

## **Harvesting Heritage Seeds in Prairie Soil: The Role of *Ukrainskyi holos* in the Formation of the Identity of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada<sup>1</sup>**

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In the first decade of the twentieth century Ukrainian settlers in Canada found themselves in a new society, surrounded by unforeseen ideas, and an unexpected diversity of religious and political opinions. Gradually emerging from the initial phase of addressing immediate questions of survival, the pre-World War I period was marked by the rise of an educated class cognisant both of its Ukrainian identity and the need for the community to raise its general educational level. This new class of people was responding to the altered socio-cultural circumstances in which Ukrainians found themselves in Canada and the traditional Church's inability to offer leadership in this new situation due to the lack of priests in Canada. Stella Hryniuk has ably described the significant role played by the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church in Western Ukraine in the late nineteenth century:

Within this society, the priest dispensed the sacraments and functioned as the community's moral authority. He also dispensed advice and generally set an example in respect of modern agricultural practice, and usually played a pivotal role in a village's cultural life in the 1880's and even the 1890's. . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to acknowledge and thank the financial support for this project given through a Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Research Grant. This paper was presented in an earlier form at the meeting of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association in Winnipeg, May 2004.

<sup>2</sup> See Stella Hryniuk, "Pioneer Bishop, Pioneer Times: Nykyta Budka in Canada," in *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present*, edited by Mark G. McGowan and David B. Marshall (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 148. Most Ukrainian settlers in Canada in the pre-World War I period came from Galicia, a smaller group from Bukovynia. The latter group was predominantly Russian Orthodox, whereas the much larger Galician group were almost exclusively Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic. This Church was created as a product of the 1596 Union of Brest when the majority of Bishops of Ukraine and Byelorussia (then belonging to the Polish Crown) united with the Church of Rome. This union was undertaken with the proviso that the rites and traditions of the Ukrainians (then termed Ruthenians) would be unchanged. Thus was born the Greek Catholic Church, sometimes derogatorily termed Uniate.

By 1912 there were between 130,000 and 150,000 Ukrainian Catholic settlers in Canada,<sup>3</sup> with only twenty-one priests, including many of non-Ukrainian heritage.<sup>4</sup> Hryniuk observes: “of all the institutions of the homeland the village church with its priest was the one most acutely missed.”<sup>5</sup> This combination of a missing social institution and non-Ukrainian priests proved volatile. Bohdan Kazymyra describes this situation as a “confusing pluralism.”<sup>6</sup> The new settlers quickly became targets of Protestant and Russian Orthodox missionary activity. As Mark McGowan noted:

After 1904, immigrants could seek spiritual guidance from several Ukrainian-born priests in the new Independent Greek Church, which drew from the followers of Seraphim Stefan Ustvolsky and was financed by the Presbyterians. In addition, desertions to the Russian Orthodox fold caused a number of court battles over church property between Uniate and Orthodox factions within existing Catholic congregations.<sup>7</sup>

The arrival in 1912 of the first Ukrainian bishop of Canada, Nykyta Budka, seemed to offer hope for an improved situation. However the bishop’s arrival neither alleviated the problem of too few Ukrainian priests nor facilitated a better understanding of the Ukrainian situation by the dominant Roman Catholic Church.<sup>8</sup> The Church, unable to lead the community in securing its identity in the new land, gave way to a rising class of educated, nationally conscious teachers.

The movement to provide sustained and nationally conscious leadership for the Ukrainian Canadian community was created by graduates of the Ruthenian Training School in Winnipeg and members of the Ukrainian Teachers’ Association.<sup>9</sup> This core group of educated,

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Michael Marunchak presents an overview (although at times idealized) of the religious situation of the early settlements in his *The Ukrainian Canadians: A History* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), 99-114.

<sup>3</sup> Mark McGowan notes the difficulty with the estimates of Ukrainian Catholics in Canada at this time, although he pegs the number at 150,000 while Hryniuk suggests 128,000. See Mark G. McGowan, “‘A Portion for the Vanquished’: Roman Catholics and the Ukrainian Catholic Church,” in *Canada’s Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*, edited by Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 222, n. 12.

<sup>4</sup> McGowan, 222.

<sup>5</sup> Hryniuk, 149.

<sup>6</sup> Bohdan Kazymyra, “Sheptyts’kyi and Ukrainians in Canada,” in *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptytskyi*, edited by Paul Robert Magocsi (Edmonton: CIUS, 1989), 329.

<sup>7</sup> McGowan, 222.

<sup>8</sup> McGowan, 226f.

