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## With the Bohoroditsa and Her Pokrov to Liberation: A Continuing Marian Presence in the History and Devotion of the Ukrainian Catholic Diaspora

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**INTERNATIONAL MARIAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

**UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON, OHIO**

**in affiliation with the**

**PONTIFICAL THEOLOGICAL FACULTY MARIANUM**

**ROME, ITALY**

**By: RICHARD LENAR**

**WITH THE BOHORODITSA AND HER POKROV TO  
LIBERATION:  
A CONTINUING MARIAN PRESENCE IN THE HISTORY  
AND DEVOTION OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC  
DIASPORA**

**A Dissertation submitted  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Sacred Theology**

**with specialization in Marian Studies**

**Director: Father Thomas Thompson, S.M., P.H.D., S.T.L.**

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*Vidimus et approbamus*

Thomas Thompson, SM., P.H.D., S.T.L., Director

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Johann Roten, S.M., S.T.D. -Revisore

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David Petras, SEOD, - Revisore

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*Daytonesis (USA), ex aedibus International Marian Research Insitute, et  
Romae, ex aedibus Pontificiae Facultatis Theologicae Marianum, die  
June 21, 2021.*

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## Chapter 1: Introduction, Objective, and Methodology

### 1.1 Overview of this Study - A Continuing Marian Presence among the Ukrainian Catholic Diaspora

*The Ukrainian people have an exceptionally strong trust in the protection of the Mother of God – it combines their survival in Eastern Europe and their historical existence with the care of Mary, the Mother of our Savior.<sup>1</sup>*

An impressive six-meter-high mosaic is located in the vault of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, Ukraine. Known as the *Virgin Orans*, (Ukrainian *Оранта/Oranta*), this icon is a national symbol of the Marian devotion of the Ukrainian people.<sup>2</sup> The *Oranta* has been continuously present in the Cathedral since its original construction in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

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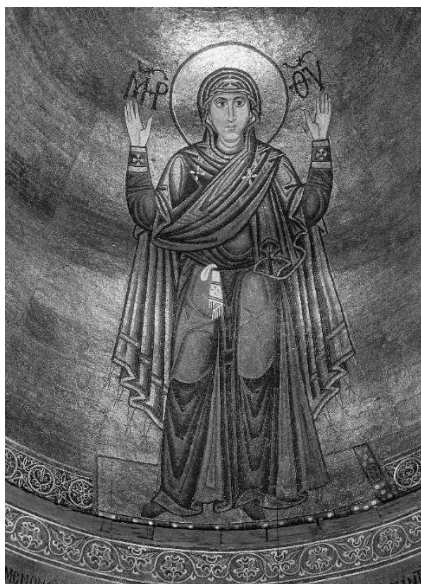
<sup>1</sup> Muzyczka, I. “Ukraine” in *Marienlexikon*, Vol. 6, 510 (St. Ottilien, 1988.) The original German text is “Das ukrainische Volk hat ein ausnehmend hohes Vertrauen in der Schutz der Gottesmutter – es verbindet sein Überleben im Osten Europas und seine geschichtliche Existenz mit der Fürsorge Maria, der Mutter unseres Heilands.”

<sup>2</sup> The Ukrainian language is written in the Cyrillic alphabet. In accordance with the *Chicago 16 Manual of Style*, which suggests that the presentation of foreign language terms and quotations conform to the linguistic abilities of the expected readers, the present author will limit the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in the main text of this study. The text will provide the original Ukrainian spelling (in the Cyrillic alphabet) for only a small selection of important and frequently recurring terms followed by a transliteration or English translation. Subsequent usage of these terms will use only the transliteration or translation.

When a Ukrainian text has been translated, the English version will appear in the main body with the original language material in a footnote. This usage also follows the guidance of Chicago 16, which indicates that an author may place translations in a footnote to avoid clutter in the main text and to simplify the overall presentation for readers, who in most cases will not be familiar with the Ukrainian language. Note that Chicago 16 does not provide specific guidance for the Ukrainian language. The guidance for the Russian language has been followed to the extent practical.



Ukrainians call the location of the *Oranta* on the Cathedral dome the “Indestructible Wall” (Ukrainian *Нерушима Стіна/Nerushima Stina*). Although the Cathedral itself has been rebuilt several times during the centuries after experiencing severe damage, the wall on which the *Oranta* stands has always survived intact.<sup>3</sup>



*The Oranta on the “Indestructible Wall” in Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev.*<sup>4</sup>

The *Oranta* possesses a special significance for Ukrainians, especially Catholics, as a visible and miraculous representation of their own survival throughout centuries of constant hardship.<sup>5</sup> Despite foreign conquest, persecution, famine, war and other calamities, Ukrainians have

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<sup>3</sup> Olexa Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev* (New York: The Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., 1953), 116.

<sup>4</sup> Public domain image accessed at <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/ZwHmjIymnSeDvQ>.

<sup>5</sup> See for example, the article “The Cult of the Mother of God - the Pearl of Tradition of the Ukrainian People,” by Vasil Vavrik, which is discussed in detail in chapter 4. Maurice van de Maele “Dévotion envers la Sainte Vierge en Ukraine,” in Hubert du Manior *Maria: Etudes sur la Sainte Vierge*, tome 4, volume 7. 749 (Paris, Beauchesne, 1956) mentions that Ukrainians consider the *Oranta* mosaic to be a miraculous icon..

maintained their trust in the protection of Mary, just as her icon has maintained its presence in the most important church of Ukraine. The above quotation concisely expresses Mary's continuing presence in the self-identity and spirituality of the Ukrainian people. This continuing Marian presence, which began with the formation of Ukraine as Kievan Rus in 988 and has been and still is expressed among the Ukrainian Catholics in various ways throughout more than a thousand years of their history, is the subject of this dissertation.<sup>6</sup>

## **1.2 Topic and Objective of this Dissertation**

The Marian presence in Ukraine and among its people is an enormous topic. Proper consideration of it must include historical and cultural factors as well as theological and devotional ones. Due to this breadth of topic, which can hardly be fully examined in a single dissertation, some means of focus and delineation is necessary. To accomplish that purpose, this dissertation will explore the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine through a specific lens, that of the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora* in North America. This lens was selected because the Marian Library of the International Marian Research Institute contains an extensive, and readily accessible, archive of material produced by the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora* which frequently references the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine.

This archive, the Ukrainian Marian Collection of the University of Dayton, will be a major and primary source of material for this dissertation. The use of this extensive archive of writings and other materials, produced by Ukrainian Catholics in North America during the time period from the end of the Second World War in 1945 to the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, will provide the focus this dissertation requires. Consequently, when reference is made to "Marian presence," the context will always be the Marian presence in Ukraine and its people from the viewpoint of the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora*.

By making use of the Ukrainian Marian Collection, this dissertation explores the continuing Marian presence from a unique perspective. The collection documents the thoughts, desires and aspirations of the Ukrainian *diaspora* during a time when Ukraine and in particular the Ukrainian Catholic Churches were subject to the hostility and oppression of the communist government of the Soviet Union. Ukraine was not yet a free country when the Ukrainian Marian Collection

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<sup>6</sup> Maele ,747, affirms the continuing presence of devotion to Mary in Ukraine,

was assembled. From that historical context, through the archive's materials, Ukrainian Catholics of the *diaspora* speak for themselves about their faith, Marian devotion, history, present difficulties, hope for a better future, and desire for political liberation. Above all, they express their firm reliance on the help and protection of the *Bohoroditsa* (*Theotokos*) and their firm trust that her intercession will lead them to their long-desired goal of liberation from oppression and persecution.

To summarize, the objective of this dissertation is *to document a continuing Marian presence in the history of Ukraine, as expressed by the Ukrainian Catholic diaspora, by making original use of the material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection of the Marian Library.*

### **1.3 Status Quaestionis**

Histories of Ukraine, both political and religious, exist, although such works are not specifically Marian in orientation.<sup>7</sup> There are many works on Byzantine Marian devotion. A recent example is the compilation *The Oxford Handbook of Mary* published by Oxford University, which contains several chapters on Byzantine Marian devotion although, as is typical for such works, it does not explore in detail the history of the Marian presence in Ukraine or the unique aspects of Ukrainian Marian devotion.<sup>8</sup>

Liturgical references for the Byzantine liturgy are readily available and numerous.<sup>9</sup> The most comprehensive text is the series of volumes by Fathers Juan Mateos and Robert Taft and published by the Pontifical Oriental Institute.<sup>10</sup> Another useful text is *The Byzantine-Slav*

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<sup>7</sup> An older, but useful example from the Roesch Library is W.E. D. Allen, *Ukraine: A History* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1963). More recent examples include Serhii Plokyh, *Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (New York: Basic Books, 2015) and Olejsandr Palii, *A History of Ukraine*. (Samit-book, 2018). These three texts were used to assemble the historical survey in chapter 2.

<sup>8</sup> Chris Maunder, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Mary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> The author is indebted to Father David Petras, Doctor of Eastern Christian Studies (SEOD), Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 1992, for his guidance in regard to the Byzantine liturgy.

<sup>10</sup> This series consists of the following volumes:

*Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom: Its Origin and Evolution* by Casimir Kucharek. This massive volume provides a detailed presentation of the Byzantine liturgy and its historical development. It also explores aspects Eastern Marian devotion, with the inclusion of some specifically Ukrainian material.<sup>11</sup> A commentary by Father Meletius Solovey includes a chapter on the evolution of the Ukrainian liturgy.<sup>12</sup>

A small selection of material is available regarding the Saint Sophia Cathedral and the *Oranta*. The largest and most detailed example is *The Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kiev* by Olexa Powstenko. This text, like smaller guidebooks to the Cathedral, tends to explore in detail the architectural and artistic aspects of the Cathedral and not its Mariological significance.<sup>13</sup>

Works which treat specifically Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion are typically written for a general readership and discuss aspects

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*A History of the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Vol. 1: Liturgy of the Word*, Juan Mateos., translated, edited and augmented by Steven Hawkes-Teeple (Eastern Christian Publications, 2016, ISBN: 978-1-940219-21-9)

Volume 2:

- *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Volume II, The Great Entrance*, Robert Taft (Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 200, 1975) ISBN: 978-8872100998

Volume 3: Not yet published

Volume 4:

- *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Volume IV, The Diptychs*, Robert Taft (Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 238, 1991) ISBN: 978-8872102855

Volume 5:

- *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Volume V, The Precommunion Rites*, Robert Taft (Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 261, 2000) ISBN: 9788872103265

Volume 6:

- *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Volume VI, The Communion, Thanksgiving and Concluding Rites*, Robert Taft (Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 281, 2008) ISBN 978-88-7210-361-4

<sup>11</sup> Casimir Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Its Origin and Evolution* (Combemere, Ontario: Alleluia Press, 1971..)

<sup>12</sup>Solovey, Meletius Michael, *The Byzantine Divine Liturgy* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, Inc., 1970) (Note that the missing chapter from this translation, "Latinization in the Byzantine Ukrainian Liturgy," can be found in: *The Romanization Tendency*, pp. 15-45, ed. by Jacob Vellian, Kottayam, India, 1975).

<sup>13</sup> Olexa Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev* (New York: The Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., 1953.)

of popular Marian devotion. Examples of such texts are numerous in the Ukrainian Marian Collection, such as the “Voice of the Good Shepherd Series,” published by the Basilian Fathers, and the two-volume “Mary, Receive Our Prayer” anthologies. None of these texts in the Ukrainian Marian Collection discuss the full range of the Marian presence in Ukraine, although they can be used to assemble a more complete picture of that presence.

The present author was unable to locate any work, at least in English, that provides a comprehensive presentation of the continuing Marian presence in Ukrainian history. Similarly, there is no scholarly work which engages with any of the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection of the Marian Library. None of those materials, with exception perhaps of an account of the Hryshiv apparitions, has been translated into English.

#### **1.4 A Historical-Theological Method**

Because of the nature of its topic, this dissertation will use a two-dimensional approach, which is partly historical and partly theological. Such an approach is necessary and essential. In the author’s view, the historical and theological aspects of Marian devotion are inseparable, especially in the case of the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora*.<sup>14</sup> Consideration of both is indispensable for understanding the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine. Further explanation of this point will illustrate the underlying methodology of this dissertation and hopefully avoid the possibility that later sections might create the impression to the reader of an alternation between two separate and unrelated approaches.

The connection between history and devotion arises from the constant sufferings which the Ukrainian people have endured in the course of their history. In combination with their native Slavic temperament, such a dark past has conditioned them to seek protection and assistance from the *Bohoroditsa*, whom they venerate as a faithful and reliable intercessor. These Marian characteristics of helper and protectress, striking and dominant in Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion, continually take shape and develop in the forge created by oppression and persecution at the hands of foreign political entities and invaders. For this reason, the historical outline in later chapters will provide an exposition of those

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<sup>14</sup> This point is affirmed by Chaillot, 123.

historical circumstances which have shaped and informed Marian devotion and which provide examples of the continuing Marian presence.

In parallel to this historical approach, later chapters will also develop the theological basis for Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion and explore the continuing Marian presence in theological terms. This theological approach is influenced by historical circumstances, such as the coming of Christianity to Ukraine in its Eastern form at a time when the Universal Church was still united and Catholic. Of special importance here is the Eastern liturgy, in particular the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, which because of historical circumstances is the liturgy of Ukrainian Catholics and an essential aspect of their self-identity as Christians and Catholics. The mystical native Slavic temperament, with its aversion to theological analysis and development, has an influence here as well, and produces an essential simple Mariology that finds its sole source in the Ukrainian liturgy. The liturgy expresses a deep understanding and appreciation of presentation of the Divine Maternity, to a much greater extent than the Western liturgy, as the ultimate object of Marian veneration and the fundamental source of Marian intercessory power. The use of icons and the importance of the *Pokrov* devotion derive naturally from the power of the Divine Maternity.

Later chapters will develop and document the historical and theological points summarized in the preceding paragraphs. What is essential for understanding the methodology of this dissertation is that these historical and theological factors are closely related and in fact inseparable. *Ukrainian Catholics are conditioned to practice Marian devotion in a manner which is influenced by and responds to the difficulties which they have constantly suffered because of historical circumstances.*

To implement the two-dimensional methodology, this dissertation will rely on other resources in addition to those selected from the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Historical and theological sources will provide a background for understanding important aspects of Ukrainian history and Eastern theology and Marian Devotion. Such sources are not treated exhaustively. with their use, the author intends only to construct a necessary context which will provide the reader a deeper understanding of what Ukrainian Catholics have to say about Marian devotion and the continuing Marian presence among the Ukrainian people.

## 1.5 Application of Methodology

This section provides a road-map of how this dissertation is organized, how it will unfold, and where it is going. By assembling information from the material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection, with a supplement of other historical, liturgical, and devotional sources, the objective is to document the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine. To achieve this, the dissertation will draw on material from the following sources:

- a. Historical events
- b. Liturgy
- c. Marian devotional practices
- d. Marian feasts
- e. Mary's titles
- f. Popular and legendary stories about Mary
- g. Poetry
- h. Pictures (especially Christmas Cards)

The material assembled from these sources will be organized as follows:

Chapter 2 will serve as a further introduction and present important aspects of the historical/cultural context of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion.

Chapter 3 will discuss the Ukrainian Marian Collection, its contents, and how this dissertation will utilize it.

Chapter 4 will examine the Eastern liturgy and explain how the ancient Eastern liturgy is the primary source for Mariology and Marian devotion in Eastern Churches and therefore an example of a continuing Marian presence. This discussion will explain how the Divine Maternity is the basis for Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion and the source of the power of Marian intercession and protection.

Chapter 5 will discuss theological aspects of Ukrainian Marian - its laudatory nature, preoccupation with maternal pity, and appreciation for the power of the *Bohoroditsa*.

