

if these principles were lived. Whereas for the irreligious scientist the centre of gravity is commonly himself, or society, or some abstraction like 'progress,' for the Christian it should be God—Pure Act, the most intelligent and most alive of all beings, who is yet 'closer than hands and feet.' The pagan scientist commonly tends to have less admiration for the ingenuity displayed in nature than for the cleverness of men in finding it out; the Christian should be readier to wonder at nature, as he learns its workings, than to exploit it. The former is impressed with the extension of the fields of knowledge; the latter should appreciate also the immensity of the unknown wonders of God beyond their frontiers. The one tends to an anthropocentric, and the other a theocentric, humanism. And if the old standards of integrity in science are to be kept, we shall have need of more God-centredness and less man-centredness. Science depends for its integrity upon the personal virtue of scientists; the ignorance and pride of modern scientists are beginning to undermine it. It is for Christians who are also scientists to insist upon those personal standards of humility and disinterestedness which alone makes science possible.

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THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN 'EASTERN POLAND'

THE annexation by Soviet Russia of certain territory which after 1920 had again been part of the Polish State is now a thing not only accomplished in fact but recognised by those powers strong enough to have a say in the matter. We have heard a great deal about it (and doubtless shall hear more) from the several sides and from various aspects. The only people whose views we have not been able to hear are those most affected, the inhabitants of 'Eastern Poland'; the great powers have not asked them to express their choice.

It is not easy to estimate what would have been the result of a free plebiscite (a really free plebiscite would probably have been un-

attainable in the circumstances).¹ The people east of the Curzon Line are mixed, and accurate statistics of the ethnic elements are not easy to come by. A Polish estimate (quoted by Konovalov in *Russo-Polish Relations*, Cresset Press), based on the 1931 Polish census, gives a total population of 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions, of whom 36.4 per cent. were Poles, 40.6 per cent. Ukrainians, 11.8 per cent. Byelorussians,² 8.4 per cent. Jews and 2.8 per cent. others. These groups are largely, but not entirely, localised: Byelorussians in the north, Ukrainians in the south, Poles in both; in the provinces of Stanislawow, Volhynia and Polesia, Poles are a minority of under 25 per cent.

Accepting these figures with all necessary caution (*see* Konovalov, *passim*), we may assume that all the nearly four million (?) Poles would have voted for the *status quo*, and that most of the minority of Jews would prefer Soviet rule. But we cannot speak so confidently and generally of the Ukrainians and Byelorussians. There are reasons for thinking that perhaps a majority of the last-named would favour union with their neighbours of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. The nearly 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ million Ukrainians would have held the balance, and might have tipped it far either way. After 1917 there was a strong movement among them for independence, whether for the Western Ukraine alone or together with their fellows in Russian Ukraine, *vis-à-vis* both Poland and Russia (the Nazis have made the most of this separatist element). But the Ukrainians were by no means unanimous about this, and there was inevitably a large number of 'non-politicals,' who did not care either way so long as they were left alone. But even these last were moved by memories of the Ukrainian-Polish War of 1918 and by the policy of colonisation and repression carried on by their new masters. It is possible, even probable, therefore, that the Ukrainian vote would have given a good majority in favour of the U.S.S.R.—but for one factor. That is, religion.

The Polish Ukrainians are all peasants and in great majority Catholics. Christian shyness of a State whose official philosophy is materialist and where atheism is the 'established church,' reinforced by the peasant's natural suspicion of a communist regime, might have over-balanced the effects of their twenty years of discontent and disability under Polish rule. For forty-four years, till his death

¹ The plebiscite 'carried out on a broad democratic basis' by the occupying Russians in 1939 can in the circumstances hardly be accepted as an unconstrained and considered expression of the people's desire.

² 'White Russians,' but not as such anything to do with the 'white' Russians who opposed the 'reds.' Their official Polish label is 'White Ruthenians.'

last November, the outstanding figure among the Ukrainians in Poland was the Archbishop of Lwow, Andrew Szepticky. Writing in the *Eastern Churches Quarterly* for July 1944, one who knew him intimately states that in 1920 Szepticky 'considered the Curzon Line as consonant with justice,' justice, that is, to Poland. It is not difficult to believe that in 1945 he might have regarded continued Polish rule as the lesser of two injustices to the Ukrainians. Nor is it difficult to believe that many of his flock may think so too.

The differences between the two main groups of Slavs in 'Eastern Poland,' Poles on the one hand and Ukrainians and Byelorussians (including Polesians) on the other, have sometimes been reduced to ecclesiastical terms as 'Catholic' and 'Orthodox.' This, though significant, is not exact. It is true that the Poles are Catholics, of the Latin rite, and practically all the Byelorussians are Orthodox. But most of the Ukrainians, $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions of them, are Catholic too—though of the Slav-Byzantine rite. They are often called 'Uniates' or 'Greek Catholics,' expressions undesirable for several reasons and not least because they obscure the fact that these Polish Ukrainians, with their Byzantine liturgy in Slavonic, their married parish clergy, and all the rest of it, are (like many similar people in other parts of the world) as authentically and unequivocally members of the Roman Catholic Church as the Bretons or the Irish—or the Poles themselves.

