCC, the UAOC and the Seventh-Day Adventists (Feigan and Shchipkov, 2000).

In the period from 1995 to 2001 the growth of the RCC in Central and Eastern

Ukraine was much more dynamic than in the traditionally 'Catholic' Western regions (Table 8). This diffusion of Catholicism has prompted the clergy of the UOC-MP to raise the issue of Catholic proselytism. From the perspective of the RCC, however, this activity is not the conversion of Orthodox believers to Roman Catholicism, but rather missionary work among the largely 'godless' population of Eastern Ukraine (Bondarenko and Elens'kyi, 1996). In any case, local discords with the RCC in Eastern Ukraine are not perceived as a big issue by UOC-MP hierarchs. According to the chief administrator of the UOC-MP, Archbishop Mitrofan, 'We have no problems with Roman Catholics' (Fagan and Shchipkov, 2001, p. 211).

As far as relations between the UGCC and the RCC are concerned, political issues are much more important than disputes about church membership and property. The UGCC expressed strong irritation when the Vatican placed the Greek Catholic parishes in Transcarpathia (Zakarpattia) (309 by 1 January 2001) under the direct supervision of the papal nuncio and removed this *oblast'* from UGCC jurisdiction. The reason for this move was that the majority of Greek Catholics in Transcarpathia are ethnically Ruthenians, distinct from the Galician Ukrainians in language, culture and traditions. The distinctive jurisdictional affiliation of the Transcarpathian Greek Catholics is similar to that of the Orthodox living in the same *oblast'*. Of 550 Transcarpathian Orthodox parishes 542 are loyal to the UOC-MP, and the *oblast'* is thus an enclave of the UOC-MP, separated by the Galician barrier from Central and Eastern Ukraine where the UOC-MP dominates. The reluctance of the Transcarpathian Orthodox and Greek Catholics to be affiliated with the nationalistic UGCC, UOC-KP and UAOC is based on a generally negative public attitude in Transcarpathia to the Ukrainian nationalist movements and to the forced ukrainisation of cultural life. Public opinion polls show that whereas in Galicia about 50 per cent of the population support the aim of gradually ousting the Russian language from Ukraine, the corresponding figure for Transcarpathia is only 19 per cent; and while 20 per cent of Transcarpathians support the idea of the reunification of Ukraine and Russia the corresponding figure for Galicia is only 2 per cent (Survey, 1998a, b, c).

Another painful issue in relations between the UGCC and the RCC is the reluctance of the Vatican to elevate the UGCC to the status of a 'Patriarchate', whose head would be a patriarch rather than a cardinal and whose canonical borders would coincide with those of the Ukrainian state.

The issues described above are symptomatic of two very different approaches to the understanding of the nature and mission of the UGGC. The hierarchs of the UGCC consider their church an all-Ukrainian 'national' church, but the Vatican prefers to see it as an 'ethno-regional' church whose borders and sphere of influence are limited to the area of predominance of the Greek Catholics of Ukrainian ethnic origin.

Without intervening directly in the interorthodox dispute in Ukraine the Vatican also attempts to prevent possible negotiations or even alliances between the politically similarly orientated UGCC on the one hand and the UOC-KP and the UAOC on the other. According to the secretary of the UGCC Synod, Bishop Yulian Gbur, 'Rome allows us to talk only to the Moscow Patriarchate, because the others are not canonical – although they are closer to us' (Fagan and Shchipkov, 2001, p. 210).

The policy of the Vatican in Ukraine can be interpreted as aiming to preserve the shaky 'status quo' in relations with the Moscow Patriarchate. The establishment of a Greek Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine (which would *de facto* encourage the spread of the UGCC into Central and Eastern Ukraine) or indirect support for the UOC-KP

or the UAOC (even by simply recognising them as the legitimate partners for dialogue) would inevitably result in the further worsening of the current tense relations between Moscow and the Holy See.

Most Recent Developments

Since 2000 there have been new developments affecting the complicated religious scene in Ukraine. The most important, up to the summer of 2002 when this article was completed, have been as follows.

(1) The direct involvement of the Constantinople and Moscow Patriarchates in the disputes about the future of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine.
(2) The intensification of contacts and growing cooperation between the UAOC and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA (UOC–USA), and the active involvement of the latter in Ukrainian church affairs.
(3) The coordination of their activities by the UOC-KP and the UAOC and the initiation of a process to lead to their merger.
(4) The increasing involvement of the Ukrainian state in the process of unification and of the creation of an independent national Ukrainian Orthodox Church.
(5) The change of leadership in the UGCC.
(6) The consequences of the pope's visit to Ukraine in June 2001.