<sup>9</sup> Orest Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Years, 1891-1924* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1991), 175.

community conscious activists formed the independent Ukrainian National Publishing Company which established the Winnipeg based newspaper *Ukrainskyi holos* (The Ukrainian Voice) in 1910.<sup>10</sup> Oleh Gerus has described the paper as speaking “on behalf of crusading and nationalistically minded intelligentsia.”<sup>11</sup> The editors identified their paper as “an educational, economically and politically progressive newspaper for the Ukrainian people in Canada.”<sup>12</sup> The editorial board’s commitment was clearly socialist and nationally-conscious; some have even called it nationalist.<sup>13</sup> However, this commitment to the values of equality and education also led the paper to develop very definite positions concerning the religious life of the Ukrainian community and the extent to which the various Churches supported the growth and development of that community. It is this latter concern which led the paper to become critical of Churches working among Ukrainian settlements and ultimately, from August 1918, to strongly support the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada, founded in Saskatoon that July.<sup>14</sup> Yuri Daschko has observed that “the church and its secular organization, the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League, have always enjoyed the support of *Ukrainskyi holos*, which still

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<sup>10</sup> The influence of this paper on the Ukrainian community was attested to in 1925 by Theodore Bodnar, chair of the Ethelbert School Board in a letter to the Manitoba Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Robert Fletcher. Bodnar wrote: “We know that the majority of our Ukrainian teachers read the *Ukrainian Voice* whether they read the *Free Press* or *Tribune* or not.” See [www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/ukrainianteachers.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/ukrainianteachers.shtml); 17 May 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Oleh Gerus, “Consolidating the Community: The Ukrainian Self-Reliance League,” in *Canada’s Ukrainians*, 160.

<sup>12</sup> *Ukrainskyi holos* (The Ukrainian Voice) Winnipeg (1910- ) 16.III.1910, 1. All English translations in this paper are the author’s, unless otherwise noted. Hereafter this newspaper will be cited as *UH*.

<sup>13</sup> Martynowych, 175. Martynowych also provides a helpful overview of the persons involved in the Ukrainian Publishing Company and *Ukrainskyi holos*, op.cit., 245.

<sup>14</sup> The Church is regarded as having its origins in the Saskatoon meeting of 18-19 July 1918, and as such seems to be the product of the work of an urban educated class. See Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada, 1918-1951* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1981). However, the first service took place in St. Julien (across the South Saskatchewan River from Rosthern, Saskatchewan) in October, 1918 and thus the first Church community arose on the rural prairie rather than in the city. Here the local Ukrainian Greek Catholic community refused to register their property in the name of the Episcopal Corporation and in September opted for entering the jurisdiction of the newly minted Church. See George Mulyk-Lutzyk, *Istoriya Ukrains’koi Hreko-Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy v Kanadi* [History of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada] Vol. III (Winnipeg: Ecclesia, 1987), 412-419. Yuzyk’s work is the standard text on the genesis of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada. See also Odarka S. Trosky, *The Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in Canada* (Winnipeg: 1968) and Myroslaw Tataryn, “Creating a Canadian Religious Tradition: Conceiving the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada,” *Toronto Journal of Theology*. Vol. 20:1 (2004), 7-21.

speaks with authority for the church hierarchy.”<sup>15</sup> This support was not only in the form of providing a media outlet for the Church, but perhaps more significantly, critical personnel from the newspaper became leaders in the newly minted Church and the newspaper became the major architect of the Church’s identity. In particular the first editor of the paper, Wasyl Kudryk (1880-1963), although beginning his public career as a strong supporter of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, became a member of the new Church’s consistory, and in 1923 was ordained an Orthodox priest. Thus the newspaper’s clearly political focus and ostensibly neutral position on inter-Church rivalries in the pre-1918 period served to strengthen the argument of the scholars who see the creation of the new Orthodox Church as an expression of nationalism, rather than “doctrinal dissent.”<sup>16</sup>

By studying the editorial pages of the newspaper in the period up to and including 1918, it is contended that the latter dichotomy between nationalism and “doctrinal dissent” is too strongly drawn. Analyzing the editorial content of the paper reveals a history of concern over the impact of religious life on the community and a yearning for a Church to function like their Church in Ukraine where “there was a populist clergy which valued the interests of the people and at times even went against the interests of the powerful.”<sup>17</sup> *Ukrainskyi holos* gradually came to the conclusion that the religious life of Ukraine would not be successfully grafted onto the life of the settlement communities and only a new creation (almost an accidental creation) would be needed, given the reluctance of Bishop Nykyta Budka to be the kind of community religious leader that they desired. Only after the events of 18 and 19 July 1918, when a “Confidential” Meeting of over 150 representatives of Ukrainian settlements in Western Canada met in Saskatoon to discuss pressing issues affecting the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, but instead initiated the creation of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in Canada, would *Ukrainskyi holos* understand these events in the context of the historical desire of some Ukrainians to have an ecclesiastical reality which represented their experience of Christian faith as a support and encouragement in the face of seemingly perpetual struggles for survival. And so, in August 1918, *Ukrainskyi holos* initiated a liberatory theology born of the seeds planted by the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, but coming to harvest on the prairie soil as the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in Canada.