In other words, as I have written before (BLACKFRIARS, July 1944), 'the important inner difference between the two main groups of elements in Eastern Poland is cultural and religious, religious not in a "denominational" sense but in terms of tradition and mental habit. In a rough generalisation, the Poles are "Western," the others "Slav-Byzantine." Unhappily historical events have produced a situation wherein the Poles are prone to identify Catholicism exclusively with the West and to identify Slav-Byzantinism with their secular enemy, Russia; and in fact the Catholic Ukrainians *are* religio-culturally closer to the Russians than to the Poles.' What from an ecclesiastical point of view will be the destiny of these Byzantine Catholics—the biggest homogeneous group in 'Eastern Poland'—under Soviet rule is an interesting speculation.

There is not the slightest reason for supposing that the attitude of the Soviet Government to religion and its organisations has altered fundamentally; and the rather strident expressions of patriotism and loyalty of some ecclesiastical leaders in the U.S.S.R. prove nothing to the contrary. I recommend a reading of Paul B. Anderson's *People, Church and State in Modern Russia* (S.C.M. Press). The present external tolerance of religion in the U.S.S.R.

can be accounted for amply and consistently by the opportunism that is as characteristic of Soviet politics as it is of the politics of the dirtiest 'capitalist government.' No doubt the Orthodox Byelorussians and Polesians will be incorporated in the pertinent eparchies of the Russian Orthodox Church. What will happen to the Latin Catholic Poles (and Lithuanians) is a question. (Perhaps there will be no Poles east of the Curzon Line—reports of deportations of them are already heard). Notwithstanding the necessary Catholic opposition to Marx-Leninism, and in spite of the 'sad history of concordats' to which Benedict XV used to refer, the Holy See certainly will not refuse to treat with the U.S.S.R. Government if it can reasonably hope that by so doing Catholics (and for that matter other Christians) in Russia will be helped. But I venture to think that a stumbling-block in negotiations between the Vatican and the U.S.S.R. may well be a Soviet refusal to include other Roman Catholics, viz., the Byzantine Ukrainians, in any *modus vivendi*.

There has been an analagous situation before. After the partition of Poland of 1772-95 Russia tolerated the Latin Catholic Poles (the Jesuits were protected by the Empress Katharine II at a time when Pope Clement XIV had suppressed them in the rest of the world). But the Byzantine Catholics of Volhynia, etc. (who dated from a reunion-with-Rome movement in 1595) were gradually, by persuasion and force, reaggregated to the Orthodox Church. They were regarded as Russians, and therefore had to belong to the Russian state church.

It is likely that the same thing will happen now. The Soviet Government, having found that Christianity is not so easily eradicable, seems to be reviving Peter the Great's policy of a church well and truly bound to the wheels of the state. It would be hopeless to try and convert Poles to Russian Orthodoxy, but the Polish Ukrainians are another matter—they already share in the Slav-Byzantine culture. Obviously it is desirable from the Soviet point of view to detach as many people as possible from ultimate allegiance to a religious leader outside Russia—the Pope—and from membership in a closely-knit supranational church.

To what extent would the Catholic Ukrainians resist such a process? After 1772 many Byzantine Catholics in Russia quietly accepted Orthodoxy; they could hardly see the difference—the church services were practically the same, and that was the main thing for them. But many others resisted and, especially after the Polish insurrection of 1830, violent coercive measures were taken against them. These were ultimately successful and Slav-Byzantine Catholicism died in Russia, except in the Kholm region, where it

lingered on as an underground resistance till about 1875.³ Again, when in September 1914 the invading Russian army gave, every help to Orthodox missionaries in Eastern Galicia, they received very little encouragement from the Ukrainian population.

Another 'line' on this can be found in Czechoslovakia. The Rusins, or Ruthenians, of the Podkarpatska Rus, at the eastern end of Slovakia, originated in the Western Ukraine, and are Byzantine Catholics. In 1920-23 a considerable number of these people 'turned Orthodox'; the movement was fundamentally racial and cultural, a reaction from 'magyarisation' under the Hungarians (Cf., Poles and Ukrainians). But it must be noted that very many of the seceders soon returned to Catholic communion, and that practically all the clergy opposed the separation movement.

The Podkarpatska Rus, now occupied by Soviet troops, seems also to be providing evidence for the use of religious factors in Soviet politics. The bishop of the Orthodox minority there, hitherto dependent on the Serbian patriarch, recently asked that his diocese be included in the patriarchate of Moscow; and immediately afterwards it was reported that, at the alleged request of the Ruthenians, the Podkarpatska Rus is to be incorporated in the U.S.S.R. If this takes effect, there is likelihood of there also happening there what I have ventured to suggest is not merely a possibility but a probability in Eastern Galicia—an effort to detach Slav-Byzantine Christians from the Roman Catholic Church and to incorporate them in the Orthodox Church of the U.S.S.R.

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POSTSCRIPT.—Since writing the above my attention has been drawn to certain reports said to emanate from the Polish Catholic news-agency K.A.P. These allege (a) that a bishop of the Byzantine Catholics in the Podkarpatska Rus ('Ruthenia,' so called) has 'turned Orthodox' and advocates the annexation of that territory by the U.S.S.R.; (b) that the Orthodox Metropolitan Nikolay (who is in very good standing with the Soviet authorities), is in Lwow and busily engaged in a drive to bring the Galician Ukrainians into the Russian Orthodox Church. This last was about Christmas time. If the report be true, it comes significantly quickly after the death of Metropolitan Szepticky.—D.A.

³ Hence a small minority of Catholic Byelorussians to-day. The present Catholic Ukrainians are in Eastern Galicia, which in the partition passed, not to Russia, but to Austria.