Chapter 6 will examine two examples of Ukrainian devotional praxis, icons and the *Pokrov*, which are important for Ukrainian Catholics as means of Marian intercession and of a continuing Marian presence.

Chapters 7 and 8 will develop an outline of only those events in Ukrainian history which have had consequences for Marian devotion. The purpose of this historical survey is twofold:

- a. To present in a historical context events which indicate a continuing Marian presence.
- b. To understand why Ukrainians Catholics (at the time the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled) so fervently desired political liberation and looked to the *Bohoroditsa* for assistance and protection to achieve it.

Chapters 9 and 10 will build on the material in prior chapters to present a series of further examples of the continuing Marian presence in catholic Ukrainian Marian devotion. This discussion will utilize the three themes of *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov*, and *Liberation* and will rely heavily on material from the Ukrainian Marian Collection. In some cases, translations of the original Ukrainian text will be provided. The purpose of these translations is two-fold.

- a. To provide the reader the best possible sense of the tone and content of the original writings.
- b. To make a portion of the material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection accessible to the majority of scholars and other readers who are not familiar with the Ukrainian language.

Chapter 11 will discuss the importance of the Millennial Celebrations 1988 of the coming of Christianity to Russia and Ukraine.

The concluding chapter 12 will reflect on the findings of previous chapters. A closing section will suggest ways in which the research of this study might be continued with a specifically Marian orientation.

## **1.6 Magisterial Documents**

Magisterial documents which have a connection to Ukrainian history or Marian devotion are referenced throughout this study. The Ukrainian Catholic Churches have been a recurring topic for papal encyclicals, apostolic letters, and other magisterial writings. Many of the documents were written at the time of papal visits or on anniversaries of significant historical events, such as the Union of Brest. Magisterial writings also appeared in connection with the Millennial Celebration of



1988. Many of these documents were produced by John Paul II, whose Polish ethnicity provided a unique perspective on the characteristics of Slavic Marian devotion.

### **1.7 Contribution to Knowledge**

This study will provide for the first time a detailed presentation of the Marian presence among Ukrainian Catholics by utilizing both historical and liturgical sources and a selection of materials from the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Those Marian Library materials form an archive which has never been reviewed in detail by a Marian scholar. At the same time, this study will tell the story of the aspiration for political liberation by a long-suffering people from a uniquely Marian perspective. The theme of liberation is a unifying element which is inseparable from the Ukrainian Marian Collection archival materials and underlies the continuing Marian presence among the Ukrainian Catholic authors who created that archive. For those reasons, this study will relate a history of Ukraine which documents its tragic history from a uniquely Marian perspective. Finally, this study will make portions of theological/Marian texts in Ukrainian, which have never been translated, available to English speakers.

## Chapter 2: A Cultural Context

This chapter will introduce essential aspects of the cultural and historical context of Ukrainian Marian devotion. The points listed below will be documented and developed with greater detail in later chapters. They are presented here to provide an introduction to what may be an unfamiliar topic..

### 2.1 General Aspects of Catholic Ukrainian Culture and Marian Devotion

Because of historical circumstances, Ukrainian Catholics share certain aspects of their culture and Marian devotion with other Slavic ethnic groups. Regardless of this communality, these aspects are fundamental dimensions for understanding the subsequent course of this dissertation.

- a. ***Influence from Eastern Christianity*** - Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion finds its source in Eastern Orthodox Christianity. This influence arose through historical circumstances, since Ukraine in 988 first received Christianity in its Eastern form. A major characteristic of the Marian spirituality which Ukraine received from Byzantium is a strong sense that Mary intercedes for sinners.<sup>15</sup> During the following centuries, when Ukraine was successively part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Russia and the Soviet Union, the influence of Russian Orthodox Church competed with that of the western Latin Church. Latinizing influences included Marian devotional practices such as the rosary,<sup>16</sup>
- b. ***Slavic Commonality*** - The result of this historical admixture is that no real difference exists in the theological nature of Marian devotion among Ukrainian Catholics, whether Greek or Ruthenian, and Orthodox Christians in Ukraine and Russia. Differences in cultural expression of Marian devotion do exist

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<sup>15</sup> Neil Brownan, "Mary as Intercessor in Byzantine Theology" in Chris Maunder, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, 140 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Father David Petras, in private correspondence with the author.

between these groups; some of these differences will be noted later. Because the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is considerably larger than the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, most of the material in the Ukrainian archive was produced by and reflects the experience and viewpoint of Ukrainian Greek Catholics, although a positive identification of origin is not always possible and is not essential for the purposes of the present study. Because of the essential similarities of Catholic and Orthodox Marian devotion, it is possible to appeal to the writings of Russian orthodox writers to obtain a description of the essential aspects of Ukrainian Marian devotion. Recourse to the writings of Russian orthodox writers is also necessary because due to the persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic church throughout the 20th century, very little material is available on the topic from Catholic clergy or theological writers from Ukraine itself.

c. ***Simplicity***. The Marian devotion of Ukrainian Catholics is essentially simple. The foundational theological principle is exclusively the Divine Maternity and its consequences. Devotion is therefore expressed in use of the title *Bohoroditsa*, a term semantically equivalent in common Slavic etymology to *Theotokos*. Other Marian titles are formed by the prefixing superlative adjectival forms “all holy” and “all pure.” Ukrainians Catholics also refer to Mary as Queen of Ukraine. The use of other titles is less frequent. Simplicity is also present theologically, since everything Ukrainian Catholics believe about Mary and the *praxis* of devotion to her is a consequence of their understanding of the Divine Maternity and the power that derives from it.

d. ***Preservation of Self-Identity*** - Although Ukrainian Catholics are anxious to maintain their union with the Catholic Church and the Pope, they are equally anxious to preserve their unique national and cultural identity. The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, a common form of the liturgy in Eastern Churches, both Catholic and Orthodox, is an important aspect of Ukrainian self-identity which they have always been careful to preserve.<sup>17</sup> Unlike the Orthodox, they are willing to accept developments in Mariology and Marian devotion which have occurred since the

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<sup>17</sup> Frederico Marti, “The Ruthenians in America: Genesis of the most important case of Oriental Catholic Diaspora in the West” in *Studi in onore di Fra' Giovanni Scarabelliper in cinquant'anni di sacerdozio*, 280. Viareggio: Edizioni La Villa, 2019.

Great Schism of 1054. However, Ukrainian Catholics tend to express their Marian devotion in the language of the East; an example is their use of the term “Dormition” instead of “Assumption.”

## **2.2 Unique aspects of Catholic Ukrainian Culture and Marian Devotion**

The close relationship between Ukrainian history and the characteristics of Ukrainian Marian devotion has the consequence that Marian devotion is culturally reflected in unique ways. The following is series of points which will be developed in the course of this dissertation.

a. ***Mary as a national patron, protectress and Queen.*** The first princes of Ukraine, after its founding in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, proclaimed Mary to be the Queen of Ukraine. Once these rulers placed Ukraine under Mary’s protection and intercession, she continued in that role throughout the succeeding centuries. Ukrainian Catholics have consequently relied on her as a guardian of the Ukrainian people. As Ukrainian history became a series of centuries suffering and devastation, Mary showed herself to be the all-powerful *Bohoroditsa*, who has always remained faithful to Ukraine. Ukrainian Catholics believe her intercession has enabled Ukraine to survive as a distinct ethnic population despite historical circumstances which would have destroyed another people. Ukrainian Catholics are confident they can continue to rely on her intercession and protection. At the time the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled in the 1980s, recourse to Marian intercession had the specific practical application that it kept alive the hope among the *diaspora* that Marian intercession would assist Ukraine in liberation from the oppression of the Soviet government.

b. ***Use of specific icons.*** Icons are an essential element of Marian devotion for Ukrainian Catholics. In this respect, their Marian devotion does not differ significantly from that of other Christians in the Eastern Church, be they Catholic or Orthodox. Nevertheless, the use of icons is more prevalent in Russia and Ukraine than in other Eastern areas because of the association of

icons with miraculous powers.<sup>18</sup> In cultural terms, certain icons are especially important and cherished by Ukrainian Catholics, such as those of Our Lady of Vladimir and Our Lady of Pochayiv. Icons are typically found in every home and make Mary present as an honored guest.

c. ***The Oranta and the Indestructible Wall.*** Mary's patronage of Ukraine is visibly manifest in the *Oranta* mosaic inside Sophia cathedral in Kiev. This mosaic dates from the time of the formation of Ukraine in the 11th century and it has survived a series of historical events in which the cathedral and surrounding city were severely damaged. The continuing survival of the *Oranta* and the "Indestructible Wall" is a physical representation for Ukrainians of the survival of their people and has become a part of the character and heritage of the Ukrainian people.

d. ***The Pokrov, the feast of the Intercession and Marian protection*** - The 10th century apparition at the Blachernae Cathedral in Constantinople, in which Mary spread her protecting veil or *Pokrov* over the assembled congregation to protect them from military invaders, became the basis for special and intense devotion to her protection in Kievan Rus. This unique aspect of Slavic spirituality, particularly in Russia and Ukraine, has continued to the present day. The feast of the *Pokrov* or Intercession has developed into a major liturgical celebration, second in importance only to Christmas, Easter and the Dormition. The *Pokrov* has become an object of strong devotion and the term is both symbolic and synonymous with Marian protection. Intense devotion to the *Pokrov* is not a replacement for the liturgy. On the contrary, it is a thoroughly practical devotional form and maintain a close connection with the corresponding liturgical feast. The celebration of its feast is a communal expression of the dependence of Ukrainian Catholics on Mary's protection and has always been a both significant event of the liturgical calendar and a national day of celebration. The observance of the feast is accompanied by family gatherings and forms of dress, food and music.

e. ***The military as an instrument of Marian protection.*** In the East, Marian devotion has often grown and spread when a serious military threat is present, especially during sieges.<sup>19</sup> This

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<sup>18</sup> Chaillot, 128.

<sup>19</sup> Brownen, 149.

connection between Marian devotion and the military is highly developed among Ukrainian Catholics of the *diaspora*. A unique cultural aspect of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion is found in the reverence which Ukrainians have for military organizations which have fought for the liberation of Ukraine from foreign oppressors. Military leaders who fought to liberate Ukraine are also revered. Perhaps surprisingly for Western readers, the military is closely associated with Marian intercession and her *Pokrov* since the military is viewed as an extension of its protecting power. A recent example is the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which during the latter years of the Second World War fought to liberate Ukraine, not from the invading German fascist army, but rather from the Soviet Communist Red Army. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army was first formed on the day of the feast of the *Pokrov* and displayed the *Pokrov* on its banner. The Marian Ukrainian Collection contains many examples of articles which express reverence and gratitude for the soldiers who fought under the *Pokrov* for Ukrainian liberation and documents the activities of veterans' organizations. From an earlier stage of Ukrainian history, the Cossacks are viewed as folk heroes since they are another military organization which fought for liberation under the protection of the *Pokrov*.

The above points indicate how deeply Marian devotion is connected with Ukrainian culture. Further development of these characteristics will be presented in chapter 4 from a specifically theological perspective. The remaining sections of this chapter will now present some additional cultural/historical aspects which bear directly on the nature of the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

### **2.3 The Ukrainian Language**

The principal language of the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection will most likely be unfamiliar to readers of this study. This unfamiliarity is a consequence of certain historical and political factors. The use of Ukrainian was outlawed or discouraged while Ukraine was first part of Tsarist Russia and later a member of the Soviet Union. Ukrainian was always competing with constant infringement from the dominant and

majority Russian language, the official language of Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup>

With Russian and Belarussian, Ukrainian is a member of the Eastern branch of the Slavic group in the Indo-European language family.<sup>21</sup> An important consequence of the political suppression of Ukrainian is that, until recently, far less instructional and reference material has been available for Ukrainian in comparison to more frequently studied European languages. Fortunately, since Ukraine achieved independence in 1991, quality textbooks are available in English and German, which the present author was able to consult during his research.<sup>22</sup> The availability of such textbooks has made it possible to overcome the language barrier which has prevented scholars from investigating the content of the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

The forgoing discussion of the Ukrainian language is of more than linguistic interest. A Marian connection arises from a basic anthropological aspect of human nature. For any ethnic group or nation, their common language is an important part of their self-identity. When they are deprived of their language, they are therefore also deprived of a part of their self-identification as a distinct ethnic group or nation. As a result, the Ukrainian aspiration for liberation includes a dimension of preserving and liberating the Ukrainian language.

It is here that the Marian connection comes into clear focus. When Ukrainian Catholics call on Mary to protect their nation, that call includes the protection of the Ukrainian language. In this context, the very use of the Ukrainian language is an act of rebellion against an oppressive government. Therefore, the Ukrainian Marian Collection itself, which includes so much material created in Ukrainian during the decades prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union, is a witness to the desire of Ukrainian Catholics, with the assistance of the *Bohoroditsa*, to resist oppression, preserve their culture, and achieve their liberation.

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<sup>20</sup> Kenneth Katzner, *The World's Major Languages*, Revised Edition. (London: Routledge, 1986), 115.

<sup>21</sup> Kenneth. Katzner, *The World's Major Languages*, Revised Edition. (London: Routledge, 1986), 2.

<sup>22</sup> See for example, Svetlana Amir-Babenka, *Lehrbuch der Ukrainische Sprache* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 2007), and Assya Humesky, *Modern Ukrainian, Second Edition* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1999).

## **2.4 Eastern Rite Ukrainians in the Catholic Church**

Ukrainian Catholics belong to an Eastern rite of the Catholic Church and are in full communion with the Pope. They share the same doctrinal beliefs as the Universal Church, celebrate valid sacraments, and are subject to the jurisdiction of the Holy Father. Within this unity of communion, various subordinate churches exist which are canonically *sui iuris*, a status which grants each of these churches the authority to exercise a form of self-administration within its own ecclesiastical hierarchy. For this reason, an Eastern Rite Church exists as a "ritual church" in Canon Law.<sup>23</sup> The independence enjoyed by each rite allows it to preserve its unique traditions and liturgical practices. The differences between these churches with regard to ecclesial structure and government are not relevant for this dissertation, since there are no essential differences in Marian devotion among their faithful.<sup>24</sup>

The Ukrainian Catholic churches were formed through a long historical process which developed after they were separated from the Western Latin Church because of the Great Schism of 1054. Centuries later, they were reunited with Rome after which a further series of changes in ecclesiastical structure took place. The history of this process of separation and reunion is complex and infused with political and sectarian strife which this study will not explore in detail. A few general remarks will suffice to provide a necessary context for understanding the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

The present day Ukrainian Churches trace their origin as a Catholic rite to the Union of Brest in 1596. At that time, a collection of parishes in Western Ukraine and Poland, which, due to the influence of Poland, had become sympathetic to the Catholic Church, petitioned Pope Clement VIII for protection from the interference of the Orthodox hierarchy. After several years of negotiations, Pope Clement

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<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Canons 111 and 112 of the *Code of Canon Law* of 1983.

The Eastern Churches are subject to their own *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* of 1990. Canon 27 refers to *sui iuris* as "A group of Christian faithful united by a hierarchy according to the norm of law which the supreme authority of the Church expressly or tacitly recognizes as *sui iuris* is called in this Code a Church." Canon 28 defines a rite as "the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, culture and circumstances of history of a distinct people, by which its own manner of living the faith is manifested in each Church *sui iuris*."

<sup>24</sup> The author is grateful to Father David Petra for confirming this point in oral discussion and in written comments.



consummated the return of these parishes to the Catholic Church.<sup>25</sup> A similar reunion took place at Užhorod in 1646.

