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# Liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1946: Ideological and Propagandistic Component

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**Abstract.** The research purpose consists in the systemic analysis of the Soviet power and the state security bodies' policy aimed at the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) in the context of solving the national issue on the Western Ukrainian lands. **The methodology.** The complex of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, comparative, dialectical) and special (historical genetic, historical comparative, historical typological, problem chronological) methods of historical cognition was used. **Scientific novelty.** Owing to attracting new documents, the process of the UGCC liquidation by the Soviet structures in the Western Ukraine was analyzed, the measures aimed at levelling the influence of the Greek Catholic Church on the local Ukrainian population were clarified and the repressions to the Greek Catholic clergy were elucidated. **Conclusions.** After World War II, finding the Western Ukrainian territories under the Soviet influence, the Stalinist leadership faced the problem of pacifying and consolidating the local population who confessed Greek Catholicism. First of all, the measures envisaged the neutralization of the UGCC, which was considered as the Church "fifth column" of Vatican and its separate representatives maintained close contacts with the Ukrainian nationalists. The liquidation of the UGCC was conducted on the initiative of the USSR higher party leadership with the most active participation of the Soviet state security services that used various political and ideological measures of influence on clergymen and believers. The Russian Orthodox Church cooperating with the Peoples Commissariat of Internal Affairs (PCIA) was an active participant in liquidating the UGCC. The repressions against the priests and believers played an important role in this process. However, ideological propagandistic and repressive measures of the Soviet authorities and special services finally did not lead to the ultimate disappearance of the UGCC as it continued to function underground.

**Keywords:** Western Ukraine, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), Peoples Commissariat of Internal Affairs (PCIA), Lviv Council of 1946, Greek Catholics, Soviet power, repressions.

The rise of the spiritual life of the Ukrainian people and its traditions is closely connected with the full development of the religious component. Religion and the Church have always played a leading role in the lives of Ukrainians. Although the main

function of the Church is to be pastor of souls, but its authority is felt in all spheres of life of separate individual and the society as a whole. In addition, it plays an important ideological and cultural role. Finally, the development of the Ukrainian statehood is impossible without proper spiritual and humanitarian foundation, which feeds the relevant links of public moral stereotypes, contributes to the transformation of state and social structures.

It is necessary to clarify the relationships between the power and the Church during different periods of the national history, which can be contributed by deep, profound knowledge of the relationship between power bodies and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), which took place in the twentieth century, in particular, after World War II. The liquidation of the UGCC on the Western Ukrainian lands in the second half of the 1940s has become the subject of many scientific studies, which have covered the causes, course, scale, results, and other issues related to this event, which had a great resonance in Ukraine and outside it, and its consequences, despite the chronological remoteness, still affect the life of the Ukrainian society.

The task arises to carry out the systemic analysis of the policy of the Soviet power and state security bodies aimed at the liquidation of the UGCC, which was the integral part of the spiritual and religious life of the Western Ukrainian population. This task envisages clarifying the relationship between the decisions of the party and state Stalinist's leadership and the activity of the Soviet special services concerning the Greek Catholic Church; revealing the peculiarities of the authorities' tactics against the UGCC in the Western Ukraine during the liquidation process, the analysis in this context of the policy of the Soviet totalitarian state on de-Ukrainization and Sovietization of the local population.

The limited volume of this article does not cover all aspects of the liquidation of the UGCC by the Stalinist regime, the impact of this process on the Russification of Ukrainians. However, its authors consider it necessary to focus on this issue and find out the mechanisms of repressive actions of the authorities in the forced liquidation of the UGCC by the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs (PCIA) bodies in the Western Ukraine.

The Greek Catholic Church was established at Beresteyskiy Council in 1596 as a result of Kyiv Metropoly's renunciation of the hierarchical supremacy of Constantinople Patriarch and the transition to the protectorate of the Pope of Rome (originally it was called the Uniate Church). The established name of the Church was introduced by Empress Maria Theresa in 1774 to distinguish it from the Roman Catholic and Armenian Catholic Churches, and unite in one name the Catholics of the Eastern Rite of several peoples living in the Austrian Empire: Ukrainians, Romanians, Serbs, Croats, Slovaks, Hungarians, etc. In the 1930s, the name Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (formerly the Russ Greek Catholic Church), and later the Ukrainian Catholic Church, began to be used. This name has been used in official Vatican documents since the 1960s.