These developments are interrelated, but I shall look briefly at each of them separately, in chronological order.

The Direct Involvement of the Constantinople and Moscow Patriarchates

The view of the Moscow Patriarchate on how to overcome the Orthodox schism in Ukraine was formulated in a resolution of the Bishops' Council of the ROC in August 2000. The resolution notes that only the UOC-MP is recognised as a legitimate Orthodox Church in Ukraine by other Orthodox Churches around the world, and insists that only the UOC-MP, therefore, can provide a canonical basis for unification. This position was endorsed in a statement of 9 July 2001 issued by the Bishops' Council of the UOC-MP: '...the question that should be posed is not about uniting various trends in the Ukrainian Orthodoxy, but rather about the need for the spiritual children who formerly separated themselves from the UOC-MP [i.e.the UOC-KP and the UAOC] to rejoin her'. The statement says that 'we are ready to continue the negotiations with schismatic groups', but only '...if they are held without anathematized Denisenko' – that is, without Patriarch Filaret (SEIA, 2001b).
   Meanwhile there have been speculations about the unclear position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on the question of Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Specifically, the scenario of a 'second Estonia' has been discussed, concerning the possibility that the Ecumenical Patriarchate might proclaim Ukraine its own canonical territory and that the UOC-KP and the UAOC might form a unified church which would be recognised by Constantinople as an autonomous church within the Ecumenical Patriarchate. These rumours were to some extent quelled by the issue of an official communiqué by the delegations of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates in April 2001. It was agreed that the two Patriarchates would work together to normalise the church situation in Ukraine and that a joint delegation consisting of clerics of non-episcopal rank would be sent to Ukraine to study the situation with the aim of restoring

Orthodox unity there (ROC, 2001b). Nevertheless, this communiqué was simply an announcement of an intention to work together on the problem. Neither at the second meeting of the delegations of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the ROC in July 2001 (where representatives of the UAOC and the UOC-KP were also present), nor at the third in October 2001, nor at the most recent one in April 2002 were any concrete proposals or decisions made. Symbolically, after the second meeting the head of the Department of External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Kirill, stressed the fact that representatives of the UOC-KP and the UAOC had been invited only as witnesses and not as participants in the negotiations and that their presence did not entail of any kind of recognition, either by Moscow or by Constantinople (RRN, 2001b).

Official consultations between Moscow and Constantinople on restoring Orthodox unity in Ukraine thus routinely continue, but the facts of daily church life indicate that the actual positions of the ROC and the Ecumenical Patriarchate are far from consensual. A message from Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios distributed in Ukraine in August 2001 on the occasion of the 950th anniversary of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, Ukraine's major religious site, caused serious dissatisfaction in Moscow. In a letter of response Patriarch Aleksi noted that the message failed to mention the canonical head of the UOC-MP, Metropolitan Volodymyr, but was addressed to 'Brothers and Children beloved in the Lord', a formulation which would tend to produce the impression of a nationwide message addressed directly to the faithful and bypassing their legitimate pastor. Furthermore, Aleksi noted, Patriarch Bartholomaios' message called for the unity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, but failed to make clear reference to the existence of the only legitimate church – the UOC-MP (SEIA, 2001d).

Growing Cooperation between the UAOC and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA (UOC-USA)

As early as October 1999 a delegation from the UOC-USA, which is an autonomous church under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, requested the latter to participate actively in the process of the unification of Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. In response the ecumenical patriarch asked the delegation to collect historical materials regarding the territory of the Kievan Metropolis before its transfer in 1686 to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate in order to demonstrate that this transfer was unlawful (Lisyi, 2000).

In May 2000 Constantinople appointed the bishops of the UOC-USA to mediate on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the negotiations in Kiev with representatives of the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP, the UAOC and the Ukrainian government (Gerez, 2001). On 14 September 2000 the Council (*Sobor*) of the UOAC, held in Kiev, was presided over by Metropolitan Konstantin (Buggan), the head of the UOC-USA. The Council appointed him as the UAOC's 'spiritual pastor'. In his speech the metropolitan stressed that he had been asked by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios to be the 'spiritual pastor' of the UAOC and that 'in independent Ukraine a united National Orthodox Church must be created' (Ivzhenko, 2000).