Father Petras describes the significance of these events as follows:

The term “Ruthenian Catholic Church” is the general term for those Churches in southern Rus which united in the unions of Brest-Litovsk (1596) and Užhorod (1646). The union of Užhorod was much smaller, comprising only one eparchy (diocese) which was in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The union of Brest-Litovsk concerned a number of eparchies (dioceses) in the Kingdom of Poland. They are of the same rite, but now comprise two separate churches *sui juris*, and indeed a third church *sui juris* in the United States, the Byzantine Catholic Church, the descendent of the Carpatho-Rus/Slovak/Hungarian/Croatian churches from the union of Užhorod. The Ukrainian Church in the United States is included in the universal Ukrainian Church under the Major Episcopate (self-proclaimed Patriarch) of Lviv. However, these developments are a product of the Ukrainian national movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup>

Opposition to the Union of Brest was strong in some parts of Ukraine among the Orthodox hierarchy, political leaders, and the general population. In subsequent centuries, the Ukrainian Catholic Church experienced continuous difficulties which threatened its existence. Eventually, because of ongoing political and ecclesiastical disagreements, and particularly as a result of the series of partitions of Poland in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Ukrainian Catholic Church was itself partitioned. Most of the successor portions of the original Church were driven out of existence by political repression, especially from the Russian Empire during the Tsarist period. The present day Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is the only survivor of the Union of Brest.<sup>27</sup>

Because of persecution in their home country, Ukrainian Catholics left in search of religious and political freedom. Some Ukrainian Catholics emigrated to North America and became the predecessors of the writers who produced the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. A

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<sup>25</sup> “Union of Brest” in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15130a.htm>.

<sup>26</sup> Father David Petras, written comments submitted to the author,

<sup>27</sup> “Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ukrainian-Greek-Catholic-Church>.

summary of the early history of North American Ukrainian Catholics can assist in understanding the heritage of those writers.<sup>28</sup>

A small strand of emigration to the United States commenced in 1879, followed by a similar exodus to Canada in 1891. Difficulties quickly developed for this growing emigrant population in the New World due to a lack of priests and the absence of support from Latin rite bishops:

For years and years, the spiritual tragedy of this priestless people would be re-enacted over and over again... in many communities they used to gather in each other's homes and sing the chant of the Liturgy by themselves without a priest. They would sit and weep bitterly because they had been without a priest for months, for years sometimes...there was no one to confess them, no one to bless them. Sundays became a day of torture for such people...they would take off their caps and bow as they passed a church, anybody's church; with tears in their eyes, they would pray aloud in public places with their faces turned toward the East, as did the Christians of the early centuries.<sup>29</sup>

There are several reasons the Catholic hierarchy was so unreceptive to the newly arrived Ukrainian Catholics. The existence of a separate rite within Latin rite territories created jurisdictional issues between bishops in North America and those in the Ukraine. A related issue was potential loss of revenue for Latin Rite bishops. Latin rite priests were not trained to conduct an Eastern Rite liturgy and administration of the sacraments could be difficult because of the language barrier. American bishops were convinced Ukrainian Catholics had to be latinized if they were to be integrated into Catholic life. Ukrainian Catholics fiercely resisted latinization because they viewed it as an assault on their self-identity.<sup>30</sup>

Over time, this desperate situation slowly improved as the missionary work of the Basilian Fathers and other religious gradually

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<sup>28</sup> The following summary of the history of the first Ukrainian catholic emigrants to North America is taken from Casimir Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Its Origin and Evolution* (Combemere, Ontario: Alleluia Press, 1971).

<sup>29</sup> Kucharek, 194-195.

<sup>30</sup> Marti, 281-294, describes the opposition Catholic Ukrainians encountered from priests and bishops in the North America, especially the United States. Sa well as the difficult issues of jurisdiction wjicj were created by the presence of a separate rite.

overcame the effects of the opposition and indifference of Latin rite Bishops.<sup>31</sup> At the present time, there is a Byzantine Ukrainian province in Canada. In the United States, a similar ecclesial structure is centered in Philadelphia.

Kucharek summarizes the experience of Ukrainian Catholics in America as follows:

It is a credit, however, to the Ukrainians of the New World that the vast majority of them did remain faithful to the Church despite the utter lack of religious instruction and spiritual guidance. They held on despite all obstacles and difficulties. And obstacles there were: if priests were lacking, there was no dearth of other proselytizers.<sup>32</sup>

This historical experience of persecution in the home country, reunion with Rome, emigration to the New World, and the struggle there to maintain both national identity and religious rite forms another layer of background for understanding of the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Almost all of these materials were produced in North America by Ukrainian immigrants and their descendants. A good portion of it derives from contributions of the Basilian Fathers, who are still active today in Winnipeg and Toronto as well as in major cities of the United States such as New York and Chicago.<sup>33</sup> The difficulties experienced by Ukrainian Catholics in the New World has created solidarity with Ukrainian Catholics suffering in the home country and each group has keenly desired liberation and freedom.

Ukrainian Catholics in North America have succeeded in preserving a link with their traditions, liturgical practices, and unique aspects of Marian devotion – the extensive use of Marian icons, strong devotion to the *Pokrov*, and fervent trust in the *Bohoroditsa* as the Queen and protectress of the Ukrainian people. In some cases, there has been a Western influence which has produced a certain degree of latinization through the introduction of devotional practices such as the rosary, stations of the cross, benediction and devotion to the Sacred Heart and

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<sup>31</sup> Kucharek, 195-196.

<sup>32</sup> Kucharek, 196.

<sup>33</sup> An example is the series of pamphlets “Voice of the Good Shepherd,” which treat various religious and devotional topics in a popular style. Over twenty examples from this series are extant in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Articles by Basilian fathers are also found in other materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collections, such as the two-volume set “Mary, Receive Our Prayer.”

Infant of Prague.<sup>34</sup> Some of these influences, in particular the rosary, are present in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Nevertheless, as will be seen in the later sections of this dissertation, the Ukrainian Marian Collection provides ample evidence of how North American Ukrainian Catholics have provided a rich written record of the uniqueness of their Marian devotion.

## **2.5 Political Considerations**

A recurring aspect of this study will be the many ways in which the Ukrainian people have experienced repression, destruction of their land and cities, and discrimination throughout much of the thousand-year period since the founding of Kievan Rus in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The historical sketch in later chapters will enumerate a sequence of invasions and conquests by foreign political powers. The result was a series of changes of both political masters and of political boundaries. This history of constant repression and threat from aggressive outsiders is an essential element of the national experience of Ukrainians, has left a mark on their character, and has been a significant influence on their Marian devotion.

A particularly relevant dimension of this political experience is the subjection of Ukraine to a communist government as a member republic of the Soviet Union throughout most of the 20th century. The Soviet government carried out policies to limit the political freedom of Ukrainians, to hinder their nationalistic aspirations, to suppress Ukrainian Catholic Churches, and to limit the use of the Ukrainian language. Because the Soviet Union did not collapse until 1991, the hostility of the Soviet Communists was an immediate and inimical reality present to the writers who created the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

These political considerations also involve religious conflict. Due to its geographic location, Ukraine after the Great Schism of 1054 came to be dominated by the Orthodox Church. As Orthodoxy gained ascendancy in the East, it was often unfavorably disposed towards other forms of Christianity. This attitude was and remains the source of much religious divisiveness and a frequent source of difficulty for Ukrainian Catholics, because the Russian Orthodox Church acted in ways to prevent them

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<sup>34</sup> Father David Petras pointed out these Latinizations in comments submitted to the author.

maintaining their own liturgical rite and from practicing their Catholic faith with its unique aspects of Marian devotion.<sup>35</sup>

This interference was the main impetus behind the emigration of Ukrainian Catholics from their homeland which began in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and led to the formation of the Ukrainian *diaspora*, especially in North America, from which the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection were produced.<sup>36</sup> Such opposition has been evident even in recent times, when, for example, the Russian Orthodox Church opposed the participation of Ukrainian Catholics in the 1988 millennial celebration of the coming to Christianity to Ukraine.<sup>37</sup> The opposition of the Russian Orthodox Church was another painful reality present to the writers who created the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> “The Religion of Russia” in *Catholic Encyclopedia* accessed at: <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13253a.htm>.

<sup>36</sup> “Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ukrainian-Greek-Catholic-Church..> Later chapters will provide documentation of the political and religious conflicts which have been present throughout Ukrainian history.

<sup>37</sup> chapter 4 will describe the political and religious tensions that accompanied the Millennial Celebrations of 1988.

<sup>38</sup> The article “Gold, Mourning, and Blood – Ukraine: A Tragedy without Frontiers.” *Crusade for a Christian Civilization* (Vol. 7, No.1. Jan-Feb 1977), 3-23. is an example of a text in the Ukrainian Marian Collection which enumerates the sufferings of the Ukrainian Catholic Church during the Soviet period and the persecution by the Soviet government and the Russian Orthodox Church. Pius XII describes these sufferings of the Ukrainian Catholic Churches in *Orientalis omnes ecclesias*, December 23, 1945, 56-59.

## Chapter 3: The Ukrainian Marian Collection of the Marian Library

### 3.1 The Ukrainian Marian Collection and its Contents

The Ukrainian Marian Collection of the Marian library is the primary source of original material for this study. This archive was assembled during the period from about 1980 to 1989 by a Marian Library cataloguer, Helen Nykolshyhn, a Ukrainian Catholic fluent in the Ukrainian language.<sup>39</sup> The official name of the archive is “The Ukrainian Marian Collection.” For reasons of simplicity and style, this study may refer to it as the “Ukrainian Collection,” “Ukrainian Archive,” or in similar such terms.

The materials in the Ukrainian archive were created by refugees and descendants of refugees who fled religious and political persecution in Russia and the Soviet Union and settled in various places in North America. This migration began on the 19th century and continued throughout the 20th century. Because of these historical circumstances, the archive is primarily a record of the experience of the Ukrainian *diaspora* in the United States and Canada in the decades following the Second World War. Because it was assembled in the 1980s, its materials predate the fall of communism in the Soviet Union in 1991.

The varied materials in the Ukrainian Collection cover a wide range of topics relating to the spiritual life and history of Ukrainian Catholicism among the *diaspora*, primarily in North America. The collection encompasses newspaper clippings, magazine articles, photographs, slides, books, pamphlets, poetry, prayer books, prayer cards and greeting cards. In some cases, hundreds of examples of these items have been assembled. All of them have been carefully sorted by type and topic and organized into eighteen banker's boxes. Less than a hundred items have been properly catalogued.

Most of the material was produced in the United States or Canada. A large quantity of the photographs, however, is of Ukrainian churches in South America, where some members of the *diaspora* settled. Very little material originated in Ukraine itself. The collection therefore stands as a

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<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, it was not possible to contact Ms. Nykolshyn during the preparation of this dissertation. The author instead has relied on the recollections and observations of the staff of the Marian Library and faculty members of the International Marian Research Institute.

record of the writings and activities of the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora* during a time when Ukraine was an oppressed member republic of the Soviet Union.

Newspaper clippings document important events in the life of parishes and individuals, including biographical information and obituaries of Ukrainian Catholics in ordained, religious, and lay life. Numerous photographs have been carefully assembled into binders and, along with carousels of slides, document churches, shrines, and religious objects. Pictures of icons, prayer cards, and greeting cards testify to important aspects of the devotion of Ukrainian Catholics. A significant portion of the material is related to the celebrations and memorials which took place in 1988 during the Millennium Anniversary of the coming of Christianity to Ukraine.

The clippings from magazines and newspapers are valuable not only for their historical documentation, but also because they discuss aspects of spiritual life. Many of these articles are almost exclusively Marian in nature and speak of devotion to her person, especially the protection of her veil, her *Pokrov*. There are frequent references to Ukrainian history, especially the foundational period of Kievan-Rus. These materials were written for a popular audience and are oriented toward practical Marian spirituality rather than technical theological instruction.

For the books and pamphlets, it is usually possible to construct a proper bibliographical entry for purposes of cataloguing. In the case of the many newspaper and magazine clippings, some contain bibliographic references or handwritten annotations, but occasionally reference can only be made to a banker box. Many of the cards and pictures similarly lack a proper bibliographic reference.

Regarding undocumented materials, a series of typewritten manuscripts by Antin Kushchinski is particularly interesting. The origin of these manuscripts is not clear. Written in a scholarly and somewhat older form of Ukrainian, they consist of three to six double spaced typewritten pages. These drafts are marked up with handwritten additions and changes. Their strong Marian content generally refers to Ukrainian history, iconography, the *Pokrov*, and Marian devotion. There is often a strong polemical tone. Possibly these manuscripts were prepared as talks to be given at meetings of the Ukrainian Marian Foundation, an organization active in Dayton in the 1970s and 80s.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The records of the Ukrainian Marian Foundation are stored in the Marian Library archives and await serious investigation by scholars.

The eighteen banker's boxes of material offer an enormous amount of material to a researcher. Most of it has never been examined in detail by a Mariologist. Since the majority of the items is in Ukrainian, the language barrier accounts in part for this neglect and is a significant obstacle for most researchers. Some materials are in English, however, and other languages are represented, such as Russian, German, Polish and Croatian.

### **3.2 Criteria for Inclusion in the Marian Ukrainian Archive**

It has not been possible to consult with the members of the Marian library staff who selected the materials which are included in the Ukrainian archive. Any statements about the criteria which were used for inclusion are necessarily speculative. The nature of the materials in the collection, however, does allow for some broad generalizations to be proposed regarding such criteria.

a. ***Exhortation and encouragement during a time of suffering, persecution, and separation from homeland.*** Ukrainian refugees to North America came forth from the long history of suffering and foreign domination which Ukraine had experienced throughout centuries of a tragic history. Persecution by the Soviet Communists was an ongoing reality when the Ukrainian archive was assembled. The Ukrainian Catholic Churches in the homeland were suppressed and their clergy was often in exile. Ukrainian Catholics in North America at times lacked the clergy to perform the liturgy or icons for devotional purposes. The materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection reflect and respond to these difficulties. They express sorrow and grief for the past and offer encouragement and hope for the future. Above all, Ukrainian Catholics are continually reminded that Mary is their Queen and protectress and they are encouraged to depend with confidence on her protection and *Pokrov*.

b. ***Historical documentation of the life of Ukrainian Catholics in North America.*** Many items document events in the life of Ukrainian Catholic parishes and religious communities. Examples include milestone events such as the occasion of ordinations or religious vows and their anniversaries. Many obituaries of figures from parish and religious life are preserved. Some materials document the persecution of Ukrainian Catholics



in the homeland, a topic which was of great interest and a source of despair for the *diaspora*. The Millennial celebration of 1988 is documented extensively.

c. ***Celebration of important religious feasts.*** Many of the newspaper and magazine articles were written on the occasion of religious feasts. References to Christmas and Easter describe the meaning of these celebrations and their relation to popular devotion. This criterion applies especially to the celebration of the feast of the *Pokrov* or Intercession, which is by far the most frequently mentioned feast. The large amount of material relating to the *Pokrov* is a strong indication of its unique importance to Ukrainian Catholics, who are encouraged to rely on Mary's veil for protection and assistance in a time of great difficulty.

d. ***Descriptive and instructional materials regarding Ukrainian Catholic popular devotion.*** Newspaper and magazine articles take some aspect of popular devotion as subject. The use of the rosary and Marian icons is described and encouraged. The importance of the *Pokrov* and its place in Marian devotion is frequently emphasized. Such devotional writings, which are typically centered on specific Marian titles such as Most-Holy, Most-Pure, or Queen, have a popular literary style without theological rigor. They are simply intended to explain and encourage Marian devotion among Ukrainian Catholics.

e. ***Preservation of Ukrainian Catholic folklore and culture.*** The archive includes materials which represent Ukrainian folklore. A prominent example is the collection of legendary stories in which Mary is often an important character. A wide selection of poetry expresses Marian devotion as well as the cultural dimension invoked by feelings of separation from the home country. Certain historical events, such as important political changes or military engagements, have become part of the Ukrainian national consciousness and the archive reflects this. Especially important here is a nostalgic cultural memory of the first centuries of Ukrainian history during the time of Kievan Rus. Finally, the archive includes songbooks and even stage plays with a Marian orientation.

f. ***Reverence for the Ukrainian military.*** The importance of the military for Marian devotion was mentioned in chapter 2. The Ukrainian Marian Collection contains articles which praise important military commanders and venerate heroes who fought for Ukrainian liberation. There are even documents which record

meetings and other activities of veterans' organizations. The Cossacks are frequently mentioned and have a striking significance since they are popular folk heroes associated with Marian protection and her *Pokrov*.