In the Soviet historiography, the subject-matter of researching the UGCC was under the total control of the authorities, it was exclusively developed in line with the party-state policy for using in ideological confrontation with "the manifestations of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism". Characteristic features of Soviet publications about the UGCC were ideological bias and prejudice, falsification of facts.

The works of Ukrainian diaspora researchers had the objective orientation, formed a balanced scientific approach to the complex history of the UGCC during the World War II and its relations with the Soviet power. The papers of Ukrainian diaspora scholars are not only attempts to recreate the real picture of events on the basis of available

documents, but also to convey the information to the international community about the persecution of the UGCC in the Western Ukraine's lands, which found itself in Soviet isolation.

In the early 1990s, in the wake of active processes of the UGCC legalization, democratization of the sphere of the state and church relations, the attention and interest of scholars to this issue increased. The long time, which separates us from the events under the investigation, not only allows us to study in detail and analyze the papers of predecessors on the UGCC and the state policy towards the Church in the Western Ukraine, but also to rethink the events of that time as well as consider the problem more objectively and without unnecessary emotions. In particular, in the religion scientific study work of the author's team led by A.Kolodnyi and P.Yarotskyi "History of Religion in Ukraine"<sup>1</sup> the fate of the UGCC during the World War II and the postwar period has objectively been shown. In O.Lysenko's monograph "Church Life in Ukraine: 1943–1946"<sup>2</sup> considerable attention was paid to the characteristics of J.Stalin's position on the UGCC. It has been proven that the process of its liquidation was organized by the USSR leadership, carried out by the joint efforts of the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and local Soviet bodies, namely the liquidation of the UGCC church was considered by the researcher as a desire of the authorities to suppress the national independence movement, which was spiritually supported by the Greek Catholic Church. A significant contribution to the development of the subject-matter of the UGCC were the papers by V.Pashchenko "Greek Catholics in Ukraine (from the 1940s to the present day)"<sup>3</sup>, V.Serhiichuk "The Unconquered Church: Self-Devotion of Greek Catholics of Ukraine in the Struggle for Faith and the State"<sup>4</sup>, N.Serdiuk "Repressions of the Soviet State Security Bodies against the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1944–1949"<sup>5</sup>, which analyzed the essence of the All-Union Party of Bolsheviks and the Soviet state's policy towards the UGCC, clarified the anti-religious and anti-church course of the power, relations with the ROC, and other aspects.

The work by O.Reient and O.Lysenko is quite profound, various aspects related to the UGCC have been considered in it<sup>6</sup>. The fate of the Western Ukrainian intelligentsia during the Stalinist period, and most importantly the priests of the UGCC in the 1940s, has been thoroughly covered in the study of O.Rublov and Yu.Cherchenko<sup>7</sup>. B.Bociurkiw's, L.Kapitan's, T.Pshenychnyi's research is of great importance in the study of this issue<sup>8</sup>; the paper covers the purposeful and complex repressive policy of the totalitarian Bolshevik

<sup>1</sup> Колодний А.М., Яроцький П.Л. Історія релігії в Україні. – К., 1999. – 735 с.

<sup>2</sup> Лисенко О.Є. Церковне життя в Україні, 1943–1946. – К., 1998. – 403 с.

<sup>3</sup> Пащенко В. Греко-католики в Україні: Від 40-х рр. ХХ ст. до наших днів. – Полтава, 2002. – 735 с.

<sup>4</sup> Сергійчук В. Нескорена церква: Подвижництво греко-католиків України в боротьбі за віру і державу. – К., 2001. – 492 с.

<sup>5</sup> Сердюк Н.С. Репресії радянських органів державної безпеки щодо української греко-католицької церкви в 1944–1949 рр.: Дис. ... канд. іст. наук. – К., 2006. – 190 с.