In the spring of 2001 the diocesan councils of the UAOC proclaimed the ecumenical patriarch, represented by Metropolitan Konstantin, as the 'supreme canonical power' ('*vysshaya kanonicheskaya vlast*'') in the Ukrainian National Orthodox Church (NG-Religii, 2001). In December 2001 Metropolitan Konstantin addressed a Christmas letter to members of the UAOC. The text of the letter

produces the impression that he considers himself to be the actual head of a Ukrainian National Orthodox Church on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, even though the UAOC is headed by Metropolitan Mefodi (Kudryakov).

A member of the permanent Council of the UOC-USA, Dr Anatolii Lisyi, summarises the activity of the UOC-USA in Ukraine as follows:

> There is no doubt about the very important role of the UOC-USA in opening doors for the Ukrainian Church to enter the family of independent national Orthodox Churches and to take the first steps towards the unification, and not the annexation [i.e. annexation to the UOC-MP], of the churches in Ukraine ... . In recent years the UOC-USA, its hierarchs and the appointed members of its Council have worked hard within the Ecumenical Patriarchate; they have created a fertile soil and have been able to draw the Patriarchate into the process of creating a unified Autocephalous National Church in the Ukraine, which would be recognised by the whole Orthodox world (Lisyi, 2000).

The coincidence of interests of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the UOC-USA and the UAOC in close cooperation between the latter two is obvious. If the UOC-USA were to incorporate into itself the UAOC and perhaps even the UOC-KP (I shall discuss this possibility below) the result would be the transformation of a small Ukrainian 'immigrant' church in the USA into an influential Ukrainian Orthodox Church with dioceses and parishes both in Ukraine and in North America. Meanwhile for the hierarchs of the UAOC a merger with the UOC-USA is the easiest way of achieving a legitimate canonical status in the Orthodox world, because the UOC-USA is part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. If it were recognised by the other Orthodox Churches and were also the representative of the worldwide Ukrainian diaspora, the UAOC, which is today the weakest and most marginal of the three Ukrainian Orthodox jurisdictions, would have a serious chance of gaining the support of the Ukrainian state authorities and the political elite of the country. Finally, for the Ecumenical Patriarchate the merging of the UAOC with the UOC-USA would result in a 'natural' and legitimate inclusion of Orthodox parishes and dioceses in Ukraine into its own canonical territory and sphere of direct influence.

Growing Cooperation between the UOC-KP and the UAOC

During the late 1990s the strategy of Patriarch Filaret of the UOC-KP was to initiate the process of unification of the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches on a basis of equality and to hold direct elections for a new patriarch of the united Ukrainian Orthodox Church after resolving the problem of its status. Filaret hoped to gain the support of Ukrainian politicians and of a significant number of Orthodoxy clergy in this venture, and thus himself to become the head of the national Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Filaret was obviously counting in advance on support from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and from the president of Ukraine. According to Filaret, in August 2000 the Bishops' Council of the UOC-KP 'supported the initiative of President Kuchma to create in Ukraine a united Orthodox Church as well as the initiative of the ecumenical patriarch to unify all Ukrainian Orthodox Churches and to recognise the Ukrainian Church as autocephalous' (Timoshenko, 2000).

By the autumn of 2000 it had become clear that the UOC-MP backed by the ROC considered itself as the only basis for unification and that there was no chance that

the UOC-MP would agree to be simply one of three equal participants in this process. From that point the hierarchs of the UOAC and the UOC-KP took several steps towards a merger in the hope that their united church would be recognised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate either as fully independent (autocephalous) or as an autonomous church within the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In September 2000 all the bishops of the UOC-KP and the UAOC signed a letter (Gerez, 2001) requesting the Ecumenical Patriarch to participate in the process of the creation of an independent autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. At the end of the year the UOC-KP and the UAOC invited Patriarch Bartholomaios to visit Ukraine (SEIA, 2001f; KNS, 2001). A meeting of UOC-KP and UAOC delegations at the Phanar in Constantinople on 13 June 2001 resulted in the creation of a bilateral theological commission under the auspices of Patriarch Bartholomaios to investigate canonical ways of unifying the UOC-KP and the UAOC. Bartholomaios appointed Archbishop Vsevolod of the UOC-USA to coordinate the work of this commission.