To repeat, these criteria are necessarily conjectural. They do, in the author's view, reflect the essential nature of the Ukrainian collection. Taken together, these criteria form a rich source for the understanding of Ukrainian Catholics of the *diaspora* and their Marian devotion.

### **3.3 Major Aspects of Marian Devotion in the Ukrainian Marian Collection**

Three aspects of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion among the *diaspora* constantly appear throughout the Ukrainian Marian Collection. They are fundamental and constituent elements which provide a window into unique aspects of a Ukrainian Catholic spirituality.

The first of these aspects is Mary as the *Bohoroditsa* (Богородица). The term is semantically equivalent to the Western term *Theotokos* or God bearer - the *Bohoroditsa* is a female parent who bears God. In a Slavic perspective, because of the Divine Maternity, the *Bohoroditsa* is also a channel of divine power and grace.

Because the *Bohoroditsa* is infused with divine grace and power, she is the purest and most holy of God's creatures. Ukrainian Catholics have a deep appreciation for these Marian qualities and frequently refer to her as the Most-Pure (Причистий/Prichisti) or Most-Holy (Присвятий/Prisvyati). Her maternal power makes her the ideal protectress of the Ukrainian people. For this reason, from the beginning of Ukrainian history, Ukrainian rulers have called on her as Queen of Ukraine.<sup>41</sup>

The second aspect is the *Pokrov* (Покров). The term refers to Mary's mantle or veil, which she spreads over her children to protect them. Reference has already been made to the origin of devotion to the *Pokrov*, which can be traced to an apparition in the Blachernae Basilica in Constantinople in the year 1100. According to legend, the people of Constantinople assembled in the cathedral for prayer because the city was

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<sup>41</sup> Prince Yaroslav the Wise declared the *Bohoroditsa* as Queen of Ukraine. References recur in the Ukrainian Marian Collection; for example, the pastoral letter by Nicholas Wojakowski in chapter 2 or the article "The Most Holy Virgin among the Ukrainian People" by O. Kupranets, discussed in chapter 4.

threatened by a foreign invading army. Saint Andrew the Fool was present in the cathedral and saw Mary appear in the vault of the church and spread her protective veil over the people. Because of Mary's protection, the city and its inhabitants were delivered from the invaders.<sup>42</sup>

As mentioned in chapter 2, although devotion to the *Pokrov* originated in Constantinople, it quickly spread to Ukraine and assumed a special importance there as a symbol of and synonym for Mary's maternal protection.<sup>43</sup> It is worth repeating, however, that through the *Pokrov* devotion, Mary has achieved the status of a national patron and protectress. The feast of the *Pokrov* is a national holiday in Ukraine which is celebrated with a wide variety of activities.<sup>44</sup>

The third aspect is *liberation*. A desire for liberation has been present among the Ukrainian people for centuries as they have endured a series of repressive foreign masters. The brutality, injustice, and repression of the Soviet period, however, were in many ways much worse than what Ukrainians had experienced in prior historical time periods.<sup>45</sup> The growth of the nationalistic aspiration for freedom and political liberation was especially strong under the Soviet Communists. The Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled with material produced while

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<sup>42</sup> Primary source accounts of the Blachernae apparition are not extant. Accounts found in present-day sources are the product of later tradition. Examples are Neil Brownen, "Mary as Intercessor in Byzantine Theology." in Chris Maunder, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, 124-125 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019) and S. Salaville, "Marie dans la Liturgie byzantine ou greco-slave" in Hubert du Manior. *Maria: Etudies sur la Sainte Vierge*, tome 1, book 2 *Marie dans la Liturgie*, 279 ( Paris, Beauchesne, 1949)..

in Accounts of this apparition are included in several later portions of this study. For example, see the account by Kushchinsky in chapter 3 and the article "Under the Pokrov of the Most-Pure" in chapter 4.

<sup>43</sup> Although *Pokrov* is the term for the *Bohoroditsa's* mantel or veil, in many semantic contexts the term can be translated as "protection." Salaville. 278-279 develops the connection between the *Pokrov* and protection by citing examples from the liturgy for the feast of the Protection of the Virgin on October 13.

<sup>44</sup> The feast of the *Pokrov* was officially recognized as a national holiday by the Ukrainian government in 2014. See the section "Marian Feasts" in chapter 4 for more detail and documentation.

<sup>45</sup> Pius XII describes the sufferings of the Ukrainian Catholic Churches under the Soviet government in *Orientalis omnes ecclesias*, December 23, 1945, 56-59. Accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xii\\_enc\\_23121945\\_orientales-omnes-ecclesias.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_23121945_orientales-omnes-ecclesias.html).

Ukraine was still subject to communist rule and frequently expresses this desire for liberation by using Marian references and imagery.<sup>46</sup>

For Ukrainians, liberation is closely connected with resistance and struggle, particularly in military terms. Even in this martial context, a close Marian connection is present, because Mary's role as a protector of Ukraine means she is the intercessor to whom the Ukrainian people turn for assistance in their struggle for liberation, a struggle that requires military action. This connection between Marian intercession, the struggle for political freedom, and the military will be further developed in in chapter 4.

These three aspects do not express the full content of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion. Instead, they form a thread which was particularly relevant at the time the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection were written and assembled. As such, the three aspects are simply a useful way to understand how that material documents a continuing Marian presence. *Bohoroditsa, Pokrov, and Liberation form a unified trajectory which expresses the essence of the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine and among Ukrainian Catholics – Mary is the Mother of God; consequently, Mary is a powerful intercessor and protectress for Ukrainians Catholics, especially in their centuries long quest for political and religious freedom.*

### **3.4 Criteria for Selection of Materials from the Ukrainian Marian Collection**

Because of the large amount of material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection (literally thousands of items), it was necessary to adopt a responsible method to select items for inclusion in the present study. Fortunately, due to its extent, the archive contains many items with a similar theme which express aspects of Marian devotion, historical memory, and present-day difficulties. Because of the recurring nature of the theme *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation*, the author was able to examine many items in the Ukrainian Marian Collection and to select a relatively small sample which provides a representative presentation of the entire archive. Other than those materials which document parish and religious

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<sup>46</sup> Salaville, 279-280, discusses the connection between Marian devotion and liberation and notes how that connection arose in part through military events, such as foreign invasion and siege.

life, which are primarily of an anecdotal nature, the collection proved to be a rich source.

The basic criterion for selection is that items reflect themes of Marian devotion. The primary theme of this dissertation, the trajectory of *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov* and liberation, exists *a priori* in the Ukrainian Marian Collection and this study reflects that already existing trajectory. The selection of materials is therefore not a matter of proof-texting or cherry-picking, but a representative and responsible sampling from among hundreds of other items with similar content. To provide a comprehensive presentation, the basic criterion was applied in connection with the following corollary or supplementary criteria:

- a. ***Representative of themes*** found throughout the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The trajectory *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation* is an important factor here.
- b. ***Explanation of Marian titles***, such as Most-Holy, Most -Pure and Queen of Ukraine. These are the most used titles.
- c. ***Descriptions of devotional practices***, particularly in regard to icons.
- d. ***Expressions of the memory of Kievan Rus*** and the first Marian Churches, including the Saint Sophia Cathedral and the *Oranta*.
- e. ***References to historical conflicts, tragedies and oppression*** which have influenced Marian devotion.
- f. ***Documentation of ongoing difficulties and persecutions***, primarily those experienced by Ukrainian Catholics in Ukraine, but also by those in North America
- g. ***Appeal to a popular readership*** rather than theological exposition. Only items which were clearly written for a general audience were included.
- h. ***Ease of translation***. Due to the dialectical variation, which is sometimes evident in the archive, items were selected which reflect standard Ukrainian and which the present author felt could be translated with a high degree of accuracy.

## Chapter 4: The Marian Presence in the Liturgy

### 4.1 Introduction

*The special place that Marian piety holds in the Eastern Churches leads us to a deeper understanding of Christ, and through him, of the Father and the Holy Spirit.*<sup>47</sup>

To understand Eastern Liturgy, Mariology, and Marian devotion, one must be aware of a fundamental difference in approach between the theological methods of the West and East. In the West, Mary has long been a subject for theological investigations and treatises. In the East, however, the case is different:

Mary has never become the object of any special and separate theological speculation; one would seek in vain for a Mariological treatise in our manuals of dogma. . . . In the East, however, she is "taken for granted" and provokes no theological questioning or reflection. There is no "Mariology" in the Eastern Church if this term is taken to mean a specific theological discipline, a separate set of intellectual problems. The veneration of Mary permeates, so to speak, the entire life of the Church; it is a "dimension" of dogma as well as piety, of Christology as well as ecclesiology.<sup>48</sup>

Because the Eastern liturgy maintains a strong connection between Christology and Mariology, it is the primary and even exclusive source for Mariology in the Eastern Church.<sup>49</sup> Through this Christological connection, Eastern believers are deeply aware of Mary's special and unique dignity. As a result, she is honored above all because of her Divine Maternity:

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<sup>47</sup> John Paul II. To the Byzantine-Ruthenian Bishops of the Province of Pittsburgh from the United States of America, November 28, 1988, 2 Accessed at : [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1988/november/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19881126\\_pittsburgh-ad-limina.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1988/november/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19881126_pittsburgh-ad-limina.html)

<sup>48</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, "On Mariology in Orthodoxy" *Marian Library Studies* 2 Article 4, 12-1-1970, 26.

<sup>49</sup>Schmemmann, "On Mariology in Orthodoxy", 27

She is the Ever-Virgin and the most pure, free from any taint of sin. Her character is expressed in a line from the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom: "more venerable than the Cherubim and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim". For [Slavic] believers, these aspects of Mariology are found in the ancient traditions of the Greek and Syrian Church Fathers, and, above all, in the title "*Theotokos*" ( [Slavic] "*Bohoroditsa*") which was affirmed in 431 during the Council of Ephesus.<sup>50</sup>

The Christological connection with the *Bohoroditsa* in the Eastern liturgy is highly developed. For this reason, a deep reverence for the Incarnation is expressed in symbols and iconography. The interpretation of Scripture is often allegorical and makes references to such Marian events such as her Nativity, Entrance in the Temple, and Dormition.<sup>51</sup>

The Eastern use of symbols and allegorical interpretation can raise questions whether the Eastern liturgy is truly scriptural. The response of the East to such questions is that the reality of these events is self-evident. Mary lived a real life with real events. Feasts such as her Nativity, Presentation and Dormition are real events because the Christological connection gives them meaning in the light of the Incarnation. It does not matter therefore that these events may have sources in apocryphal or other pious devotional writings. To repeat, their reality and significance are simply self-evident.<sup>52</sup>

This self-evident dimension of the Eastern liturgical and devotional orientation explains the *Bohoroditsa's* place in Eastern liturgical celebration. An example is the development of Marian feasts, which resulted from reflection on the meaning of the Incarnation and its Christological connection with Mary. Eventually, even Marian devotions would preserve this Christological connection.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Sergej Averintsev, "The Image of the Virgin Mary in Russian Piety (Gregorianum 75, 4 (1994), 614

<sup>51</sup> Schmemmann, "On Mariology in Orthodoxy", 27.

<sup>52</sup> Schmemmann, "On Mariology in Orthodoxy", 27.

<sup>53</sup> Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 27.

## 4.2 Liturgies of the Byzantine Rite

In the Eastern churches, the liturgy has four primary purposes:

- a. To acknowledge God's dominion over his creatures
- b. To express gratitude to God for His blessings
- c. To offer a sacrifice of propitiation to placate God's anger and atone for sin
- d. To ask God for help.<sup>54</sup>

The liturgy has a strong Marian presence. The Marian prayers in the liturgy frequently express the purpose of asking for help, although the context can be a petition for divine forgiveness. Similarly, in thanking God for His blessings, the liturgy often extolls the virtues of the *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa*.

A foundational magisterial document for understanding the liturgy of Eastern Rite Catholic Churches is *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, promulgated by the Second Vatican Council on November 21, 1964. This document describes the relationship of the Eastern Rite churches with the rest of the Universal Church and outlines their unique characteristics. Although Mary is not mentioned specifically in this decree, two points in this document are relevant for Mariology and Marian Devotion:

- a. The history and ecclesiastical traditions of the Eastern churches possess great merits and belong to the spiritual heritage of the Universal Church. For this reason, Eastern Churches have a right and obligation to rule over their own church hierarchy.<sup>55</sup>
- b. Members of the Eastern Rite Churches are assured and should always be cognizant that they will always be able to preserve their own form of the liturgical rights.<sup>56</sup>

These conciliar statements affirm the prerogative of Eastern Catholic Churches to maintain their own specific forms of the liturgy and celebrate them in accordance with their own ecclesiastical traditions. This

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<sup>54</sup> Solovey, 22.

<sup>55</sup>Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, (November 21, 1964), 5. Accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19641121\\_orientalium-ecclesiarum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_orientalium-ecclesiarum_en.html).

<sup>56</sup> *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, 6.



faculty is important for Ukrainian Catholics because it allows them to continue to use the forms of the liturgy which they have traditionally always used, especially the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. As mentioned above, the liturgy is a primary source of Mariology for Ukrainian Catholics. By protecting and encouraging the use of their form of the liturgy, the Second Vatican Council was also preserving the liturgical sources and the associated traditions which have shaped the Marian devotion of Ukrainian Catholics.

The Eastern Catholic Churches use a Byzantine Liturgy which follows the liturgy used in Constantinople. This liturgy is used with one of two *anaphoras* (equivalent to the Eucharistic Prayer in the Latin liturgy.) One of these is that of Saint Basil, which originates from the Church of Caesarea in Cappadocia. The other is that of Saint John Chrysostom, from Antioch. Because of the use of two *anaphoras*, reference is made to the Liturgy of Saint Basil or the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, although they are forms of the same liturgy. There is also a Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (attributed without historical basis to Pope Gregory the Great).<sup>57</sup>

The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is the most used form and is employed throughout the liturgical year. The Liturgy of Saint Basil is used on the eves of Christmas and Epiphany, January 1 (the Feast of Saint Basil), the first five Sundays of Lent, Holy Thursday, and Holy Saturday. On Mondays through Fridays in Lent, the Liturgy of the Presanctified gifts (which has no *anaphora*) is used.<sup>58</sup>

The texts of the liturgy used in the Eastern Rite Churches can be documented historically from at least the eighth century.<sup>59</sup> The liturgies that exist today are the product of centuries of further development. Additional ceremonies and new prayers have been added. The liturgy therefore cannot be construed as being the work of a single saint or writer. For example, textual evidence suggests that St John Chrysostom wrote some portions of the liturgy attributed to him, while other portions derive from other sources.<sup>60</sup>

The meaning of this liturgical development for the Ukrainian Churches is that by the year 988 and the coming of Christianity to Kievan

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<sup>57</sup> The author is indebted to Father David Petras for his written comments which clarified the usage of the Byzantine Liturgy in the Ukrainian Catholic Churches.

<sup>58</sup> Stephen C. Gulovich, *Windows Westward: Rome, Russia, Reunion*. (New York: The Declan X. McMullen Company, 1947), 47-48

<sup>59</sup> *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, 6.

<sup>60</sup> *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, 7. Salovey, 53-65, provides a summary of the history of the development of the Eastern Liturgy,

Rus, the Slavs there received a liturgy which was already the product of centuries of development. That liturgy is strongly influenced by the mysticism of the Eastern Church and these qualities appealed to the Slavic temperament. From this beginning, the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom eventually became the primary source for Mariological beliefs in Ukraine.