<sup>6</sup> Реєнт О.П., Лисенко О.Є. Українська національна ідея і християнство. – К., 1997. – 128 с.

<sup>7</sup> Рубльов О.С., Черченко Ю.А. Сталінщина й доля західноукраїнської інтелігенції (20-ті – 40-ві рр. ХХ ст.) // Український історичний журнал. – 1991. – №7. – С.17–28.

<sup>8</sup> Боцюрків Б. Українська греко-католицька церква і радянська держава (1939–1950). – Л., 2005. – 268 с.; Капітан Л. Ліквідація греко-католицької церкви у Закарпатті, 1945–1949 рр.: ідеолого-пропагандистська складова // Краєзнавство. – 2012. – №3. – С.71–83; Писничний Т. Еволюція теоретичних та методологічних прийомів вивчення радянської доби в історії Української греко-католицької церкви // Часопис української історії. – Вип.40. – К., 2019. – С.52–60; Його ж. Греко-католицька церква і спроби її ліквідації у 1939–1945 рр.: історіографія проблеми // Наукові записки Тернопільського національного педагогічного університету ім. Володимира Гнатюка. Серія «Історія». – Вип.1. – Тернопіль, 2011. – С.256–261; Його ж. Оцінка ініціатив греко-католицького єпископату в подоланні суспільно-політичних конфліктів у 1940-х рр.: історіографічний аспект // Релігія на шляху подолання конфліктів: жертвовність, поразки, компроміси: Мат. XVIII Міжнар. наук.-практ. конф. студентів і молодих науковців «Релігія на шляху подолання конфліктів: жертвовність, поразки, компроміси» (Львів, 15–16 квітня 2016 р). – Л., 2016. – С.70–73.

power towards the Ukrainian people, and, consequently, the religion and the Church. On the whole, the research direction has been formed in modern Ukrainian historiography, the object of which is the study of the complex history of relations between the UGCC and the Soviet state.

With the re-establishment of the Soviet power in the Eastern Halychyna in 1944, a new tragic page in the history of the UGCC was opened. During the German occupation, the Uniate Halychyna clergy, defending the right of the Ukrainian people to their own state, stimulated the strengthening of national consciousness of the population in the region and their desire to strive for the national self-determination. It is clear that such a position forced the Soviet leadership to develop the appropriate policy towards the UGCC. Especially since in the postwar period, the war of the Ukrainian underground against Soviet power actually took place in the Western Ukraine<sup>9</sup>.

As a result of measures taken by the USSR PCIA bodies to liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church and its forced “reunification” with the Russian Orthodox Church as on January 1, 1945, there were 1149 clergymen who agreed to transition to Orthodoxy, including the Vicar General, 76 Deans, 892 priests, 17 deacons, 160 sextons, and 3 monks. And as on March 1, 1946 their number was 1,238 persons: Vicar General, 98 Deans, 922 priests, 17 deacons, 195 sextons, and 5 monks<sup>10</sup>.

As a result of the Bolsheviks power struggle against the hostile Greek Catholic clergy, who were active in anti-Soviet activities against the forced “reunification” with the Orthodoxy, by the beginning of January 1946, 262 people, including the Metropolitan, 4 Bishops, 163 priests, 11 monasteries’ priors, 6 deacons, 9 students of Theological Academy, 23 monks, 20 members of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) connected with the UGCC, and 25 laymen had been arrested from among the clergy and members of the OUN<sup>11</sup>.

In general, the preparations for the systemic attack on the Greek Catholic Church began in the spring of 1945. On March 2, G.Karpov, the then chairman of the ROC Council, he was also a colonel of the state security service, received the order from the first deputy chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars, V.Molotov to develop recommendations as to large-scale attack of Catholicism, in particular the UGCC. On March 15, G.Karpov submitted such plan to J.Stalin who approved it. This project provided for a significant strengthening of the positions of the Orthodox Church in Halychyna, as well as creating the “initiative” group that would declare the breakup of the Ukrainian Greek Catholics with Vatican<sup>12</sup>.