At a meeting in Ternopil' (Western Ukraine) from 19 to 20 June 2001 the heads of the UOC-KP and the UAOC, Patriarch Filaret and Metropolitan Mefodi, signed an agreement on eucharistic fellowship and concelebration by priests of both churches (RRN, 2001a).

The Increasing Involvement of the Ukrainian State

The current presidential administration is deeply interested in the creation of a united and independent National Orthodox Church, in the belief that it would contribute both to the internal stability of Ukrainian society and to the personal popularity of the president himself. There are two ways of achieving this goal: either through autocephaly granted by the ROC to the UOC-MP and the subsequent subordination to it of the two other smaller jurisdictions, or through unification of all three Orthodox Churches on an equal basis and recognition of this united church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in spite of protests from the Moscow Patriarchate. The approach of President Kuchma and the Ukrainian government has been to explore both possibilities.

The request by Kuchma to the Bishops' Council of the ROC in August 2000 to grant the UOC-MP the status of an autonomous church was refused (Gerez, 2001). From that point the second strategy, that of placing a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, has become dominant. In November 2000 Kuchma visited Patriarch Bartholomaios and discussed with him the problem of creating a National Orthodox Church (NG-Religii, 2000). In December 2001 Kuchma and the Ukrainian parliament officially invited Bartholomaios to visit Ukraine in May – that is, before the visit of the pope planned for June. The invitations were politely refused, however, under the formulation that such a visit would take place only 'when the time is right' (SEIA, 2001f; KNS, 2001). The celebration of the 950th anniversary of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves in August 2001 showed that the Ukrainian president was keeping firmly to his line. In his speech he asserted that 'the creation of a unified National Orthodox Church is the only way to enhance the role religion must play in our life' (Lampsi, 2001). In spite of the fact that official delegations of other national Orthodox Churches have confirmed their recognition of the UOC-MP as the only legitimate Orthodox Church in Ukraine, representatives of the Ukrainian state have taken a different line. In order to demonstrate even-handedness in relations with all three Orthodox jurisdictions President Kuchma and other state officials have for example attended both a festive

celebration at the Monastery of the Caves (which belongs to the UOC-MP) and the liturgies held separately on the same day in the cathedrals of the UOC-KP and the UAOC (SEIA, 2001c). One factor making it difficult for the Ukrainian government to maintain 'political correctness' in its impartial relations with the three Orthodox jurisdictions is the fact that it is the major reason for the refusal of the head of the ROC, Patriarch Aleksi, to accept repeated invitations from the Ukrainian president to visit the country.

The Change of Leadership in the UGCC

In January 2001 the Council of Bishops of the UGCC elected a new head of the church: Bishop Liubomyr Husar (Huzar), a Ukrainian immigrant to the USA, a member of the 'pro-Byzantine' Studite monastic brotherhood and the former auxiliary bishop (so-called 'coadjutor') of his predecessor, Cardinal Myroslav Liubachivs'kyi, who died on 14 December 2000.

The first steps taken by the new head of the UGCC demonstrated his intention to increase the influence of his church at the nationwide level. On 13 May 2001 Cardinal Husar announced that the headquarters of the UGCC would move from L'viv to Kiev. 'This is the capital,' he said, 'L'viv became the capital, because Kiev was strangled by Mongols. But now we have our free Kiev, our free country, and we must be where the center is' (Ukrainian, 2002). In L'viv *oblast'* the UGCC has over 1500 parishes and no less than half the population of the *oblast'* are Greek Catholics, but in Kiev city and Kiev *oblast'* together the UGCC has only 16 parishes (RISU, 2001b), and in Kiev city the proportion of Greek Catholics does not exceed 0.2 per cent of the population (Survey, 1998a, b, c). During the period 1996–2001 the tempo of establishment of new UGCC parishes in Eastern Ukraine was higher than the average tempo of increase in other Ukrainian churches, but much lower at the nation-wide level (Table 8).

In the light of the close connection between the UOC-USA and the UAOC in Ukraine and given the 'pro-Eastern' Studite heritage of Cardinal Husar, his extensive visit to the headquarters of the UOC-USA in Bound Brook, New Jersey, in September 2001 can also be taken to demonstrate his intention not only to move the UGCC to the east geographically, but also to improve relations with the UAOC, which like the UGCC has a pronounced Ukrainian ethnic and cultural character.