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<sup>15</sup> Yuri Daschko, “The Ukrainian Press in Canada,” in *A Heritage in Transition: Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada*, edited by Manoly Lupul (Toronto: McClellan-Stewart, 1982), 272.

<sup>16</sup> Martynowych, 410.

<sup>17</sup> *UH* 27.XII.1916, 6.

Generated by the valid concern for the survival of the settlement communities in their new land,<sup>18</sup> the founders of *Ukrainskyi holos* used their paper to support and strengthen the public, bilingual school system in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. While this theme dominates the editorial pages of the paper far more than any other issue appearing in ninety-three editorial articles between 1914-1917, it also generated tension with more ecclesiastically focused community circles. Martynowych notes: “The teachers and other would-be enlighteners met with resistance from several quarters: Russophile school trustees; Latin-rite settlers who thought of themselves as Poles; Bukovynians under the influence of Ukrainophobic Russian Orthodox priests; and pious Catholics who feared for the salvation of their souls.”<sup>19</sup> This latter concern was clearly fed by the Ukrainian Basilian priests and the French and Belgian Redemptorists based in Yorkton. Public education was “a frequent Basilian target,”<sup>20</sup> and as Martynowych reports, a French priest stated that “Ukrainian public school teachers were not only ‘pedantic and puffed up with the little knowledge they may have acquired,’ they were also ‘perverted, imbued with Protestant principles.’”<sup>21</sup> Thus *Ukrainskyi holos*’ support of public, bilingual education was often condemned from the Catholic pulpit and reportedly challenged in the confessional.<sup>22</sup> This conflict was not limited to the Catholic sector. However, since the Catholic Church was the largest community-based Church the dispute resonated with meaning for the entire community. For the editors of the newspaper the tension was regarded as only part of a historic pattern: Rome’s ongoing attempts to destroy “our rite are as old as the world;”<sup>23</sup> both Orthodoxy and Catholicism tried to make Ukrainians into “willing serfs;”<sup>24</sup> and it was hard to comprehend what the Polish Roman Catholics have tried to do to “our people.”<sup>25</sup> In the end, the paper saw the Ukrainian people as deserving sainthood since “our long-suffering and tormented people, burdened by the Polish Roman Catholic insult cannot to this day come to themselves.”<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, the paper saw reason to hope that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church could play a more positive role.

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<sup>18</sup> Paul Rutherford opines, “the ethnic newspapers were definitely an obstacle to the assimilative influences of the majority society.” See Paul Rutherford, *The Making of the Canadian Media* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978), 41-42.

<sup>19</sup> Martynowych, 280.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>22</sup> This clerical opposition continued even under Bishop Budka. Support of public schools, so dear to the editors of *Ukrainskyi holos*, was one of the factors identified by Budka in 1914 as requiring ecclesiastical sanctions. Martynowych, however, notes, “While the bishop and the Redemptorists invoked the regulations, many secular priests regarded some of them with scepticism.” See Martynowych, 386.

<sup>23</sup> *UH* 18.III.1914, 6.

<sup>24</sup> *UH* 27.V.1914, 6.

<sup>25</sup> *UH* 7.I.1914, 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

Although a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Bishop, Soter Ortynsky, was appointed for the United States in 1907, the Vatican was reluctant to do the same for the Canadian Ukrainians. As a result of positions taken by Archbishop Langevin and others, the efforts for the creation of such an episcopate were greatly troubled. It was not until 1912, thanks to a great extent to the intervention of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, that Nykyta Budka was appointed the Bishop for Ukrainians in Canada.<sup>27</sup> Ostensibly appointed in order to abate the growing unrest and defections among the settlers, the new Bishop was seen as the key to consolidate the Greek Catholic Church's authority in the community. Also, the new Bishop's attempt to recruit diocesan priests and seminarians from Ukraine was seen as a way of stemming growing dissatisfaction with the non-Ukrainian clergy who had played such a dominant part in the Church's life in Canada thus far.<sup>28</sup> He was therefore, initially very well received by the community.

Budka's recruitment of new, Ukrainian born, diocesan clergy was perhaps the most welcome initiative of his Episcopal career. In 1914, *Ukrainskyi holos* noted:

Polish anarchy and the persecution by the nobility aimed at leading members of the clergy, made life for some of our priests unbearable in Ukraine. They left our native land, the enslaved people for whom they wished to dedicate their lives, and everything which they held dearest and departed into the land where they could breathe more easily and to which our *muzhik* had come, to America.