However, in addition to “ideological” measures, the repressive measures were envisaged. As early as March 15, 1946, the state security bodies were put the task to prepare for the mass arrests of the Greek Catholic clergy, especially the Episcopate<sup>13</sup>. The signal for the attack on the UGCC was the article by Ya.Halan “With the Cross or Sword” signed under the pseudonym of V.Rosovych and published in early April 1945 in Lviv regional

<sup>9</sup> Лагодич М.М. Специфіка функціонування структур Української греко-католицької та Руської православної церков у Східній Галичині в умовах радянської моделі державно-церковних відносин (1945–1965 рр.): Дис. ... канд. іст. наук. – Острого, 2014. – С.54.

<sup>10</sup> Зуляк І. Участь агентури НКВС у підготовці і проведенні Львівського собору 1946 р. // Наукові записки Тернопільського національного педагогічного університету ім. Володимира Гнатюка. Серія «Історія». – Вип.1. – Тернопіль, 2011. – С.169.

<sup>11</sup> Там само.

<sup>12</sup> Сергійчук В. Нескорена церква: Подвижництво греко-католиків України в боротьбі за віру і державу. – С.227; Стоцький Я. Держава і релігії в західних областях України: конфесійні трансформації в контексті державної політики 1944–1964 рр. – К., 2008. – С.87.

<sup>13</sup> Ліквідація УГКЦ (1939–1946): Документи радянських органів державної безпеки / За заг. ред. В.Сергійчука. – Т.І. – К., 2006. – С.391–395.

newspaper “Vilna Ukraine” (“The Free Ukraine”)<sup>14</sup>. It condemned the activities of the late Metropolitan Andrei (Sheptytskyi), the Beresteiska Union of 1596, and the UGCC in general in the spirit of militant communist social and political journalism. The author made it clear that Greek Catholics needed to return to Orthodoxy. On April 10, the article was published in the republican newspaper “Radianska Ukraine” (“The Soviet Ukraine”), published in a separate brochure with the circulation of 10 000 copies, and was broadcast on the radio<sup>15</sup>.

At the same time, large-scale repressions against the UGCC clergy began. On the night of April 11–12, 1945, Metropolitan Yosyp (Slipyi), who succeeded Andrei (Sheptytskyi) to the Metropolitan Department, and Greek Catholic Bishops Mykolai (Charnetskyi), Hryhorii (Khomyshyn), Ivan (Liatyshevskyi), and Nykyta (Budka), were arrested. Many Greek Catholic priests in Lviv, who ensured the activities of the leading structures of the UGCC, were arrested<sup>16</sup>, which paralyzed the functioning of the Greek Catholic Church.

One of the following steps to liquidate the UGCC was the creation of the “Initiative Group for the Reunification of the Greek Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church”. The Central Initiative Group for the first time officially declared about its existence on May 28, 1945, with the appeal signed by Fathers H.Kostelnyk, M.Melnyk and A.Pelvettskyi (they became the organizers of the “initiative group”), which was called “To the Honorable Greek Catholic Clergy in the Western Regions of Ukraine”<sup>17</sup>. At the same date, the letter to the Council of People’s Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, signed by the above-mentioned priests, was sent, in which the “initiative group” requested permission for the official registration<sup>18</sup>. It is noteworthy that there are the following words in its address to the clergy: “We hereby inform you, Reverend Fathers, that with the permission of the state authorities, the Initiative Group for the Reunification of the Greek Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church based in Lviv has appeared. Its purpose is to take our Church out of the chaos and anarchy in which it has found itself. The state authorities will recognize only our Initiative Group, and will not recognize the other administrative power in the Greek Catholic Church”<sup>19</sup>. In fact, these words confirmed that the “initiative group” was created thanks to the state power bodies. As a result, the disorganization of the church life of Greek Catholics, which was mentioned in the appeal, was provoked by the state security bodies. Instead, the “initiative group” was to take the Church out of such a state of disorganization (“chaos and anarchy”).