### **4.3 The Liturgy as a Sources for Mariology**

Because the liturgy maintains a strong connection between Christology and Mariology, it is the primary and even exclusive source for Mariology in the Eastern Church.<sup>61</sup> In this regard, Alexander Schmemmann indicates four ways in which the Eastern liturgy expresses Mariological beliefs and praxis: Mariological prayers, Mariological feasts, Mariological iconography, and Mariological devotions.<sup>62</sup> These liturgical sources, however, can never be the basis for a systematic Mariology. Instead, they provide Marian content, rather than dogmatic assertions, which should be contemplated in mystery:

They are treated with such reverence that there has always been a reluctance to somehow take hold of their Marian content in a manner that organizes it into a logical dogmatic structure. The East prefers to contemplate in mystery, rather than to analyze and seek understanding. For this reason, a systematic presentation of Eastern Mariology has traditionally been undesirable and hardly possible.<sup>63</sup>

The following discussion of the Marian presence in the liturgy has been developed in this spirit of contemplation without seeking systematic dogmatic understanding. Since the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is the most common form, it will serve as a primary example of how the Eastern liturgy is a source for Mariology and a means of preserving a Marian presence.<sup>64</sup> The accompanying chart presents an outline of this

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<sup>61</sup>Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 27

<sup>62</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, "Mary in the Eastern Liturgy" (Marian Studies 19 Article 10, 2-9-1968), 7.

<sup>63</sup> Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 28.

<sup>64</sup> A significant point for the current study is that the Liturgies of St. Basil and the Presanctified Gifts do not provide any additional any Marian content beyond what is contained in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. Conversation between the author and Father David Petras, September 15, 2020.

liturgy and a framework for understanding the context of the Mariological references in the liturgy. The following commentary will first present the Marian references. Two of these references, the *Tropar before the Icon of Mary* and the *Monogenes Hymn*, are then discussed in more detail to illustrate how they are sources for the Mariological beliefs of Eastern Catholics.

#### **4.4 Outline of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom<sup>65</sup>**

##### **Preparatory part**

The Proskomidia

##### **Didactic Part: Liturgy of the Word**

###### *Introduction*

Preliminary Prayers

The Litany of Peace

Antiphons

###### *Enarxis*

Little Entrance

Troparion and

###### Kontakion

Trisagion

Prokimenon

Epistle

Gospel

The Insistent Litany

The Litany of the

Catechumens

##### **Sacrificial Part: The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

###### *Before the Anaphora*

Prayers for the Faithful

The Cherubic Hymn

The Great Entrance

The Litany of the

Offertory

Profession of Faith:

Creed

###### *The Anaphora*

The Pre-Sanctus

The Sanctus (Hymn of Victory)

Narration

Words of Institution

Anamnesis

Epiklesis

Commemorations

###### *Precommunion*

The Litany of

###### Supplication

The Lord's Prayer

###### *The Communion*

Elevation of the Lamb

Fraction of the Lamb

The Communion of the

Celebrant

The Communion of the

Faithful

Transfer of the Sacred

Species

###### *The Postcommunion*

Thanksgiving

The Dismissal and

Blessing

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<sup>65</sup> Taken from *The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom – Ruthenian Form* (St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, MD: The Liturgical Press, 1961), 3-4. The outline was updated based on written comments provided by Father David Petras,

#### 4.5 References to Mary in the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

References to Mary occur throughout the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. For example, at the beginning of the liturgy, before the incensing of the iconostasis, a *tropar* is offered in private by the priest and deacon to the icon Mary. The text of this prayer is examined in the next section.

Mary is venerated at the end of every series of hymns in a prayer called a *Theotokion*. This practice is applicable to all segments of the liturgy, whether daily, weekly, yearly or sanctoral. “Whatever the theme of any particular celebration, its last word, its seal will always be the *Theotokos* Mary - the Virgin Mother of God.”<sup>66</sup> The *Theotokia* take on a different form when the cross is venerated, such as on Wednesdays and Fridays, when instead the *Stavrotheotokion* is recited, a prayer which reflects on Mary as she stands beneath the cross.<sup>67</sup>

Examples of *Theotokia* during the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom are found:

- a. After the series of "Lord have mercy" petitions – “Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.”<sup>68</sup> Repeated after the First Antiphon<sup>69</sup> during the little entrance.<sup>70</sup> and after the petitions of offering.<sup>71</sup>
- b. Response to petitions during First Antiphon (four times): “Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.”<sup>72</sup>
- c. During the Hymn of the Incarnation (also referred to as *Monogenes Hymn*):” O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, Who, being immortal, deigned for our salvation to become

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<sup>66</sup> Schmemmann, *Liturgy*, 7.

<sup>67</sup> Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 27.

<sup>68</sup> Ukrainians use *The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* (The Synod of the Hierarchy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1988). References here are from *The Divine Liturgy of Our Father St. John Chrysostom* (Pittsburg: Byzantine Seminary Press, 1965), 7.

<sup>69</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 10.

<sup>70</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 13.

<sup>71</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 35

<sup>72</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 8-9.

incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, and became man without change.”<sup>73</sup>

d. At the conclusion of the prayer of the Thrice Holy: “through the prayers of the holy Mother of God and all the saints, who have pleased you from the beginning.”<sup>74</sup>

e. During the recitation of the Nicene Creed: “Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin, and became man.”<sup>75</sup>

f. During the eucharistic sacrifice, the priest prays: “Especially for our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary.” The choir sings in response: “It is truly proper to glorify you, who have borne God, the ever-blessed and immaculate and the Mother of God. More honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare and more glorious than the Seraphim, who, a virgin, gave birth to God the Word, you, truly the Mother of God, we magnify.”<sup>76</sup>

g. During the concluding prayer: “Christ our true God, risen from the dead through the prayers of His most holy Mother, and of the holy glorious and illustrious apostles ... will have mercy on us and will save us, for He is gracious and loves mankind.”<sup>77</sup>

These examples of the *Theotokion* indicate the importance of the personal qualities of the *Theotokos* (especially holiness and purity) and the Divine Maternity. These Marian references are the liturgical source for Eastern Marian devotion. To illustrate this point, the following discussion will look at the content of two of these prayers, the *Tropar* before the Icon of Mary and *Monogenes* Hymn.

#### **4.6 Tropar before the Icon of Mary**

The Eastern Liturgy makes extensive use of icons. The Second Ecumenical Council of Nicaea II in 787 “sanctioned the tradition according to which venerable and holy images, done in color, mosaics and all other appropriate materials, of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ as well as those of Mary Immaculate, the Holy *Theotokos*, the honorable

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<sup>73</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 12.

<sup>74</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 17

<sup>75</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 36-37.

<sup>76</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 43-44

<sup>77</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 60-61.

angels and all holy and pious people are to be exposed in the holy churches of God, on sacred vessels and vestments, on the walls and on the floors, in the houses and in the streets."<sup>78</sup>

Pope John Paul II wrote about the importance of icons in the Eastern Churches:

In particular, the Greek and Slav Churches . . . considered the veneration of icons as an integral part of the liturgy, like the celebration of the Word. Just as the reading of material books allows the hearing of the living word of the Lord, so also the showing of the painted icon allows those who contemplate it to accede to the mystery of salvation by the sense of sight.<sup>79</sup>

The iconoclastic controversy and its resolution provide the theological background for the use of icons by the Byzantine churches. The East recognized that the decision at Nicaea II was founded on a development in appreciation for the mystery of the Incarnation and how the divine presence is communicated through mediation to human beings. Icons represent saints who have been transformed by grace into their eternal form and therefore icons could be used to depict theological meaning and make saints present in a real manner.<sup>80</sup>

An example of the use of icons in the liturgy is the prayers before the iconostasis. Every iconostasis in a Byzantine church has a prominent icon of Christ and his Mother. Prior to the beginning of the Liturgy, a deacon incenses these icons. The deacon also bows to acknowledge the congregation and offers them incense as well. This ritual is a form of a very old Eastern practice, in which guests arriving at a house would be offered greetings and perfumes. This initial act of hospitality includes a reverent acknowledgment of Mary's presence when her icon is incensed.<sup>81</sup>

A prayer, called a *tropar*, is offered by the priest to the icons of Christ and Mary. For the Eastern Church, *troparia* offered to these icons

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<sup>78</sup> Henry Denzinger, *Sources of Catholic Dogma* tr. Roy J. Defarrari. (Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire: Loreto Publications, 2010), 121-123.

<sup>79</sup> John Paul II, *Duodecimum Saeculum, Apostolic Letter* to the Episcopate of the Catholic Church on the Occasion of the 1200th Anniversary of the Second Council of Nicaea, *December 4, 1987*, 10. Accessed at:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/1987/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_19871204\\_duodecimum-saeculum.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1987/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19871204_duodecimum-saeculum.html)

<sup>80</sup> Kucharek, 229-230.

<sup>81</sup> Kucharek, 327-328,

are especially powerful, since they are offered in the very presence of the Savior and the Mother of God.<sup>82</sup> Penitential in nature, these prayers are part of priest's preparation for the celebration of the liturgy and indicate the sentiments that a priest should have: recognition of the necessity of atonement for his sins and the sins of the people, and confidence in the mercy of God.<sup>83</sup>

The *tropar* to Mary is part of this series of prayers which the priest recites before the iconostasis prior to the liturgy itself. Its text is as follows:

*You are the font of mercy, O mother of God, bestow your compassion on us. Look down upon the people who have sinned; show your power as always. Because we are placing our hope in you, we cry aloud to you, Hail, as once did Gabriel the leader of bodiless beings.*<sup>84</sup>

The *Tropar* to Mary has a specific orientation towards her role as the Mother of God and the power which accompanies the Divine Maternity, rather than towards her role as the mother of all the faithful. This emphasis on Mary as the powerful *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa* has special meaning for Slavic Byzantines:

Her great power stems from her position as the Mother of God. Power, if possessed by a friend, inspires confidence and hope: "Show your power as always." Unswerving confidence in her power makes her a logical choice as protectress. For the ancient Slav, Mary's victory giving power was not merely spiritual, but expended to the physical . . .<sup>85</sup>

This liturgical affirmation of Mary's power through her Divine Maternity provides another example of how the liturgy is a source for Mariology. The power of Mary expressed in her *tropar* indicates that she exercises an active force of protection. This protection has had an

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<sup>82</sup> Kucharek, 230.

<sup>83</sup> Solovey, 113-114. Salaville, 301, also describes the preparatory character of this prayer,

<sup>84</sup> Kucharek, 220.

<sup>85</sup> Kucharek, 355.



especially deep influence on practical aspects of Marian devotion for Ukrainian Catholics because of their difficult history.

For example, the role of the *Bohoroditsa* as protectress explains why she was adopted as the patron of the Ukrainian nation from the very beginnings of Christianity in Kievan Rus. For the Slavic temperament, it is self-evident and natural that the powerful *Bohoroditsa* should occupy such a place as a protectress of the nation. In that role, the power of Mary extends readily both to her physical protection of individual believers and to her protection of the nation during military operations. Mary's role as protector, especially in connection with the military, will be explored in later sections of this study.

#### **4.7 The Monogenes Hymn**

During the liturgy itself, after the second antiphon, the *Monogenes* hymn is sung by the cantor and/or people. This hymn includes the affirmation "O only begotten son and word of God, though immortal, you deigned for our salvation to take flesh of the holy mother of God and ever Virgin Mary; and without undergoing change, you became man."<sup>86</sup> This portion of the hymn, with its strong doctrinal content of a specifically anti-Nestorian character, affirms what the Church believes regarding both the two natures of Christ and the closely related theological point that Mary is truly the *Theotokos*, the Mother of God.<sup>87</sup>

Mary's Divine Maternity is closely related to the doctrine of the two natures of Christ. The reference to Mary herself in the hymn therefore has an important Christological point - since Christ took flesh from Mary, the Incarnation was not possible unless Mary was truly the Mother of God. In doing so, the liturgical text is that demonstrating one way in which Christology relates to Mariology for the Eastern Church:

The Mariological connection affirms the reality of the Incarnation.<sup>88</sup> The theological legacy of the Council of Ephesus is in evidence. "The *Monogenes* hymn also clearly states that "Christ became incarnate . . . thereby contradicting the Nestorian heresy. The hymn emphatically calls Mary the mother of God (*Theotokos*); yet, she never ceased being a virgin."<sup>89</sup> At the same time, the *Monogenes* affirms the

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<sup>86</sup> Kucharek, 372.

<sup>87</sup> Kucharek, 374-375.

<sup>88</sup> Salaville, 302.

<sup>89</sup> Kucharek, 375.

two natures of Christ, since it “refutes Nestorianism and Monophysitism.”<sup>90</sup> The hymn “contains profound truths concerning Christ’s nature, Incarnation, death and resurrection” and is “a resume of all the dogmas regarding Jesus Christ.”<sup>91</sup>

The doctrinal content of the *Monogenes* hymn states the orthodox Catholic understanding of, and the relationship between, the two natures in Christ, the Incarnation, Mary as the Mother of God, and the Redemption. Nevertheless, a difference between the Eastern and the Western liturgy is evident here. The Eastern liturgy is more concerned with providing a fuller exposition of doctrinal content than the Western liturgy. For example, this additional layer of detail shows a greater awareness of the doctrinal development which occurred during the early ecumenical councils. Similarly, there is a greater sensitivity to need to refute the Nestorian heresy. since that heresy took place in the East. The prominent place Mary has in this affirmation of both the Incarnation and the meaning of the two natures in Christ is an important example of how the liturgy is a source for the Mariology of the Eastern church – for Christ to be our Savior, He must be truly God and truly man; that requires the Incarnation, which can only take place if Mary is truly the Mother of God.<sup>92</sup>

For Ukrainian Catholics, the affirmation of Mary as *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa* in the *Monogenes* hymn, is especially important. The Divine Maternity, expressed in the title *Bohoroditsa*, is what makes Mary a powerful intercessor and protectress<sup>93</sup>. The *Bohoroditsa*’s power is the reason Ukrainian Catholics rely on her assistance.

#### **4.8 Marian Feasts**

Another example of the Marian presence in the Eastern Liturgy is its extensive cycle of Marian feasts. Four of these feasts belong to the important liturgical group of twelve “major” feasts:

- a. The Nativity of the Virgin (September 8)
- b. The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21)

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<sup>90</sup> Solovey, 174.

<sup>91</sup> Solovey, 174.

<sup>92</sup> Kucharek, 372-375.

<sup>93</sup> The quote from Kucharek, 230, found on pages 75-76, expresses this point incisively.

- c. The Annunciation (March 25)
- d. The Dormition (August 15)

The Feast of the Purification (February 2) also has strong Marian content, although it is not considered a Marian feast. Besides these major feasts, there is also a series of lesser Mariological feasts which includes:

- a. The protection of the Virgin (October 1, observed October 14 in Ukraine accordance with the Gregorian calendar)
- b. The Synaxis of the Theotokos (December 26)
- c. The Conception of Mary (December 9).<sup>94</sup>

The celebration of these feasts is common among the Eastern Churches and is an important way of meeting the Eastern concern to maintain a strong historical continuity in the liturgy with the past.<sup>95</sup> What is unique for Ukrainian Catholics is that they attach much more importance to the feast of the Protection of the Virgin than other Eastern Christians. The Ukrainian Marian Collection easily documents this phenomenon. since it contains dozens of articles, images, and other materials which provide explanation and commentary for this feast. No other Marian feast receives attention in such detail.

The feast is associated with the *Pokrov*, Mary's protecting veil or *omophorion*. In the case of Ukraine, the day is a state holiday of both religious and national significance.<sup>96</sup> The feast is also very popular among Ukrainian military veterans.<sup>97</sup> The feast of the Protection of the Virgin is

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<sup>94</sup> Schmemmann, *Liturgy*, 7.

