

INTRODUCTION

I. A VIEW FROM THE PRESENT

On January 6, 1996, the Vatican's Congregation for the Eastern [Catholic] Churches published its *Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*. Paragraph 21 includes the following exhortation:

In every effort of liturgical renewal the practice of the Orthodox brethren should be taken into account, knowing it, respecting it, and distancing from it as little as possible so as not to increase the existing separation, but rather intensifying efforts in view of eventual adaptations, maturing and working together. Thus will be manifested the unity that already subsists in daily receiving the same spiritual nourishment from practicing the same common heritage.¹

The Congregation cites a 1994 discourse by the pope himself.²

Those familiar with the Ukrainian Catholic "ritual question" will immediately note the revolutionary nature of this exhortation. The present work analyzes the efforts of one of the twentieth century's greatest bishops to move in the direction mandated by the *Instruction* long before any Eastern Catholic could have dreamed of the support symbolized by its publication.

II. THE SHACKLED CODIFIER OF UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WORSHIP

Even during his lifetime, Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944) was acclaimed the "Moses" of his Church and people.³ The designation is particularly, and ironically, apt regarding his liturgical work: Sheptytsky was the great codifier of authentic Ukrainian Catholic worship; and he never entered the "promised land." Victor Pospishil has suggested that "Sheptytsky was certainly not the first bishop in the history of Ukrainian Catholicism to initiate a reform of the liturgy in his church; he was, however, the first to

¹ *Istruzione per l'Applicazione delle Prescrizioni Liturgiche del Codice dei Canoni delle Chiese Orientali* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1996). The translation is from the English edition published by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana, p. 21.

² John Paul II, "Discourse to Participants of the Meeting about the Pastoral Problems of the Catholic Church of the Byzantine Rite in Romania" (22 January 1994) *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 January 1994, p. 5.

³ See, for example, Donald Attwater, "The Ukrainian Church and Its Leader," *Studies* (Dublin) 28 (1939) 580.

complete that reform.”⁴ It is my contention that Sheptytsky was actually only able to begin completing a revision of liturgical *books*, because the “promised land” of liturgical reform *per se* was unattainable as long as Ukrainian Catholics remained theologically constrained and politically enslaved.

Until Vatican II, Eastern Catholics were prevented from fostering the distinctive theology that undergirds their liturgical tradition. Before the 1960s there was virtually only one Catholic theology, that of the Latin West.⁵ Writing about the Ruthenian [Ukrainian and Belarusan] Church at the time of the Union of Brest (1596), Sophia Senyk once noted that it, “like the other Eastern Churches, had preserved the rites and forms of the Greek Church, but, again, like its fellow Churches of the East, had lost the sources that gave life to that rite.”⁶ This destructive process continued for almost four hundred years until even the Ukrainian Church’s Eastern “rites and forms” began to wither, cut off from their concomitant theology. Without a religious vision congruent with these Byzantine rites and forms, most discussions of Ukrainian Catholic worship in Sheptytsky’s day degenerated to ecclesio-cultural issues like “liturgical hybridization,” and the nature of the “authentic past.” Such stultifying formalism was inevitable; before Vatican II the ultimate criterion – the Eastern *lex credendi* – could rarely be invoked, as doing so usually evoked denunciations of “schismophilia”; Eastern Christian theology was considered Orthodox in the confessional sense. In spite of Sheptytsky’s best efforts, he himself was not able, or allowed, to develop a *lex credendi* congruent with the emphases and ethos of Byzantine worship. I demonstrate this in the first part of this book.

As for the second barrier to comprehensive liturgical reform, political constraints, as long as Ukrainian Catholics were dominated, or potentially dominated, by Polish or Russian regimes, anyone wishing to open Ukrainian worship to the influence of Roman Catholicism, or, on the other hand, to recoup and develop Greco-Catholicism’s liturgical heritage according to models retained (and broadened) by the Orthodox – such a person could easily be branded an “enemy of the people.” Orthodoxy was identified with Russia, and Catholicism with Poland. “Uniates” were “in between.” And while hypothetically this centre could have become a creative crossroad, it became instead a menacing vice strangulating Ukrainian Catholics. Russian

⁴ Victor Pospishil, “Sheptyts’kyi and Liturgical Reform,” in Magocsi, M&R, 201. In spite of various errors of fact and interpretation, indicated below, Pospishil’s article remains a helpful and concise introduction to Sheptytsky’s liturgical work.

⁵ I discuss the particulars of this situation at the end of Chapter 3.

⁶ “The Ukrainian Church and Latinization,” OCP 56 (1990) 167. Senyk’s article is a very good introduction to the problem.

Orthodoxy and Polish Roman Catholicism were not neutral neighbours, but powerful monoliths perennially at loggerheads.

This political dimension is a thick thread running the length of the second part of this work. As noted, Vatican II lifted the strictures regarding Eastern Catholic theology; Ukraine's political chains, however, fell only in 1991. It has taken almost thirty years for the Ukrainian Catholic Church to *begin* appropriating the freedom of theological expression guaranteed by *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, *Unitatis Redintegratio* and *Lumen Gentium*.⁷ It will probably take another thirty for the effects of political liberation to affect the liturgical question. Only once all of these freedoms have taken hold, will Ukrainian Catholics be able to achieve the liturgical reform needed for centuries, even before Brest. But this is getting ahead of ourselves.

III. THE GENESIS OF THE PRESENT WORK

1. *A Fissure Between Theology and Liturgy*

To introduce other elements of this study, I should like to narrate something of its genesis.⁸ I began researching the theological foundations of Sheptytsky's liturgical work for my PhD dissertation presuming that his renowned Easternizing efforts in the area of liturgy had a concomitant theological base. The mythology surrounding the Ukrainian Church's great restorer of Eastern traditions naturally engendered such presumptions. I got my first hint that these might be misplaced when in 1988 then Bishop Lubomyr Husar, the first scholar to undertake a dissertation on Sheptytsky,⁹ wrote to me that while he was sincerely pleased that I had chosen to study Sheptytsky, he hoped that I would portray him as he really was. I have never asked Husar exactly what he meant, but I presume he had in mind the mythology concerning Sheptytsky's "Easternness," since the other popular perceptions, concerning Kyr Andrei's sanctity and outstanding leadership, have only been confirmed by my research.

I shall never forget the day I realized that Sheptytsky's pro-Eastern approach to the revision of liturgical books was not buttressed by an analogous theology. My dissertation topic ("The Theological Foundations of the Liturgical Work of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky [1865–1944]")

⁷ The appropriate sections of these documents are cited at the end of Chapter 3.

⁸ I do so here instead of in a preface because some of the facts mentioned below would not be entirely intelligible without the material presented thus far.

⁹ Husar, *Pioneer of Ecumenism*.