But having arrived here they did not waste their time. They rolled up their sleeves and often, though cold and hungry, and in spite of various other problems that they were forced to deal with by the Latin bishops, they went among the people, taught them, enlightened them, led them forward and organized them.<sup>29</sup>

Although the previously recognized problem of foreign priests had not disappeared, the newspaper valued the arrival of more populist priests from Ukraine. Sadly, Budka's efforts to Ukrainianize his contingent of clergy did not make significant headway until the mid 1920s, too late to avert the crisis of 1918.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Martynowych, 201-206. For a more extensive discussion of Sheptytsky's relationship with the situation in Canada see Kazymyra, "Sheptyts'kyi and Ukrainians in Canada," 329-348.

<sup>28</sup> Martynowych, 206.

<sup>29</sup> *UH* 16.IX.1914, 6.

<sup>30</sup> Hryniuk observes that when Budka arrived in Canada, "there were...about eighty Ukrainian Catholic parishes and missions, thirteen secular and nine regular clergy, four small convents with thirty-two nuns, and two day schools. By 1927 there was an organized diocese with twenty-nine secular and eighteen monastic

Budka's other positions were not as warmly embraced. After issuing a Pastoral Letter in the spring of 1913, *Ukrainskyi holos* expressed its regret that the Bishop perceived issues in the Ukrainian community from a much too narrow sectarian viewpoint. Budka seemed to conflate the community and the Church, and this view, the paper stated, "is erroneous and perhaps even very harmful."<sup>31</sup> Possibly of more importance to the editors was the Bishop's assertion that the community schools needed to be Greek Catholic. The editors' response was unequivocal:

Catholic schools are grist for the French mill. We should stand by the need for public schools, not sectarian ones. These schools should teach our children in our language, about our history and literature.<sup>32</sup>

For the paper the problem in the community was one of leadership. Budka's letter had derided the identification of "Ruthenian" Catholics in the 1911 Census, an absence which the editors argued was due to ". . . [the] Basilians, who have lived in Canada for a while now and have had the time to teach the people. But it seems, they have not taught the people, and they themselves were ashamed of identifying their Greek Catholicism to the government officials." This leadership issue extended, for *Ukrainskyi holos*, to the issue of non-Ukrainian priests:

We need to recognize that most of our Greek Catholic clergy are in the main foreigners . . . for whom our people's affairs, or even the question of the organisation of Canadian Ruthenians, is of as much interest as for us is last year's snow. The Bishop will do well to turn his efforts to speedily get rid of, from among our people, these uninvited 'guardians' because they clearly paralyze our national organism.<sup>33</sup>

Reflecting upon this situation a year later, the editors expressed their support for local community efforts to engage Bishop Budka in the enterprise of strengthening the community's identity and cohesion. The editors added: "The people fully understand the Church question; the people see that things cannot long continue as they are. But why talk about the people when we can even find priests who will tell us that our Church in Canada is less ours than that same Church in Halychyna."<sup>34</sup> In the 1 November 1915 issue the editors called upon Bishop Budka to take a stand on the bilingual schools issue and echo the assessment of the recently fired

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priests, two hundred ninety-parishes and mission stations... It was no longer a collection of disparate entities but a united body whose survival and integrity in Canada was not in doubt." "Pioneer Bishop," 162.

<sup>31</sup> *UH* 14.V.1913, 6.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *UH* 8.VII.1914, 4.

editor of *Kanadyiskyi rusyn* (The Canadian Ruthenian),<sup>35</sup> that Budka is in a “French jail” and so the French priests have a greater say in Ukrainian affairs in Canada than does the Bishop.<sup>36</sup>

Tensions further increased between the paper, its supporters and the official Greek Catholic camp over another educational issue: *bursy* or student residences. In order to support and encourage higher education among Ukrainian students, a series of student residences were established in various Canadian cities. The newspaper appealed to its readers to financially and morally support the Kotsko residence in Winnipeg (1915) and the Mohyla residence in Saskatoon (1916). Not surprisingly, the non-denominational policy of the governing boards echoed the policy of *Ukrainskyi holos*. But in both instances this produced a conflict with representatives of the Catholic Church. Hryniuk understands this conflict as revolving around the Catholic versus secular character of the residences,<sup>37</sup> whereas Martynowych places the official Catholic response to the rise of the *bursy* in the context of Budka and the Belgian priests’ fear of Protestantism.<sup>38</sup> However, the supporters of the residences saw their position as neither anti-Catholic nor pro-Protestant. Non-denominational student residences were not the same as the work of the Presbyterian missions, ostensibly represented by the paper *Ranok*, and their efforts to create residences to build the community’s national self-consciousness. The projects were two different creatures. The paper argued its position in late 1916:

We are not getting mixed up in religious affairs, there are enough dilettantes who are attracted to the religious question and go about reforming, upsetting and making a mess. As far as the religious education of children (and the residences have no children) is concerned that is the affair of the parents who select the Church to which their children are sent and the character of the religious education they wish them to receive.... Now most members of the Board of the residence are Greek Catholics, but not such bigots as to force anything upon people...<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Mykola Syroidiv was fired by Budka as editor in December 1913. Syroidiv’s critiques of Budka’s dependence upon the French-Canadian hierarchy were published in *Ukrainskyi holos* in early 1914. In one such article, “For the Clarification of the Matter,” Syroidiv wrote: “The reason for my departure were [sic] the ‘French-Belgian-Ruthenian fathers’ who for the longest times were conspiring against me. Bishop Budka, who admitted to me that he was totally materially dependent on the French-Catholic missions, felt obliged to fire me as the editor of *Kanadyiskyi rusyn* because this was the demand of the French and the French-Ruthenian ‘fathers.’” See *UH* 21.1.1914; 4).

<sup>36</sup> *UH* 1.XI.1915, 4.

<sup>37</sup> Hryniuk, “Pioneer Bishop,” 158.

<sup>38</sup> Martynowych, 405 f.

<sup>39</sup> *UH* 1.XI.1916, 6.

The Mohyla Residence was founded by the First Ukrainian National Convention in August 1916 quite explicitly as an institution for all Ukrainians which would nurture the students' "moral and religious education."<sup>40</sup> This non-denominational policy was attacked not only by the Greek Catholic press organ *Kanadyiskyi rusyn*, but also initially by the Presbyterian funded *Ranok*. In fact in 1916 and 1917 most editorials defending the policies of the Mohyla residence were responding to the *Ranok* attacks. The Mohyla residence became a symbol for those forces within the Ukrainian community wishing to have the community develop a unique sense of its national and religious identity. The need to clarify the relationship between national and religious identity arose then, not as a result of a theological question, but rather because of continuing attacks against the *bursy* by the Presbyterian funded *Ranok*, which the editors of *Holos* came to identify with the force of assimilation and integration.<sup>41</sup>

Within the context of this wider question of religious and national identity the editorial pages of *Holos* offered a series about a "People's Church." However these articles, while containing muted attacks on the Greek Catholics, were primarily a response to a perceived greater threat from the Presbyterians. In January 1917, one of these articles directly attacked the Protestant community: affirming that Ukrainians can be good Protestants, but a Protestant cannot be a good Ukrainian!<sup>42</sup> During this same month the paper ran a series of articles under the heading "The Saskatoon Comedy of our 'Independent Protestant' Bankrupts," in which the Convention of Christian Farmers (December 1916) organized by the Ukrainian Protestant leaders Ivan Bodrug and Paul Crath was derided.<sup>43</sup> A very different tone was taken in the 17 January issue. When referring to the Greek Catholic Church, the "People's Church" editorial affirmed that the problems which have arisen are not reflective of a hopeless situation:

Absolutely not. The Church reflects the people generally. If the Church had informed and intelligent people, then the Church would be like that. In Halychyna, once the general consciousness and spirituality of the people was raised, so was their national consciousness...<sup>44</sup>

For the editors of *Holos*, religious and national identity were intimately linked and the cleric as community leader (or perhaps even ethnarch) was the linchpin in the development of that integrated identity.

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<sup>40</sup> *UH* 6.XII.1916, 9.

<sup>41</sup> The attacks on the Mohyla Institute in particular are discussed in *Iuvileina Knyha 25-littyia institutu im. Petra Mohyly v Saskatuni* [Jubilee Book on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon] (Winnipeg: P. Mohyla Institute, 1945), 61-69.

<sup>42</sup> *UH* 17.I.1917, 6.

<sup>43</sup> *UH* 17.I.-31.I.1917, 6.

<sup>44</sup> *UH* 17.I.1917, 6.

However, this rather sympathetic attitude towards the Greek Catholic Church changed in late 1917 and 1918 when the polemic with *Kanadyiskyi rusyn* heated up and there was no doubt that the *Rusyn* was a surrogate for the Bishop himself.

By April 1917 the pages of *Ukrainskyi holos* were dominated by reports from various parishes about conflicts with the clergy. It is into this context that the paper placed its growing polemic with official Greek Catholic circles. Under the heading “Parochial Misunderstandings” the situation was once more perceived as a question of individuals and community leadership rather than an institutional or, better, fundamentally religious problem:

misunderstandings exist not only between *Ukrainskyi holos* and priests (although not all), but between the people and priests. And where this will lead we cannot tell. However, it is another matter that certain people are dismissive of the Church and religion and thus are insulting in their conduct, but fortunately we have none of those people at *Ukrainskyi holos*...<sup>45</sup>

A few issues later the same theme was taken up, when again in response to the polemic with *Kanadyiskyi rusyn* the paper noted:

Lest someone suggest that we are enemies of Catholicism . . . we say that the issue is not Catholicism, but people. This same Catholic Church will be progressive and valuable if it is led by progressive people, however in the hands of reactionaries it will be reactionary and worthless. Neither the form, nor the name of a Church, but the idealism of its priests and their work will give the Church its worth.<sup>46</sup>

This position was sharpened in the next issue when the author commented: “Experience has shown that often, when the clergy take the lead, the life of the people did not progress, but rather declined. The politics of the clergy is often not the politics of the people.”<sup>47</sup> Yet, the earlier argument about the possibility of a Protestant being a good Ukrainian is explicitly not applied to Greek Catholics. The paper observed:

Because a nationally-conscious Ukrainian can be a Greek Catholic and a Greek Catholic a Ukrainian, nonetheless a ‘true Catholic’ cannot be a nationally-conscious Ukrainian, nor can a nationally-conscious Ukrainian be a ‘true Catholic’. This is so because Greek Catholicism and ‘Catholicism’ are two separate worlds, two separate ideas. . . Evil people...wished to convert Ukrainians to Roman Catholicism but fortunately, thanks be to God, the people did not

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<sup>45</sup> *UH* 25.IV.1917, 6.

<sup>46</sup> *UH* 30.V.1917, 6.

<sup>47</sup> *UH* 6.VI.1917, 6.

listen, but rather stopped in mid-road and stayed as they were, just changing one thing, began to call themselves Greek Catholics. But they did not change their rituals and in no way grew closer to the Catholics. That is why Rome continues to this day to regard Greek Catholics as not quite 'true Catholics,' but rather some kind of half Catholic or material for becoming Catholic.<sup>48</sup>

*Ukrainskyi holos* was reflecting a nuanced understanding of the varying roles that Christian Churches were playing in the life of the community. In the articles on the "People's Church" the authors recognized that all Churches play a leadership role in the life of the nation and often the state:

In Austria the Catholic Church is closely connected with state organisations. In England and the English colonies we have strong ecclesial organisations – Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican – which have as their aim the expansion and strengthening of the English state. Their motto is: One State, One Banner, One Language.

Every Church, besides its clearly religious function cares, nurtures, and develops the state agenda or the popular strivings within their state, or of their people. It is not surprising then that every intelligent person recognizes that the Church with an educated clergy fulfils a leading role in the growth of the people and their state.<sup>49</sup>

Such a symbiosis between the life of the Church and the strivings of the people existed in Ukraine, where the Greek Catholic Church was judged as "being the closest to the national interests and so has the greatest possibility of being a truly people's Church."<sup>50</sup> It was even evident among the clergy in the United States, who did not fear to challenge Metropolitan Sheptytsky in 1902, by asserting that the Greek Catholic Church had suffered many losses as a result of its relationship with Rome.<sup>51</sup> This analysis of the community's religious life served to clarify the paper's view of the nature of the Greek Catholic Church and its role in Canada: it sought not only to protect the community's identity, but to foster that identity as it had in Ukraine. This conservative position ultimately saw the paper defend the Church against the inadequacies of the clergy: "when *Ukrainskyi holos* wrote about Church issues, it was not writing against the Church, but against bad priests, against their carelessness, their lack of tact, their apathy, and their lack of idealism. *Ukrainskyi holos* did this...to remind them of their priestly, community responsibility."<sup>52</sup> The evolving theme reappeared in October, when the paper again focused on the

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<sup>48</sup> UH 13.VI.1917, 6.

<sup>49</sup> UH 27.XII.1916, 6.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> UH 27.V.1914, 6.

<sup>52</sup> UH 25.VII.1917, 4.

inadequacies of the non-Ukrainian clergy. These problematic clerics were contrasted to the preferred married clergy because:

The cleric's family tied our old-country priests with the people and their life, because it was among this people that their children would grow and work. The priest's family became a great cultural strength for our people...<sup>53</sup>

At the end of 1917 *Ukrainskyi holos* saw itself as defending the character of the Greek Catholic Church as it had developed in Halychyna (to the noted exclusion of the Stanislaviv Eparchy under Bishop Khomyshyn)<sup>54</sup> and hoping that this inheritance would be allowed to flourish in Canada.