The Consequences of the Pope's Visit to Ukraine in June 2001

According to official Vatican sources the visit of the pope to Ukraine in June 2001 at the invitation of the Ukrainian president had a threefold goal: 'to meet with the leadership of the UGGC and celebrate its revival after persecution under Soviet rule; to develop contacts with the Ukrainian government; to continue a dialogue with the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine' (Ukrainian, 2002).

The visit produced a strongly negative reaction from both the ROC and the UOC-MP. A letter from the head of the UOC-MP, Metrppolitan Volodymyr, approved by the Synod of Bishops of the UOC-MP in January 2001, stated that in the event of a papal visit none of the UOC-MP clergy would take part in the programme. There were three major reasons for this position. First, there had been no official invitation from the UOC-MP to the pope to visit Ukraine, a country with a predominantly Orthodox population. Second, relations between the Greek Catholics and the Orthodox in Western Ukraine were unsettled, and a prospective papal visit would

strengthen the UGCC in the belief that it was proper for it to seize Orthodox churches in Western Ukraine. Third, it was not clear what the attitude of the RCC was towards the schism amongst the Orthodox in Ukraine. This last reason, involving the fear on the part of the UOC-MP of any kind of recognition of the UAOC and the UOC-KP by the RCC, was obviously the most important. More specifically, the letter indicated that

> if in the course of your visit Your Holiness has a meeting with any schismatic leader, especially the false patriarch Filaret anathematised by our church, this will mean that the RCC is interfering blatantly in our internal affairs by supporting schismatics. This may have most negative implications for relations between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Churches (ROC, 2001a).

By contrast, the UOC-KP enthusiastically supported the papal visit. In an interview with the newspaper *La Repubblica*, Patriarch Filaret said: 'I believe the visit of the pope will aim at promoting peace and mutual understanding, because this is the pope's image in the world, a conciliatory pope, a pope who has not hesitated to ask pardon for the errors of the church' (SEIA, 2001e).

On 24 June 2001, at the pope's meeting with 16 of the 17 leaders of the largest Ukrainian religious organisations which form the Ukrainian Council of Churches (Metropolitan Volodymyr of the UOC-MP was not present), the heads of the UOC-KP and the UOAC, Patriarch Filaret and Metropolitan Mefodi, kissed the pontiff demonstratively on both cheeks at the beginning and at the end of the meeting.

During his visit the pope managed to avoid official contacts with the leaders of the UOC-KP and the UAOC, and consequently the visit did not cause further complications in interorthodox tensions in Ukraine or in relations between Moscow and the Vatican. Furthermore, the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Walter Casper, declared that the Catholic Church had no desire to interfere in internal Orthodox problems and noted that the Vatican maintained official relations only with the canonically established UOC-MP (SEIA, 2001a). At the same time, however, the pope's visit confirmed the existence of a problem in relations between the RCC and the UGCC in Ukraine. At a meeting with hierarchs of the RCC and the UGCC in Kiev the pope stressed that it was necessary 'to work in close cooperation' and 'to overcome every temptation to disagreement'. Later in L'viv, even more openly, he said 'it is time to leave behind the sorrowful past and the prejudices stirred up by nationalism' (SEIA, 2001a). Symbolically, the liturgies celebrated by the pope alternated each day between Eastern-rite and Western-rite.

The pope's visit to Ukraine did not seriously influence the religious situation in the country, but it has had two important consequences. First, it has shown that in future the position of the Vatican will need to be taken into consideration just as much as the positions of the Moscow and Ecumenical Patriarchates in the context of resolving interorthodox discords in Ukraine. Second, it is to be considered as a political victory for the Ukrainian president, who has demonstrated his 'independence from Moscow and persistence in inviting the pope to Ukraine in spite of resistance from the head of the ROC, Patriarch Aleksi, and from the Russian ambassador Chernomyrdin' (Basmanov, 2001).

Conclusions, Prospects and Questions

The pattern of religious rebirth is unique to each republic of the former Soviet Union.

The particular case of Ukraine shows that within modern society religion may cause no less system-threatening cleavages than, for instance, ethnicity. An understanding of the changing situation in interreligious and church–state relations in Ukraine is important for several reasons. Regional divisions within Ukraine are going to remain a major determinant of the country's future, and they are maintained to a significant degree by religious differences. Religious differences are also important as a factor influencing the current oscillating geopolitical position of Ukraine as a country between the 'Western' and the 'Eastern' state-blocks and alliances.