<sup>95</sup> Chaillot, 123.

<sup>96</sup> The day of the feast, October 14, has always been an important liturgical feast which is celebrated with other popular festivities. The Ukrainian government made the feast a national holiday in 2014 with the title "Day of the Defender of Ukraine." See the news report which describe this declaration of an official national holiday at <http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/10/15/changing-the-date-of-defenders-day-breaks-ukraine-free-from-the-soviet-embrace/#:~:text=On%20October%2014%2C%20Ukraine%E2%80%99s%20President%20Petro%20Poroshenko%20proclaimed,the%20Day%20of%20Defender%20of%20Ukraine%20http%3A%2F%2Ft.co%2FfBblrHyZHZ%20pic.twitter.com%2F6m1Liz4foI>. Although the Ukrainian government recognized the religious significance of the holiday, the renaming of the holiday (it was previously called "Defender of the Fatherland Day" by the Soviet government) was a means for Ukraine to assert its political liberation and independence from its past as part of the Soviet Union.

<sup>97</sup> Muzyczka, *Ukraine*, 509.

called literally “the feast of the *Pokrov*.” This terminology indicates that, for Ukrainian Catholics, “*Pokrov*” is interchangeable with “protection” both in semantic usage and in liturgical and devotional praxis.

From a theological perspective, the contents of the specific liturgies of the Marian feasts do not add significantly to the Mariology of the Eastern Churches. The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom remains the primary source for Mariology and Marian devotion. An exception is the feast of Mary’s Conception.<sup>98</sup> As Kucharek points out, the liturgy of the feast of Mary’s Conception on December 9 emphasizes her immaculate nature, as in the following excerpts

- a. *This day, or fateful, from saintly parents begins to take being the spotless Lamb, the most pure tabernacle, Mary*
- b. *She is conceived... The only immaculate one*
- c. *Having conceived the most pure dove*<sup>99</sup>

These liturgical citations indicate that the Eastern liturgy affirms that Mary was immaculate from the moment of her conception. This is an indication that the Eastern Churches, do not have an issue with the content of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Ukrainian Catholics, of course, accept the dogma as part of their Catholic identity and tradition. The immaculate nature of the *Bohoroditsa* is frequently expressed in the materials of the Ukrainian Marian Collection through the use of the title “*Prichista*,” the intensified Ukrainian adjective which means “Most-Pure.”

As the foundational principle of Eastern Marian doctrine and devotion, the Eastern understanding of the Divine Maternity in the liturgy is an example of the simplicity of Eastern Marian devotion. In accordance with this simplicity, the Divine Maternity naturally becomes the source for the *Bohoroditsa*’s power and protection. One can say without exaggeration that in theological terms, the Divine Maternity explains every aspect of Marian doctrinal belief and devotional praxis.

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<sup>98</sup> This point was verified during a conversation of the present author with Father Daniel Petras, September 15, 2020.

<sup>99</sup> Kucharek, 355.

## Chapter 5: Theological Characteristics of Ukrainian Marian Devotion

The Eastern liturgy is the primary source for Ukrainian Catholic belief in the Divine Maternity, the *Bohoroditsa's* power as an intercessor, and her role as a protectress. These qualities are prominent in the threefold theme of this dissertation of *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov*, and Liberation. The rest of this chapter will develop how these themes are expressed in Ukrainian Marian devotion in the light of their source in the liturgy.

### 5.1 Differences between Western and Eastern Marian Devotion

Ukrainian Marian devotion differs in important ways from devotion in the West. At least three historical factors have produced this differentiation. First, Kievan Rus received Christianity in its Eastern form, with all the mystical and contemplative elements that distinguish Eastern Christianity from its Western counterpart. Secondly, the strong influence of the Slavic temperament, permeated by a long historical experience of suffering and oppression, has continuously driven Ukrainians to seek the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*. Finally, as Christianity spread in Kievan Rus, it was enculturated in a land which was pagan. Inevitably, certain pagan elements influenced the practice of Christianity among the Ukrainians. These factors will be explained during this chapter.

Understanding the Slavic temperament is essential for understanding the unique expressions of Marian devotion in Ukrainian spirituality. The native Slavic temperament is “easy-going” and not too concerned with the practical.<sup>100</sup> Three important theological aspects of this temperament are “an inherent preoccupation with an eschatological outlook,” an “exceptionally developed sense of one’s own sinfulness,” and “an equally developed sense of one’s own helplessness.”<sup>101</sup>

The combination of historical factors and preoccupation with sinfulness and helplessness has produced a form of Marian devotion which differs from the devotion of the West due to the following highly developed and distinguishing characteristics:

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<sup>100</sup> Stephen Gulovich, *Mary in the Eastern Church* (Marian Library Publications, Marian Reprints 045, 1955), 7.

<sup>101</sup> Averintsev.618.

1. A *laudatory* character which spontaneously praises the holiness and perfection of the *Bohoroditsa* . This praise recognizes that certain theological truths regarding her are a logically self-evident consequence of the Incarnation and the Divine Maternity.
2. A great sensitivity for the *maternal pity* which the *Bohoroditsa* feels for her suffering and errant children, who are engulfed in a feeling of personal need and helplessness
3. A strong appreciation for the *power* the *Bohoroditsa* possesses because of her Divine Maternity and for the active way she exercises that power to intercede for believers and, especially, to protect them.<sup>102</sup>

The Christological orientation of Eastern Mariology determines the nature of Eastern Marian devotion and how it differs from Marian devotion in the West. In the East, there is a highly developed sense that what Christ possesses by nature, Mary possesses by grace. This notion does not mean that Mary possesses the divine nature. Rather, since Christ is God and worthy of all praise, there is consequently no limit to the praise which may be given to Mary as the grace-filled *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa*.<sup>103</sup>

The Eastern appreciation for Mary as a grace-filled creature who reflects divine attributes infuses how she is venerated in the liturgy and Marian devotion. The best-known example of such veneration is from the liturgy, which speaks of the *Bohoroditsa* as “more honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim.”<sup>104</sup> This liturgical example demonstrates an essential contrast between Eastern and Western Marian devotion. “Unlike the Western, the Eastern Marian devotion is primarily laudatory and only secondarily, one might say indirectly, supplicatory.”<sup>105</sup>

## **5.2 The Laudatory Character of Eastern Marian Devotion**

This laudatory character results from a Christological connection which has always made Marian devotion relevant for Eastern Christians. Even in the contemporary theological climate, which in the West can be

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<sup>102</sup> This presentation of the characteristics of Slavic Marian devotion is based on the summary at Averintsev, 621-622.

<sup>103</sup> Gulovich, 7.

<sup>104</sup> *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 44.

<sup>105</sup> Gulovich, 7. *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*

indifferent to Marian dogma and devotion, Mary retains a central role in Eastern liturgy and devotion:

Something is expressed in Mariology, which is fundamental to the Christian faith itself, to the Christian experience of the world and of human life . . . Since Mariology has always been conceived and understood from the perspective of Christology, there is no need for special revelation regarding Mary. The fact that she was the mother of Christ is sufficient to secure her an important place in Eastern devotional praxis and theological reflection. The Christological connection is enough to make Mary a self-evident and essential “dimension” of the Gospel itself.<sup>106</sup>

The simplicity of the “self-evident” dimension of the Eastern orientation in Marian devotion appeals to the Slavic mystical temperament, which is not preoccupied with theological discourse or demonstrations. The logical connection is straightforward - the *Bohoroditsa* is the Mother of God; consequently, it is self-evident that she is worthy of the highest praise. No further biblical exposition or proof-texting is necessary. This self-evident dimension of the *Bohoroditsa*'s virtues has an important corollary - as the Mother of God, it is self-evident that Mary is a powerful protectress. This corollary explains, for example, the great veneration for her *Pokrov* among Ukrainian Catholics.

Marian feasts developed in a Christological context as the Eastern Church reflected on the meaning of the Incarnation. This connection between liturgy and Incarnation defines Mary's place in the liturgy. Eventually even Marian devotions would also preserve this Christological connection.<sup>107</sup>

The laudatory character of Eastern Marian devotion, present in the liturgy and devotion, manifests the “real spirit of the Byzantine tradition.” Historical memory is a factor as well. Instinctive to the Eastern temperament is a deep appreciation for the great victory won by the forces of orthodoxy at the Council of Ephesus, by which the Marian title of *Theotokos* was affirmed and secured.<sup>108</sup>

The East simply feels no need for restraint in celebrating Mary as *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa*, in sharp contrast to the more restrained

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<sup>106</sup> Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 26.

<sup>107</sup> Schmemmann, *Mariology*, 27.

<sup>108</sup> Denzinger, 50. The writings in the Ukrainian Marian Collection frequently refer to the Council of Ephesus.

approach to Marian devotion which is typical in the West. This laudatory and exuberant character, gives Eastern Marian devotion a pronounced contemplative character, which contrasts with the more active character of Western devotion.<sup>109</sup>

This distinction between the contemplative and the active, between the laudatory and the supplicatory, does not mean that petitions to the *Theotokos* are lacking in the Marian devotional prayers of the East. Like the West, the East does not hesitate to invoke Mary's assistance. As the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection abundantly demonstrate, Ukrainian Catholics have a strong appreciation for the effectiveness of Mary's protection and frequently take recourse to the safety of her intercession and her *Pokrov*. Such petitioning, however, does not change the essential nature of their Marian devotion, which is satisfied to give itself over completely to exuberant and unbounded praise of Mary.<sup>110</sup>

### 5.3 Marian Titles

The laudatory exuberance of Eastern Marian devotion is expressed in the titles under which she is invoked. For Ukrainians, the fundamental and most important of Mary's titles is *Bohoroditsa*., the Ukrainian word which is equivalent to *Theotokos*. As described previously, the term is a compound of the common Slavic roots *Bog*, meaning God and *rod*, meaning birth or parent. Semantically, *Bohoroditsa* parallels *Theotokos* in expressing that Mary is the one who bears God and in doing so encompasses the person of the Son of God, but not the divine nature.

In its praise of the *Bohoroditsa* in liturgy and devotion, the East recognizes all her privileges which are present in Western devotion. Nevertheless, the attention of the East is fixed primarily on the Divine Maternity under the title *Theotokos*. As a result, the equivalent title *Bohoroditsa* has been transformed into a proper name for Mary.<sup>111</sup>

The title of *Bohoroditsa* is frequently used in the writings of the Ukrainian Marian Collection in a wide variety of contexts. This usage has a superficial similarity with the way the term "Mother of God" is used in English, since both express Mary's Divine Maternity. There is a subtle difference, however. Reflecting the Slavic perception of Mary's power, *Bohoroditsa* expresses a much stronger and immediate awareness of

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<sup>109</sup> Gulovich, 7-8.

<sup>110</sup> Gulovich, 9.

<sup>111</sup> Gulovich, 5



Mary's Spiritual Maternity as she actively exercises it for the protection of her spiritual children.

Mary's other titles are a consequence of her Divine Maternity.<sup>112</sup> Slavic believers are deeply aware of the special dignity and unique holiness of the *Bohoroditsa*, qualities which have been dogmatically affirmed by conciliar decree at Ephesus:

She is the Ever-Virgin . . . and the most pure . . . free from any taint of sin. Her character is expressed in a line from the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom: " more venerable than the Cherubim and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim". For [Slavic] believers, these aspects of Mariology are found in the ancient traditions of the Greek and Syrian Church Fathers, and, above all, in the title "*Theotokos*" ( or "*Bohoroditsa*") which was affirmed in 431 during the Council of Ephesus.<sup>113</sup>

This awareness of Marian holiness is readily observable in the material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Two titles predominate.<sup>114</sup> One frequently used Marian title is присвятий (*prisvyati*), equivalent to the Greek *παναγία*, (most holy). The basic adjective, святий (*svyati*), meaning holy, is intensified with the prefix при- (*pri*). This intensified compound is stronger than the standard superlative adjectival construction in the Ukrainian language and indicates not just the most or the greatest, but the greatest degree possible. The intensifying prefix expresses that her holiness is ontological.<sup>115</sup> The titles of "All-Holy" and "All-Pure" are by far the most common Maria titles in Ukrainian Catholic usage. They recur constantly, a feature which is typical of Eastern Marian devotion.<sup>116</sup>

Kucharek explains this strong appreciation of the *Bohoroditsa*'s holiness in the following way: "She is the supreme example of synergy, the cooperation between God's will and man's freedom. Forever respecting the free will of man, God became incarnate through the free consent of the person he chose as his mother. She could have refused but she did not."<sup>117</sup> This freedom of Mary to choose to become the Mother of God is closely associated with her role as the New Eve. Mary repairs the

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<sup>112</sup> Kucharek, 354

<sup>113</sup> Averintsev, 614

<sup>114</sup> Chailly, 122.

<sup>115</sup> Averintsev, 620 describes this ontological meaning of the *pri*- prefix when discussing the related adjective referring to the *Bohoroditsa*'s purity.

<sup>116</sup> Chailly, 122.

<sup>117</sup> Kucharek, 354.

damage created by Eve's disobedience. The Byzantine understanding of the New Eve is grounded in the writings of the Church Fathers, such as Irenaeus and Justin Martin, who describe how Mary unities the knot of Eve's disobedience. While death came through Eve, life comes through Mary.<sup>118</sup>

Perhaps most telling for Eastern Marian spirituality is a quote from Father Nicholas Cabasilas: "The Incarnation of the Word was not only the work of the Father, of his power, and of the Spirit . . . but also the work of the will and the faith of the Virgin . . . Just as God became incarnate voluntarily, so he wished that his mother should bear him freely and with her consent."<sup>119</sup> In this view of the Incarnation, Mary is not merely a recipient of Christ after she gives her consent during the Annunciation. She actively participates in the Incarnation through her faith and will. This emphasis on Mary's activity as the divine mother correlates well with the Slavic understanding of Mary's Divine Maternity, which has a power to extend outwards and be expressed in her Spiritual Maternity through her active role as a protector.

The second frequent title refers to Mary's immaculate nature. The writings in the Ukrainian Marian Collection use a prefixed form of the adjective чистий (chisti), meaning "pure" or "clean" to produce the word причистий. This term is equivalent to the English "immaculate" or "most pure." The use of the intensifying prefix again expresses the greatest degree possible. Mary is not merely the purest of all God's creatures; she possesses the greatest degree of purity possible:

The most usual epithet of the [Bohoroditsa]. . . that of precistaya, means literally "most pure" or even "more than pure." This expresses an idea of purity which is not merely moral but ontological. The designation of Mary as the New Eve ... implies that Our Lady is unfallen as Eve was before the Fall, without any stain of Original Sin.<sup>120</sup>

#### **5.4 The Immaculate Conception**

Discussion of the immaculateness of the *Bohoroditsa* raises the question of whether the Immaculate Conception is accepted in Byzantine

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<sup>118</sup> Kucharek, 354.

<sup>119</sup> Kucharek, 355 and David Petras. "Mary in Eastern Liturgical Tradition. *Liturgical Ministry* 6 (Winter, 1997), 14 both cite this quotation from Cabasilas.