In the midst of trumpeting the need for more community-focused priests the editors were also aware that Polish and French priests played exactly this community leadership role for their people. In various remarks over the years the editors lamented that Ukrainian priests did not take the lead from their Roman Catholic counterparts who did not shirk away from defending their people's community life. In reflecting upon the history of Ukrainian-Polish relations, in a series of articles entitled, "Throughout Hundreds of Years" the editors highlighted the many injustices of those relations. Yet, they also pointed out how Polish priests were not constrained by their faith from serving the interests of Poland and tormenting the Ukrainian peasantry, just like the Polish landowners.<sup>55</sup> In a 1917 "Correction" to a report on a Winnipeg teacher's convention, W. Arsenych pointed to the lack of a truly populist Church for Ukrainians:

Our neighbours have 'People's Churches'. Our neighbour's Churches serve the precious things of their people. They strengthen their people and often establish themselves among other peoples in order to benefit their own people. We do not have a people's church; our churches are not our own.<sup>56</sup>

In the same issue, in discussing "Current Issues" the editors again affirmed: "Among other peoples the Church serves the people, it is as the people wish it to be...why do our Church organisations rather serve foreign interests...?"<sup>57</sup> Although this desire for a Church which supported and encouraged the community's life and identity was strong, it was increasingly difficult to reconcile with the positions taken by Bishop Budka.

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<sup>53</sup> UH 31.X.1917, 6.

<sup>54</sup> One of the numerous derogatory references to Bishop Khomyshyn can be found in the editorial article "Also For Consideration" where he is described as "ours by blood, but Roman in education." 27.V.1914; 6).

<sup>55</sup> UH 7.I.1914, 4.

<sup>56</sup> UH 15.VIII.1917, 5.

<sup>57</sup> UH 15.VIII.1917, 6.

In mid-1917 a new obstacle thwarted any attempted reconciliation between the Bishop and the paper's supporters. The paper began publishing a series of articles by Michael Stechishin (1888-1964) critiquing the Episcopal Incorporation Act which sought most controversially to incorporate all church property in the name of the Eparchial Bishop, but with no guarantee that the Bishop would be Ukrainian. The timing of this critique was particularly significant in that Budka was increasingly insistent that the privately incorporated Mohyla Institute should be placed under the Episcopal Act. This ceaseless conflict over the Mohyla Institute was worsened by a public confrontation between the Bishop and two community leaders, Wasyl Swystun (then rector of the Mohyla Institute) and Michael Stechishin (a law student and promoter of the *Ukrainskyi holos* agenda), at Canora's railway station on 16 June 1917. The paper's comments on this new development were telling. In the past it had identified the Church problem as having to do with the quality of the clergy, now it focused on the leadership, that is, on Budka himself. "If our Church's leaders demonstrated some understanding, then they would recognize that the days of our serfdom and the Church's aristocratism have passed."<sup>58</sup> Budka had become the problem, but as Michael Stechishin (who apparently only occasionally attended Orthodox services) is reported to have noted in his autobiography,<sup>59</sup> in mid-1917 Swystun still thought that the battle could be won within the Greek Catholic Church.<sup>60</sup>

The events of 1918, leading up to the establishment of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada were turbulent and not well reflected on the editorial pages of *Ukrainskyi holos*. This suggests that the new Church's rise was not well planned. Michael Stechishin's memoirs suggest that the verbal assault unleashed by Bishop Budka on Wasyl Swystun at the Easter service in Saskatoon, was the final spark that caused Swystun to proclaim to Stechishin that now he is Orthodox.<sup>61</sup> Yet, both Swystun and Stechishin chose to organize a "Confidential Meeting" in July 1918 to discuss the Church issues, hopefully with Budka in attendance. This decision meant that a leading supporter of a new national Church, Onuphry Hykawy, the editor of *Kanadyiskyi farmer* and a vehement opponent of Budka, refused to participate in the organization of the gathering. Ironically, in the end Budka refused to attend. Fr. Semen Sawchuk a key leader of the new Church, wrote in his memoirs (before 1927) that "the result of this confidential meeting nobody knew."<sup>62</sup> This statement gains credibility from the late reporting of the events in Saskatoon by *Ukrainskyi holos*. In the 24 July issue the paper provided a Ukrainian translation of the

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<sup>58</sup> *UH* 3.X.1917, 6.

<sup>59</sup> See Mulyk-Lutzyk, Vol. II (Winnipeg: Ecclesia, 1985), 181, n.11. This autobiography was written in 1962.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

report of the Saskatoon events as printed in the *Saskatoon Star*, with an explanation that the postal strike in Winnipeg made it impossible to get any other information about the meeting. The first extensive coverage of the meeting awaited the 31 July issue; this coverage involved extensive and clearly affirmative reports, yet there was no editorial comment. The main focus of the editorial pages at this point was events in Ukraine. Editorial attention on the new Church's establishment only gradually gained prominence. But as the editorial position evolved, it became clear that the editors were setting out the argument that this Church in fact embodied all that was good in the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine. In the 18 September 1918 issue the first such exposition appeared. Under the heading "Where to Find Reasons" the editors expounded upon the historic desire of the Ukrainian community in Canada to make the Greek Catholic Church a central agent in their life. "He [the people] built churches, decorated them and now it was the clergy's turn to further that work, while the people are always ready to assist further."<sup>63</sup> In their estimation, Bishop Budka and the clergy did not work to unite the community nor defend the Church from Roman Catholic attack. In fact, the Greek Catholic Church in Canada, in the assessment of the editors of *Ukrainskyi holos*, failed in its mission:

The majority of the people want a Church, but a Church which cares for their moral, spiritual and cultural development rather than the class interests of the clergy and the Roman Church. When the Bishop and clergy failed to and do not wish to understand this, then one cannot be surprised that a stronger movement in the direction of improvement of our Church situation had to develop.<sup>64</sup>

In October, the editor also commenced a much stronger line against the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, suggesting that reported missionary activity in Eastern Ukraine may have been spearheaded by Belgian Redemptorists, who had now been effectively demonized by many in the Ukrainian community.<sup>65</sup> At this point, rather than differentiating Greek Catholicism from Catholicism, as it had done in June 1917, the paper suggested the Greek Catholics had themselves discarded the modifier "Greek" in favour of simply "Catholic" and thus identified themselves with a foreign Church. The paper concluded:

The Ukrainian people must create their own life and be done with foreign protectors and any foreign dependence. History has taught us that this is the only road to independence, strength and good fortune.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> UH 18.IX.1918, 4.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>65</sup> UH 2.X.1918, 4.

<sup>66</sup> UH 20.XI.1918, 6.

In November the editors published a report claiming that Metropolitan Sheptytsky was about to impose obligatory celibacy on the clergy. Laying claim to the heritage of the past, prior to July 1918 meant that aspects of Church life in Ukraine could still be used constructively in the development of the new church's self image. After July 1918, the newspaper began to identify the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada as the sole bearer of the best of the heritage of Christianity among the Ukrainian people. Clearly, the newspaper had moved in the direction of being the organ for the development of the identity of the new Church, but an identity which lays direct and exclusive claim upon the heritage of the past.

If we configure religion as simply the positions enunciated by those in authority, then it would not be difficult to argue that the editors of *Ukrainskyi holos* were anti-religious and strictly interested in politics. However, in reviewing the editorial pages of that newspaper it is clear that they regarded the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as a necessary and important agent in the life of the community. This Church had a legitimate claim to leadership in the new Canadian context, a role which the editors affirmed it had historically played in Ukraine. Prior to July 1918 the newspaper's editors consistently argued that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church needed to more fully actualize its promise in the Canadian setting for the betterment of the entire community. That role was not to be somehow exclusively given over to the one Church, in spite of its adherents dominating the newspaper's supporters. The democratic and modern spirit awakening in Ukraine at this time and present in the very fabric of Canadian society had already been internalized by the editors. They were initially open and accepting of a degree of religious pluralism within their community, as long as it was respectful of the needs of Ukrainians.

Points of tension with Church authorities were unrelenting and apparently irreconcilable. These tensions and conflicts interestingly reflected issues unique to the Canadian context: obligatory celibacy, legal registration of land property titles, community halls and student residences. In Ukraine, given the history of the Greek Catholic community and Church, these issues had not appeared as points of tension. Ostensibly the only major issue sparking a conflict which affected both Canada and Ukraine was the authority of the Bishop. In both settings the canonical authority of a Catholic bishop was virtually unassailable. Yet, a distinction between the two locales must be made. In Canada, there was only one bishop and thus his approach, his attitudes, and his decisions were dominant and unquestionable. In Ukraine, there were a number of bishops and, as any observer would agree, a great variety of styles. The strongest differentiation can be made between the style and approach of Metropolitan Sheptytsky in Lviv and Bishop Khomyshyn in Stanislaviv (now Ivano-Frankivsk). The former has come to symbolize a more

nationally conscious, populist and Easternizing bishop, whereas Khomyshyn both on the pages of *Ukrainskyi holos* and more generally in popular consciousness, has come to be seen as authoritarian and a Latinizer.

A plurality of approaches and opinions present in Ukraine did not translate at all into the new setting of Canada. Thus the attempt by *Ukrainskyi holos* and most other members of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to graft the identity and life of that Church from Ukraine onto the community's life in Canada was doomed to failure. The events of July 1918 did not simply create one new Church, but, it may be suggested, two new Churches: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of Canada. The latter may have in name been the same Church as existed in Ukraine, but Canada made a difference. And the seed planted on Canadian soil produced new fruits, which commencing in 1919 waged an often vicious war between each other, for dominance in the Ukrainian community. Both laid exclusive claim to the heritage of Ukrainian Christianity and an influential voice in this process belonged to the newspaper *Ukrainskyi holos*.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> In 1918 the new Orthodox Church established was called the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in Canada, however this nomenclature changed in 1990 when that Church simplified its name to Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada. Similarly, the Ukrainian Catholic Church (current terminology) was in the first half of the twentieth century called the Greek catholic Church or sometimes the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.