At the peak of interchurch confrontation in 1991–93 over 1000 Ukrainian parishes were internally splintered and involved in open and frequently violent conflicts amongst followers of the UGCC, the UOC-MP, the UOC-KP and the UAOC, including the seizure of churches and the destruction of clergy homes. The churches built before the Soviet era were returned to believers and became the property of the 'victors': those who had the support either of a majority of the local population or of the local authorities (whose sympathies often coincided) (Mitrokhin, 2001). The 'losers' had either to cease their activities (take for example the gradual disappearance of the UOC-MP from Galicia) or to build their own churches (take for example the many newly-established parishes of the RCC).

This period of uncontrolled redistribution of church property and membership (which can be interpreted as a period of predominantly 'grassroots' church development) is now over.

Today the dispute between the largest Ukrainian churches has entered an obviously different phase: it has largely moved from the 'grassroots' level into the political sphere. True, the Ukrainian churches remain independent players, but the rules of the game have become much more definite and the whole game increasingly influenced by the interests of various political associations, of regional and national state authorities, and especially of foreign corporate actors: the Ecumenical and Moscow Patriarchates, the Vatican, and Russia.

Today the competitive coexistence of three Orthodox Churches is recognised as a major nationwide problem in the religious life of Ukraine and as one of the main reasons for the internal instability of the whole society. The separation of Ukrainian Orthodoxy from Moscow is obviously considered by politicians and the state authorities in Kiev as a necessary complement to Ukrainian national independence. At the same time, the questions of how this separation will be achieved and of what the status and internal composition of the national Ukrainian Orthodox Church will be are a long way from being answered.

There are many other open questions. In the framework of the interorthodox dispute, will the UOC-MP develop its own position, more independent from Moscow? What will be the extent and character of the involvement of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA? Will the Ukrainian state officials intervene more actively in the restoration of Orthodox unity, or they will they keep to their current rather temporising policy of 'wait and see'?

Today the balance of forces in the triangle 'Ukrainian churches – state authorities – political players' is dynamic and differs from region to region. The involvement of the aforementioned 'outside' actors (the Moscow and Ecumenical Patriarchates, the Vatican, the Russian state) makes the religious situation in the Ukraine even more difficult to predict. Nevertheless, the experiences of a decade of religious development in an independent Ukraine allow for some conclusions and assumptions.

First, the divisions in contemporary transitional Ukrainian society are maintained by differentiation according to ethno-cultural, political, linguistic and especially

regional attributes. Religious identity and affiliation can ensure that people with a certain combination of these attributes come under the umbrella of one particular church, which can thus serve as a 'badge' for a cluster of various attributes; then in turn this 'church label' helps to distinguish 'us' from 'them' not only in a religious sense but in terms of that particular cluster of attributes.

Second, wherever religion assumes the role of the main mark of differentiation between what would otherwise appear to be groups of kindred people, it can be a substitute for another determinant. This is particularly clear in the case of the 'Galician' regional example. Here, for instance, religion is a rallying-point for those ethno-cultural groups which have abandoned more pertinent expressions of ethnic identification such as language (the case of Ukrainian-speaking Roman Catholics of Polish descent), or for those which have no other distinctive 'visible' status within a state (such as ethnicity or political union or territorial autonomy) and who have no other differently-patterned institutional framework than religious affiliation within which to accommodate themselves (the case of UGCC, which has played a major role in the creation of the particular regional culture and the collective self-consciousness of the Galicians).

Third, current trends in the changing geography of the major Ukrainian churches, especially the 'eastward' movement of the UGCC, UOC-KP and RCC, allow one to predict an increasing diffusion of interreligious tensions from the limited territory of Western Ukraine into other parts of the country.

Fourth, since the issue of schism within Ukrainian Orthodoxy directly impinges on the interests of foreign actors, any future scenario of intensification or resolution of this conflict will have an impact on the state of relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, on pan-Orthodox relations, dividing other national Orthodox Churches into those supporting Constantinople and those supporting Moscow, and on world-wide Orthodox-Catholic relations.

The first decade of religious development in postsoviet Ukrainian society has demonstrated that while religious homogeneity may not be a *sine qua non* for the maintenance of national boundaries in a modern society, nevertheless the existence of religious diversity still has serious consequences for the functioning of community in that society as a whole.

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