Although the Soviet government officially maintained ties with the UGCC through the Council for Religion and Cults, the state controlled the “reunification” process through the Council in ROC Affairs, as its ultimate goal was to merge Halychyna Uniates with the ROC. On the instructions of the Ukrainian Soviet government, it was P.Khodchenko, authorized by the Council in ROS Affairs for the Ukrainian SSR, in letter №625 dated June 18, 1945, informed the leaders of the “initiative group” that it was authorized as the only temporary church-administrative body given the right to govern in full the existing Greek Catholic Church in the Western regions of the Ukrainian SSR and to carry out the task of reunification with the representative of the Council in the ROC Affairs under the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR and,

<sup>14</sup> Державний архів Львівської обл. (далі – ДАЛО). – Ф.3. – Оп.1. – Спр.212. – 198 арк.

<sup>15</sup> Стоцький Я. Держава і релігії в західних областях України: конфесійні трансформації в контексті державної політики 1944–1964 рр. – С.90.

<sup>16</sup> Лагодич М.М. Специфіка функціонування структур Української греко-католицької та Руської православної церков у Східній Галичині... – С.59.

<sup>17</sup> ДАЛО. – Ф.3. – Оп.1. – Спр.212. – Арк.1–7.

<sup>18</sup> Там само. – Арк.8–13.

<sup>19</sup> Там само. – Ф.Р-1332. – Оп.1. – Спр.3. – Арк.9–10.

accordingly, in separate regions – with local representatives, to register Deans, parishes and monasteries of the UGCC; the “initiative group” was to send the representative the lists of all priests who refused to obey it. This was the open state intervention in the affairs of the UGCC. It turned out that the state security bodies first repressed the leadership of the Greek Catholic Church, and then the “initiative group” of three people appeared and in fact it usurped the power of the UGCC under the direction and support of the Soviet authorities<sup>20</sup>.

The leadership of Soviet Ukraine closely followed the events unfolding around the UGCC. On August 7, 1945, at the meeting with Metropolitan Ioann (Sokolov), Exarch of Ukraine, N.Khrushchev devoted most of the time allotted to the audience (up to 90 minutes) to the issue of “reunification” of Greek Catholics and Orthodox, and on December 12–18 that year, the joint meeting of the Council in ROC Affairs and Council for Religion and Cults representatives at the regional executive committees of the Western Ukrainian region took place in Kyiv, attended by G.Karpov and I.Polianskiy. The participants of the meeting analyzed the results of the first stage of the activity on “reunification” of Greek Catholics with the Orthodox Church. After the official meeting, the members of the “initiative group” met with the power officials where the issues were discussed as to the degree of readiness of the Greek Catholic clergy to conduct the “reunification” Council and the official declaration of the statement about breaking-off with Vatican and “reunification” with the Russian Orthodox Church<sup>21</sup>.

As a result of measures aimed at expanding the influence of the “initiative group” in early 1946, Vicar General, 77 Deans, 902 priests, 17 deacons, 195 sextons and 3 monks agreed to “reunite” with the Orthodox Church<sup>22</sup>.

In an attempt to attract supporters of “reunification” with the Orthodox Church, the PCIA bodies contributed to the appointment of 91 Deans from among the adherents of “reunification” with the ROC in practically all Western Ukrainian eparchies of the Greek Catholic Church. Most of them had previously held these positions, but were appointed on behalf of security bodies to strengthen their ties with the “central initiative group”. Simultaneously with conducting secret service work among the Greek Catholic clergy, the newly opened Orthodox churches were actively promoted by Bishop Makariy<sup>23</sup>.

Thus, at the beginning of 1946, the “initiative group”, referring to the wishes of believers and the clergy, sent petition to the government of the Ukrainian SSR for permission to convene the Council of the Greek Catholic Church. The group leader Fr. H.Kostelnyk sent the letter to the chairman of Lviv regional executive committee M.Kozyrev, asking for the permission to hold the Council on March 7–10, 1946. According to the previously approved plan, on March 7 he began his work on the registration of delegates. 225 priests and 22 laymen were invited, of whom 216 and 19 delegates, respectively, arrived. According to the official data, opponents of “reunification” were not present at the Council<sup>24</sup>.