<sup>120</sup> Averintsev, 620.

theology and devotion. As one example among many scholars, Gulovich has examined the testimony of the Church Fathers and medieval writers and concludes that “the [Eastern] Church as such is not and never was opposed to this dogma.<sup>121</sup> Similarly, Kucharek, in discussing the title “Immaculate” states: “No sin, no fault, not even the slightest, ever marred the perfect sanctity of this masterpiece of God’s creation. For hundreds of years, the Byzantine Church has believed this, prayed and honored Mary in this way. Centuries of sacred tradition stand behind this title.”<sup>122</sup>

The constant belief of the Byzantine Church in Mary’s immaculate nature means that the Byzantine church has always accepted the essential content of the doctrine of Immaculate Conception, even though it was never formally defined there. The Eastern Church maintained this belief even during periods, such as during the 12th and 13th centuries, during which the Immaculate Conception was disputed among Western theologians.<sup>123</sup> There was even a period of time in the 18th century when belief of the Immaculate Conception was required in order for seminarians to enroll in the most important Ukrainian seminary in Kiev.<sup>124</sup> Dmitri, the Bishop of Rostov in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, defends the Immaculate Conception when discussing the Feast of Saint Anne in his *Menaion*.<sup>125</sup>

Opposition to the Immaculate Conception arose in the Orthodox East only after its formal definition by Pius IX in 1854. Even then, the objection was not based on any disagreement regarding Mary’s holiness. The real theological issue was that the Orthodox church did not believe that the pope had the authority to make a doctrinal definition which, in their view, could only be made by a Church council.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Stephen Gulovich, “The Immaculate Conception in the Eastern Churches” *Marian Studies*, Vol. 5 (1954), 183. A large literature exists about the Immaculate Conception in the Eastern Churches and this study does not propose to engage with it. The essential point for this study is that the Eastern Churches have always accepted Mary’s purity and freedom from sin and those Marian qualities are venerated in Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion.

<sup>122</sup> Kucharek, 355.

<sup>123</sup> Kucharek, 356.

<sup>124</sup> Averintsev, 619.

<sup>125</sup> Martin Jugie, *L’Immaculée Conception dans l’Écriture Sainte et dans la Tradition Orientale* (Rome: Academia Mariana, 1952), 412-413.

<sup>126</sup> Kucharek, 357

## 5.5 Maternal Pity and the Helplessness of the Believer

Another aspect of the Slavic temperament which influences Marian devotion is the notion of an "ideal woman". The Slavic conception of the ideal woman reflects an ideal of maternity, rather than eroticism. The essential characteristics of the ideal woman are " a mother full of loving compassion and an all-forgiving tenderness."<sup>127</sup>

There is an Old Testament background to such a notion, in that the plural Hebrew noun *rahamin*, meaning womb, can also mean " mercy" or "pity." The term is translated in the Slavic liturgy as "balgooutrobie", a compound of "blago", meaning goodness, and "outraba", meaning womb.<sup>128</sup> This translation is an example of how the Slavic temperament associates mercy and pity with the feminine and the maternal image of the womb.

Mercy and pity are also divine attributes. In the Slavic view, an essential aspect of the divine nature is " maternal pity." The biblical basis for this concept of God can be found, for example, in Isa. 66:12-13 - " For thus says the Lord ... As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you." This maternal pity is expressed in Russian in the term "oumilenie," which is equivalent to the Greek *eleos*, with the same semantic root as the expression "Kyrie eleison."<sup>129</sup>

Since the *Bohoroditsa* possesses by grace what Christ, as God, possesses by nature, she too, as the most grace-filled of all God's creatures, is full of maternal pity for human beings. Her maternal pity evokes a sense of helplessness on the part of the believers, who are aware of their sinfulness. "No [Slav] has an illusion that he can be saved by his own virtue, by his own efforts, help is badly needed."<sup>130</sup>

Recognition of a personal need for help encourages recourse to Marian intercession and protection. Such recourse to the help of the *Bohoroditsa* is accomplished without any direct or specific references to our needs and requests. Instead, Mary is praised in such a manner that human dependence on her is made evident:

The Blessed Mother is familiar with the dictum "nobilitas obligat" and all that it implies. Therefore, the East reasons, if we ceaselessly and generously sing the glories of Mary as contrasted

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<sup>127</sup> Averintsev, 611-612.

<sup>128</sup> Averintsev, 612.

<sup>129</sup> Averintsev, 612-613.

<sup>130</sup> Averintsev, 618.

with our own misery, her own greatness – not to mention her boundless motherly love – will compel her to take into account our lowliness, our misery, our needs, without our directly pointing at any particular need.<sup>131</sup>

Enculturation is another factor in the combination of Marian devotion and the Slavic temperament. When Christianity came to Kievan Rus, it was enculturated in a land which was pagan. Inevitably, certain pagan elements, as well as the deep mystical character of the Slavic temperament, influenced the practice of Christianity among the Slavs. Appreciation of the spiritual maternity Christianized the pagan reverence for the human motherhood of the Earth. The devotional consequence is the “the image of a new earth,” which is “morally sensitive to the transgressions of sinners and at the same time patient and prepared to forgive.”<sup>132</sup>

This enculturation of a pagan notion of the earth gives Slavs a special appreciation for the *Bohoroditsa*’s maternal characteristics. She understands human weaknesses and patiently forgives them, as she protects her children and guides them through life’s challenges and difficulties. This conception of a sensitive and patient mother is therefore an essential aspect in the Slavic apprehension of the Spiritual Maternity.

## 5.6 Summary

This chapter has developed the basic characteristics of Eastern Marian devotion and demonstrated how they are founded on the liturgical sources which express the Eastern understanding of the Divine Maternity. These characteristics – laudatory, maternal pity, and power – are common to all of Eastern Devotion and are an example of a continuing Marian presence. Ukrainian Catholic devotion is essentially simple – it expresses praise for the *Bohoroditsa* and her powerful intercession and protection. The sense of helplessness and dependence on Marian protection is especially highly developed. This point is historically conditioned and is

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<sup>131</sup> Gulovich, *Mary in the Eastern Church*, 9.

<sup>132</sup> Averintsev, 616. Throughout his article on Marian devotion, Averintsev’s use of the adjective “Russian” can be understood as having a general application to all Slavs that were part of Russia (i.e. the Soviet Union). This includes Ukraine, so his remarks are equally relevant for Ukrainians as well as Russians.

observable in the use of icons in Ukrainian Marian devotion, which is the subject of the next chapter.

## **Chapter 6 : Icons, *Pokrov* and the Power of the *Bohoroditsa***

For Slavs, it is self-evident that the Divine Maternity is the reason that the *Bohoroditsa* is a powerful intercessor and channel of grace. The recognition of the connection between the Divine Maternity and Mary's intercessory power is an example of the simplicity of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion - everything that they believe about the *Bohoroditsa* is a consequence of the Divine Maternity. Marian intercession is understood in terms of protection and deliverance. An example is the acclamation of the Byzantine liturgy "Most holy birth giver of God, save us." Petras explains:

Here she is more than a mediator, but has the function of salvation itself. This ejaculation arises perhaps from a profound sense of faith, that the intercession of God's mother is so strong as to bring about salvation . . . this sense led the Eastern faithful to turn first to Mary in times of distress and need. She was seen as the protector of her city and her people.<sup>133</sup>

These essential Marian characteristics of power and protection are frequently expressed by the Ukrainian *diaspora*. One can easily verify this point by an examination of the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection, in which two common forms of such devotional expression are Marian icons and the image of the *Pokrov*. Both are examples of devotional practices which have special meaning for the *diaspora*. Separated from their homeland and facing a difficult life in the New World, members of the *diaspora* turned to Mary's icons for help and to her *Pokrov* for protection.

### **6.1 Marian Icons and Devotional Praxis**

The use of icons is an important example of sacred art. For the Eastern Church, icons have a legitimate role in worship and devotion. Veneration of icons is permissible and not idolatry, because icons make

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<sup>133</sup> Petras, 18. Eastern The notion of salvation through Mary in the Eastern liturgy is an expression of her role of deification; The liturgical acclamation is not an affirmation that the Theotokos is a Savior or Redeemer in the proper theological sense which can only be applied to Christ.

present what they represent. The viewers thoughts are raised towards the prototype and divine truth. As a result, the person of the prototype is venerated, and not a material object or image. Veneration of icons expresses honor and love toward God and the saints.<sup>134</sup>

Marian icons occupy a central place in devotion, because they are oriented towards the Divine Maternity. This orientation has a theological basis, since the East has never formally defined Marian dogmas other than the Divine Maternity. An example is the Dormition (equivalent to the Western term “Assumption.”) The East fully accepts that that the *Theotokos* was taken body and soul into heaven after the end of her earthly life. This event, however, is full of eschatological and anthropological secrets which the East prefers to leave hidden and unexplored. As a result, the Dormition “did not become in a direct way a theme for sacred art.”<sup>135</sup>

In contrast to the West, therefore, in which Mary is represented in art within a wide variety of roles - Mother of God, Immaculate Virgin, Woman of Nazareth, Mother of the Church, and so on – in the East, she is officially represented exclusively in a traditional manner as *Theotokos* or *Bohoroditsa*. Similarly, while in the West Marian art can take many forms – statues, paintings, stained glass, icons, etc. – in the East, Marian representations are primarily in the form of iconography.<sup>136</sup> For the Eastern Church, iconography has become an important and essential aspect of Mariology and icons of the *Theotokos* are an “integral” part of the Eastern Church.<sup>137</sup> The use of icons in the liturgy and devotions was confirmed by the Second Council of Nicaea in 787. Icons are a means to venerate the saints and holy ones, because "the honor rendered to the icon reaches the prototype."<sup>138</sup> Veneration of Marian icons is therefore a means of expressing the laudatory character of Eastern Marian devotion.

In the East, icons have a more important and central role in devotion than in the West. The Western Church encourages the veneration of icons because of what they represent; they are a means of orienting devotion toward a person or event in salvation history.<sup>139</sup> In the East, however, icons have a more direct and deeper significance as a channel of grace. In some mysterious and spiritual manner, the icon makes present the saint which it represents. The icon becomes a conveyor of grace which

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<sup>134</sup> Giakalis, 117-120.

<sup>135</sup> Averintsev, 619.

<sup>136</sup> Gulovich, 5.

<sup>137</sup> Schmemmann, Liturgy, 7.

<sup>138</sup> Denzinger, 121-123.

<sup>139</sup> Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Charlotte, North Carolina: Tan Books, 2009), 320-321.



purifies the world from sin and sanctifies it. More than merely a representation of a saint in heaven, an icon is “a veritable theophany, a dynamic manifestation of divine energy and work on earth.”<sup>140</sup> Icons of the *Bohoroditsa* are therefore a means of maintaining a continuing Marian presence.

## **6.2 The Theology of Icons and Marian Presence**

The theological explanation for this presence finds its source in a fundamental aspect of Eastern typology - the church building is a locus for Heaven on Earth. This idea probably originates from Gregory of Nyssa. In the centuries after his death, this idea developed into an understanding of the church building as a holy place where the triune God dwells on Earth. The divine presence is what gives icons their efficacy, because if the church is a place where God dwells on Earth, then the presence of Heaven can be found in icons as well.<sup>141</sup>

This conception of icons differs fundamentally from the way icons are understood in the West. The West views them as an aspect of devotion.<sup>142</sup> The way icons are used is purely a disciplinary matter. For Byzantines, however, the use of icons is a much more serious matter. Icons and their veneration are closely connected with doctrine, especially aspects of doctrine which relate to the Incarnation.<sup>143</sup>

The Eastern understanding of icons reflects aspects of patristic theology which were confirmed at Nicaea II. This theology finds its source in divine revelation. Two characteristics of revelation are especially important - divine accommodation to human limitations, and the Incarnation. God and divine truth are infinitely beyond human understanding. In his love and mercy, God therefore communicates with humans in ways that are accessible to their humanity, particularly the human senses, by making use of materials, objects, and aspects of daily human life. The Incarnation is the supreme example of such accommodation; the Scriptures and the Sacraments are additional examples. By means of accommodation, divine truth becomes visible,

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<sup>140</sup> Kucharek, 228-229.

<sup>141</sup> Kucharek, 229.

<sup>142</sup> Ott, 320.

<sup>143</sup> Kucharek, 229.

because God communicates His self-revelation to humans "under sanctified yet tangible and accessible forms."<sup>144</sup>

Icons are another way that divine truth becomes visible. For this reason, in the Eastern Church they have an essential pedagogical purpose as a "supreme educational instrument of universal power."<sup>145</sup> Divine truth does not change. Because they too are unchanging, icons fulfill an educational role "to guide one to saving truth"<sup>146</sup> In her teaching, the Eastern Church does not merely provide information, but makes that teaching accessible through the senses.<sup>147</sup> By providing visible representations of divine truths, icons accomplish this making-visible at its most fundamental level through the sense of sight.<sup>148</sup> In their teaching role, icons possess a mystagogic aspect of raising the thoughts of the viewer towards God and creating the desire to praise Him.<sup>149</sup>

For the faithful, the mystagogic character of icons has a Christological orientation, and icons thereby make visible God's self-communication through the Second Divine person and function as an extension of the words and actions of Christ after the Incarnation.<sup>150</sup> An emotional factor is at work in the experience of viewing an icon. Humans possess a psychological need to remember and contemplate the truths of revelation and icons meet this need effectively.<sup>151</sup> Icons are not a product of a historical process but depict sacred persons and things which have permanent and enduring value in Christian education, above all the saving work of Christ.<sup>152</sup>

The theology of icons is also grounded on the principle that matter has value as a means of expressing the truth.<sup>153</sup> Matter can be used for good purposes, because humans possess senses which to apprehend the truths of revelation.<sup>154</sup> Through the human senses, icons can therefore function as a "vision of reality" and for this reason are the best means of education available to the Church.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Giakalis, 53.

<sup>145</sup> Giakalis, 54.

<sup>146</sup> Giakalis, 54.

<sup>147</sup> Giakalis, 55-56.

<sup>148</sup> Giakalis, 57.

<sup>149</sup> Giakalis, 57.

<sup>150</sup> Giakalis, 59.

<sup>151</sup> Giakalis, 62.

<sup>152</sup> Giakalis, 64.

<sup>153</sup> Giakalis, 65.

<sup>154</sup> Giakalis, 66-67.

<sup>155</sup> Giakalis, 67.

Creators of icons are respectful that some divine realities, such as God himself cannot be represented. Only truths which are clearly delineated and are related to salvation through Christ are represented. God the Father, therefore, is not represented. Because of the Incarnation, Christ can be represented, and icons of Christ and Mary together are a way of depicting the reality of the Incarnation.<sup>156</sup>

By portraying Christ in His humanity, icons make the person of Christ visible and present.<sup>157</sup> Like the incarnation, icons are a "vision of God."<sup>158</sup> They provide an imitative representation of the person who is depicted. Properties of the prototype are present in the icon and create a connection between icon and prototype. In this, manner, icons radiate an immanence in which the prototype becomes present to the viewer. Christ, Mary, and the other saints are thus truly present to the viewer.<sup>159</sup>

### **6.3 Slavic Icons and Maternal Pity**

In making the *Bohoroditsa* present, icons bring the viewer into contact with the essential characteristics of her nature, such as her holiness and purity. For Slavs, icons also make present maternal pity, because icons do not separate the joy of Christmas and birth from the pain of Good Friday and death.<sup>160</sup> Slavs are drawn to this maternal pity because they possess a strong sense that divine righteousness justly condemns everyone. Hope can only be found in divine mercy and maternal pity. Mary shares these divine qualities of mercy and pity, and therefore her intercession is necessary for the reception of God's forgiveness. The presence and intercession of the *Bohoroditsa* provide hope for believers, who know that apart from her they would be eternally lost.<sup>161</sup>

The presence of the *Bohoroditsa* and other saints explains why icons are commonly found in the homes of Slavs. Homes often contain a small shrine, called a *kivot*, which is decorated in an attractive and beautiful manner. Because it is believed that Christ, the *Bohoroditsa* and

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<sup>156</sup> Giakalis, 76.

<sup>157</sup> Giakalis, 103.

<sup>158</sup> Giakalis, 104.

<sup>159</sup> Giakalis, 111-112.