The Council was opened on March 8, 1946 and took place in the temple of St. George’s Cathedral in Lviv. The introductory speech was made by Fr. H.Kostelnyk, who set the task: “For our Council to decide to abolish the decrees of Brest Council of 1596, to renounce the union with Rome, to return to the Holy Orthodox Church”<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Лагодич М.М. Специфіка функціонування структур Української греко-католицької та Руської православної церков у Східній Галичині... – С.60–61.

<sup>21</sup> Там само. – С.62.

<sup>22</sup> Зуляк І. Участь агентури НКВС у підготовці і проведення Львівського собору 1946 р. –С.170.

<sup>23</sup> Там само. – С.171.

<sup>24</sup> ДАЛО. – Ф.3. – Оп.1. – Спр.439. – Арк.10–12.

<sup>25</sup> Діяння собору Греко-католицької церкви 8–10 березня 1946 р. у Львові. – Л., 1946. – С.85.

The resolution of the Council was adopted by unanimous decision and consisted of four points: “1) to annul the resolutions of Brest Union of 1596; 2) to break away from the Roman Church; 3) to return to the ancestral Orthodox faith; 4) to reunite with the All-Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union”<sup>26</sup>. It is worth noting that on the first day of Lviv Pseudo-Council, all the main and most important decisions were made. The following two days of its work were a pure formality.

However, the question arises as to the canonicity and legitimacy of the decisions of Lviv Council of 1946. In general, it can be interpreted as illegitimate. After all, according to the canons of Orthodox Churches, each of them has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of the other. Moreover, this other Church was not even Orthodox, but Catholic. All the priests present at the Council were Orthodox, as they had been considered such since the time of applying for membership in the “initiative group”. Besides, there were no Greek Catholic Bishops in the Council. At that time, the entire highest hierarchy of the UGCC was already in Stalin’s camps. As it became known on the eve of holding the Council, Bishops A.Pelvetskyi and M.Melnyk, present at it, had adopted Orthodoxy. Therefore, the Council can be interpreted as Orthodox rather than Greek Catholic<sup>27</sup>.

Thus, the action launched by the “Central Initiative Group” on the instructions of the Soviet repressive authorities in 1945, despite significant resistance from the clergy and believers, ended with the proclamation of “self-liquidation” of the UGCC. However, the state power failed to fully incorporate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church into the Soviet system.

Nevertheless, the Church Council held in Lviv on March 8–10, 1946, was of great ideological and propaganda significance for the Soviet authorities. This is evidenced by the fact that the Divine Liturgy and the most important moments of the Council were filmed and gramophone records were made to perpetuate the event. The Soviet authorities also organized the publication of the book “Deeds of the Council of the Greek Catholic Church in Lviv on March 8–10, 1946”<sup>28</sup>.

Besides, on the instructions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (bolsheviks) of Ukraine in Lviv, the brochure “Appeal of the Participants of the Council to all Believers in the Western Regions of Ukraine” was published. An informational article for Canadian Ukrainians was also prepared, in which Fr. H.Kostelnyk outlined the reasons for the liquidation of the Union with Rome in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR<sup>29</sup>.

It should be mentioned that the resistance to spreading Orthodoxy took various forms. Some priests who joined the “initiative group” did not canonically legalize their transition. It was a common phenomenon when, not wishing to renounce the faith, the clergy left the church service and moved on to secular life. In particular, this is evidenced by the decrease in the number of existing churches. In Lviv region alone, they halved. Priests who did not want to put up with that situation, left their parishes. Such churches were among the so-called “unregistered” churches, with their characteristic underground Greek Catholic services<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Правда про унію: Док. і мат. / Гол. ред. Д.А.Яремчук. – 3-тє вид., доп. – Л., 1981. – С.367–368.

<sup>27</sup> Концур Н. Львівський «Собор» 1946 р. і проблеми виживання греко-католиків // Наукові записки Тернопільського національного педагогічного університету ім. Володимира Гнатюка. Серія «Історія». – Вип.3. – Тернопіль, 2008. – С.269.

<sup>28</sup> Діяння собору Греко-католицької церкви 8–10 березня 1946 р. у Львові. – Л., 1946. – 176 с.

<sup>29</sup> Лагодич М.М. Специфіка функціонування структур Української греко-католицької та Руської православної церков у Східній Галичині... – С.74–75.

<sup>30</sup> Концур Н. Львівський «Собор» 1946 р. і проблеми виживання греко-католиків. – С.269.

Despite fierce pressure and repressions of the Soviet security services, some Greek Catholic clergy continued to remain faithful to their church. D.Pospilovskiy, using the data from Moscow archives, claims that even in 1959 in the Western regions of the USSR there were 1643 former Greek Catholic priests, of whom 1243 joined the ROC, and 347 (27,8% of the total number) remained faithful to the Union<sup>31</sup>. Thus, the liquidation of the UGCC in Halychyna was stipulated by political motives. Firstly, the Soviet authorities treated the Church as a center of Ukrainian nationalism, and secondly, they were worried about the UGCC's ties with Vatican, which was independent of the USSR.

The post-war policy of the Soviet government, especially with the beginning of the Cold war, became isolationist. New large territories came under the Soviet influence – the Western Ukraine, which had to be calmed down, intimidated, and consolidated. There was the whole Church “fifth column” of Vatican – the UGCC, some representatives of which maintained contact with the Ukrainian nationalists. In fact, this forced the Soviet leadership to resort to the liquidation of Greek Catholicism in the USSR.

It should be stated that the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in the Western regions of Ukraine was carried out artificially at the initiative of the top party leadership of the USSR with the most active participation of the Soviet special services, which used various means to influence the clergy and believers. An active participant in the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in the Ukrainian SSR was the Russian Orthodox Church, which cooperated with the state power bodies. Besides, repressions against the clergy and believers played an important role. However, the measures taken by the top political leadership of the Soviet power and special services in fact did not lead to the ultimate liquidation of the UGCC, as it continued to operate underground.

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<sup>31</sup> Пospelовский Д.В. Русская православная церковь в XX в. – Москва, 1995. – С.464.



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# Ліквідація Української греко-католицької церкви у 1946 р.: ідеологічно-пропагандистська складова

**Анотація.** Мета дослідження полягає у системному аналізі політики радянської влади та органів державної безпеки, спрямованої на ліквідацію Української греко-католицької церкви в контексті вирішення національного питання на західноукраїнських землях. **Методологія.** Використано комплекс загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, порівняння, діалектичний) та спеціальних (історико-генетичний, історико-порівняльний, історико-типологічний, проблемно-хронологічний) методів історичного пізнання. **Наукова новизна.** Завдяки залученню нових документів проаналізовано процес ліквідації владними радянськими структурами УГКЦ у Західній Україні, з'ясовано заходи, спрямовані на нівелювання впливу греко-католицької церкви на місцеве українське населення та висвітлено репресії стосовно її кліру. **Висновки.** Із потраплянням після Другої світової війни під радянський вплив західноукраїнських територій перед сталінським керівництвом постало питання вкорення й консолідації місцевого населення, котре сповідувало греко-католицизм, що передбачало насамперед нейтралізацію УГКЦ, яку розглядали церковною «п'ятою колоною» Ватикану, а окремі її представники підтримували тісний зв'язок з українськими націоналістами. Ліквідацію УГКЦ було здійснено з ініціативи вищого партійного керівництва СРСР за найактивнішої участі органів держбезпеки, котрі використовували різноманітні політико-ідеологічні засоби впливу на священнослужителів і віруючих. Діяльним учасником знищення УГКЦ стала Російська православна церква, що співпрацювала з НКВС. Важливу роль відіграли також репресії щодо кліру й вірян. Проте ідеологічно-пропагандистські та репресивні заходи радянського керівництва все ж не призвели до остаточного зникнення УГКЦ, оскільки вона продовжувала діяти в підпіллі.

**Ключові слова:** Західна Україна, УГКЦ, НКВС, Львівський собор 1946 р., греко-католики, радянська влада, репресії.