<sup>160</sup> Averintsev 613-614

<sup>161</sup> Averintsev, 618.

the other saints are present through icons, people bow and make the sign of the cross upon entering a home before greeting anyone.<sup>162</sup>

Slavic Christians associate the Marian presence in icons with the power of the Divine Maternity and protection. Pope John Paul II spoke of this connection between icons and Marian protection during his General Audience of October 15, 1997. Commenting on *Lumen Gentium* 66, the Holy Father affirmed that iconography is a manifestation of Marian protection:

Then, alluding to the third-century Marian prayer, "Sub tuum praesidium" — "We fly to thy patronage" — it [*Lumen gentium* 66] adds that this characteristic emerges from the very beginning: "From the earliest times the Blessed Virgin is honored under the title of Mother of God in whose protection the faithful take refuge together in prayer in all their perils and needs." This assertion has been confirmed in iconography and in the teaching of the Fathers of the Church since the second century.<sup>163</sup>

Because icons are a powerful channel of grace which can make the *Bohoroditsa* herself present to a viewer, they occupy an important role during liturgy and devotions. Marian icons evoke a unique atmosphere of compassion and maternal pity which they transmit to a receptive viewer. The effect of viewing an icon for the first time can be especially powerful and create a reaction of amazement or shock. Icons emit a "radiant glow" within an "emotional atmosphere of extreme tenderness and extreme austerity" and transmit a powerful combination compassion, serenity and silence.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Kucharek, 230. Kucharek notes that the underlying meaning of *kivot* is "altar" or "tabernacle." The word *kivot* is still in existence in the modern Ukrainian language with the meaning of ark or ciborium. The semantic relationship between red and beautiful has been preserved in the modern Russian adjectives *krasniy* and *krasiviy*. In Ukrainian, this distinction has been lost through the influence of vocabulary acquired during *polonisation* in the 16th and 17th centuries, and unrelated words are used for red and beautiful. This is an example of how the influence of the Latin west can in some cases obscure the unique aspects of Byzantine devotion.

<sup>163</sup> Pope John Paul II, General Audience, Wednesday, 15 October 1997, 3-4. Accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1997/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_aud\\_15101997.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1997/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_15101997.html)

<sup>164</sup> Averintsev, 613-614.

A specifically Marian aspect of iconography arises with the Slavic word *oumilenie*, which means “maternal pity.” The term is used to designate an important type of Marian icon (equivalent to *eleusans* in Greek terminology.):

Any icon that represents the Divine Child on the lap of his Mother, not in the hieratic and frontal posture, but clinging to her in a more intimate and expressive manner, is called *oumilenie*. The emotional atmosphere of these icons is determined by the greatest reciprocal tenderness of the Mother and the Child, tinted with a sorrow, in anticipation of Calvary.<sup>165</sup>

The allusion here to Calvary is an indication that the experience of viewing an icon is not static. Because they express the truths of Christ’s salvific work, icons have a soteriological dimension, and the contemplation of them has a sanctifying effect on the viewer. More than mere excitement, a real inward change takes place. A connection arises inside the viewer with what the icon represents.<sup>166</sup> The artistic, visible representation of the icon produces inner illumination.<sup>167</sup>

In ontological terms, icons are a type which is in contact with a prototype, and the viewer participates in this connection.<sup>168</sup> Icons are thus a form of matter that raises the viewers thoughts towards the divine because they represent enduring truths revealed by God. They are infused with divine energy (or grace) in which the viewer can take part. In this manner, they become " a self-manifested vision."<sup>169</sup>

An example of the experience of viewing a particular Marian icon for the first time and being drawn into the relationship between Mother and Child is provided by Sister Wendy Becket. In her book, *Encounters with God*, she describes her journeys throughout the world to visit the eight most ancient icons of Mary.<sup>170</sup> A particularly arduous segment of her journey took her to Kiev in search of the icon of the Virgin of Kiev.<sup>171</sup> Arriving in Kiev, she found the icon in a museum, whose curators had respectfully and reverently constructed a small chapel for early icons.

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<sup>165</sup> Averintsev, 613.

<sup>166</sup> Giakalis, 78-79.

<sup>167</sup> Giakalis, 81.

<sup>168</sup> Giakalis, 85.

<sup>169</sup> Giakalis, 91.

<sup>170</sup> Wendy Beckett, *Encounters with God: In Quest of the Ancient Icons of Mary* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

<sup>171</sup> Beckett, 96-97.

Unlike the seven other ancient icons of Mary which she had already visited, the Virgin of Kiev radiated a unique ambience and power:

I must confess to bursting into tears to see it so honored and so beautiful. This is a unique vision of Mary, not tranquil or remote like her seven sisters, but passionate. She has snatched up the child Jesus and holds him firmly, her eyes fixed with frightening force upon what would seem a danger that Mary alone can see. Of all the infant Christs, this is the most beautiful, a golden child, trustful and loving.<sup>172</sup>

In this experience, Sister Wendy found herself drawn into the relationship between Mother and Child. This interaction of pity, compassion and tenderness expands to encompass the totality of human pain and suffering. Her experience is an example of how a person who encounters an icon is “accepted in the exchange and communion of the perfect compassion that exists between Christ and Mary.”<sup>173</sup> This interchange naturally extends into maternal protection: “Mary is his protector, protecting him against his infinite capacity to love, his guileless readiness to trust, his sweetness, his goodness.”<sup>174</sup>

#### **6.4 The Place of Icons in Ukrainian Marian Devotion**

Although the use of icons in liturgy and devotion is common throughout the Eastern Church, there is an important and unique aspect of the Ukrainian Catholic perspective on Marian icons. In addition to the Slavic preoccupation with maternal pity, Ukrainian Catholics have a special and highly developed appreciation of icons as a means of Marian protection. This appreciation is a result of historical conditioning which has taken place throughout centuries of political oppression and persecution. Icons are also venerated for their miraculous powers.<sup>175</sup>

The materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection often refer to icons and their use in liturgy and devotion. Once again, the context is frequently Marian protection. Some representative examples of such texts will be examined later in chapter 10. The rest of the present section will present two examples of texts which systematically provide a framework

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<sup>172</sup> Beckett, 99.

<sup>173</sup> Averintsev, 614

<sup>174</sup> Beckett, 99-100.

<sup>175</sup> Maelle, 749.

for understanding the place of icons in Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion.

The notion of Marian protection in connection with icons is developed at length by Father Nikolai Boyakovski in his book *By Means of the Pathways of Our Faith: Sermons on the Miraculous Icons of the Mother of God*.<sup>176</sup> This text provides a perspective on Marian icons from the viewpoint of a member of the Catholic Ukrainian Church hierarchy. In his series of sermons, Boyakovski discusses those Marian icons which are important in Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion. Each sermon is devoted to a particular icon and includes accounts of miraculous events associated with that icon.

Significantly, Marian protection is prominent in two introductory sermons “About the Protection of the Most-Pure Virgin Mary” and “Doors of Mercy.” The context is practical spirituality. Boyakovski first explains that darkness arises in the soul in three ways - when one is possessed by mortal sin, is attacked by temptation, or experiences sorrow.<sup>177</sup> Mary can dispel this darkness. Through her icons, she becomes a “door of salvation” and a “key to the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>178</sup> Her intercession is practical, with a soteriological objective - she opens a door of mercy, leads us into this door towards heaven, and helps us pass through this door of mercy to eternal salvation.<sup>179</sup>

The use of the image of doors in association with Marian intercession is closely related to Marian protection and assistance. Boyakovski is adamant that Marian help is readily at hand – “Mary can help us”; “Mary wants to help us”; “Mary does help us.”<sup>180</sup> In stressing that Marian help and protection is communicated through icons, Boyakovski also confirms their soteriological aspects, because through her icons Mary can lead us to eternal life.

Another example of the extensive role of icons in Ukrainian Marian devotion is the three-volume set *The Mother of God - A Complete Illustrated Description of her Earthly Life and the Miraculous Icons*

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<sup>176</sup> Nikolai Boyakovski, *Шляхами наших Прочан: Проповіді про Чудоворні Ікони Божої Матері (By Means of the Pathways of Our Faith: Sermons on the Miraculous Icons of the Mother of God)* (Philadelphia, Printnighouse "America"), 1965.

<sup>177</sup> Boyakovski, 11-18.

<sup>178</sup> Boyakovski, 21

<sup>179</sup> Boyakovski, 22-26.

<sup>180</sup> Boyakovski, 26-27.

*Dedicated in her Name*, compiled by E. Poselyanin.<sup>181</sup> This lengthy Ukrainian text of more than 600 pages is presented in the form of a *menaion*. In the Eastern Church, a *menaion* is a series of readings, for each day of the year, grouped by month and synchronized with the liturgical calendar. In most cases, a *menaion* is published in twelve volumes, although in the present case the text is organized in only three. Nevertheless, this *menaion* strictly follows the pattern of a chapter for each month and readings for each day. The readings on Marian feast days are particularly extensive.

To supplement the daily readings, the text makes great use of illustrations of icons as well as drawings depicting Mary, episodes from her earthly life, and miraculous events associated with her icons. The writing maintains a reverent, devotional tone which not only describes in detail Marys' life later miracles which take place through her icons, but also maintains a strong sense of practical application. The reader is constantly reminded that Marian intercession and help is readily available through her icons, and her assistance often comes in a miraculous way. There are accounts of healings, delivery from danger, and conversions. The text thereby encourages Marian devotion and the celebration of Marian feasts, and exhorts the reader to rely confidently on her protective intercession.

The date of publication of this text is unclear. The language uses an older form of the Cyrillic alphabet which predates the spelling reforms introduced by the communist authorities after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Most likely, the text dates from the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Whatever the date of publication, this magnificent example of Marian devotion through her icons provides an extended and rich account of the state of Marian devotion in Ukraine at approximately the time when the first emigrants were leaving Ukraine to form the North American *diaspora* which eventually produced the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The text therefore provides a record of the beautiful Marian devotion which the members of the *diaspora* brought with them to the New World.

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<sup>181</sup> E. Poselyanin,. Богоматерь - полное иллюстрированное описание ея земной жизни и посвященныхъ ея имени чудотворныхъ иконъ *The Mother of God - A Complete Illustrated Description of her Earthly Life and the Miraculous Icons Dedicated in her Name*. (St Peterburg: Soikina, date of publication unknown).



## 6.5 Icons in Ukrainian History

Scholars disagree on the historical origins of the usage of Marian icons. One idea is that icons were first used during the desperate situation which occurred during the siege of Constantinople in 626, when the Patriarch Sergius led the city's people in procession around the city walls with a Marian icon. This episode suggests icons have always been closely associated with the military<sup>182</sup>. Another train of thought suggest that Marian icons came into use during the 10th century along with the use of Marian litanies and hymns on the feast of Mary's Nativity.<sup>183</sup>

Whatever their origin, Marian icons were in common usage when Kievan Rus converted to Christianity in 988. In receiving Christianity in its Eastern form from Byzantium, Kievan Rus also received the art of making icons. An important historical point is that Ukraine received iconography in an already fully developed form, since icon making had existed and grown in Byzantium for several centuries before the conversion of Kievan Rus.<sup>184</sup>

Iconography, consequently, did not first develop from a primitive stage in Kievan Rus, but appeared there in a full flowering of high culture and artistic beauty. The monks at the Monastery of the Caves near Kiev were probably the first to receive instruction in icon making, and the practice quickly spread throughout Kievan Rus. Icons received an important place in worship because they were associated with miraculous powers. As a result, they became an object of veneration and were used in state ceremonies. A military connection is also evident at this early historical stage since icons accompanied the army to give support and strength to soldiers on campaign.<sup>185</sup>

The impressive iconographic style of the period is on display in the first Churches constructed in Kiev, such as the Church of the Tithes and the Cathedral of Saint Sophia. The Cathedral contains many icons, mosaics and paintings which are representative of the highly developed style of the period. The *Oranta* mosaic on the "Indestructible wall" is a

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<sup>182</sup> Maele, 748.

<sup>183</sup> Brownen, 147-149.

<sup>184</sup> Liudmilla Milyaeva, *The Ukrainian Icon 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries: From Byzantine Sources to the Baroque*. (Bournemouth: Parkstone Press Publishers, 1996), 5. Also Sviatoslav Hordynsky, *The Ukrainian Icon of the XIIth to XVIII Centuries* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Providence Association, 1973), 9..

<sup>185</sup> Milyaeva, 6.

prominent and impressive example. The iconography in these churches earned prestige and status for Ukraine, especially the city of Kiev.<sup>186</sup>

Few icons survive from the first period of Kievan Rus. The limited historical evidence indicates that icons of this period often represented the Divine Maternity. Depictions of Mary and Child were the consequently the most common, and included the *orans*, *eleusans*, and *hodigitria* types. Important well-known examples are *Our lady of Vladimir*, *The Great Panagia* and *Our Lady of Pochayiv*. These three icons will be considered in more detail below.<sup>187</sup>

During subsequent centuries, Ukrainian iconography experienced a series of stylistic developments, the artistic and technical aspects of which are beyond the scope of the present study. It is worth noting, however, that the Marian orientation of iconography went through changes. During the Galician period from the XIV to the mid- XVII the centuries, newly created Marian icons were limited primarily to the *hodigitria* type.<sup>188</sup> In subsequent centuries, other topics became more common, such as the Nativity of Mary, the Visitation, the Visit of the Magi, the Presentation, the Flight into Egypt and the Dormition. These additional iconographic topics express a growing veneration for the *Bohoroditsa* and reflect the influence of folklore. In pedagogical terms, they present devotion to her with a strong Christological orientation.<sup>189</sup>

## **6.6 Important Marian Icons in the Ukrainian Catholic Devotion**

Certain Marian icons are especially important in Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion. The following discussion will consider three examples. A well-known Ukrainian Marian icon is *Our Lady of Vladimir*, a popular icon in the East and “a masterpiece of Byzantine art of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>190</sup> Schmemmann describes *Our Lady of Vladimir* as “a wonderful revelation of the central mystery of the Christian faith, as well as the meaning of man, his body, his life, his destiny.”<sup>191</sup> For Schmemmann, this icon illustrates both doctrinal truths – the Incarnation and Redemption – and truths about eschatology and theological anthropology.

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<sup>186</sup> Milyaeva, 5.

<sup>187</sup> Hordynsky, 9-11.

<sup>188</sup> Hordynsky, 13-15.

<sup>189</sup> Hordynsky, 19-25. Milyaeva, 34-47.

<sup>190</sup> Averintsev, 613.

<sup>191</sup> Schmemmann. Mariology, 27-28.



*Our Lady of Vladimir, the best-known and most popular icon in Slavic Marian devotion. The icon came to Ukraine during the time of Prince Yaroslav the Wise in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The presence of this icon in Ukrainian homes throughout the succeeding centuries is a visible manifestation of a continuing Marian presence.*<sup>192</sup>

By tradition, *Our Lady of Vladimir* is a copy of an icon produced by Saint Luke. It was commissioned by Prince Yaroslav the Wise and brought from Constantinople to the *Pirogoshcha* Church near Kiev. The Suzdal prince Andrei Bogolyubsky seized the icon in 1169 and took it to his capital city of Vladimir, from which place the icon received its name.

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<sup>192</sup> “The Virgin of Vladimir.” Public domain image accessed at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin\\_of\\_Vladimir#/media/File:Virgin\\_of\\_Vladimir.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_of_Vladimir#/media/File:Virgin_of_Vladimir.jpg).

The icon was taken to Moscow in 1395 and still is kept there in the Tretyakov Gallery.<sup>193</sup>

*Our Lady of Vladimir* is an example of the *oumilenie* or *eleusans* type of icon. It is the quintessential expression of the Slavic perception of maternal pity and the connection between the Mother of God and her protection. Found in homes and churches throughout Ukraine, it is an essential element of the continuing presence of the *Bohoroditsa* and devotion to her. As Averintsev eloquently expresses this point: “the Christian palladium of Moscow, an eternal promise of bliss for the city. It is impossible to imagine my native Moscow without this icon.”<sup>194</sup>

Averintsev expresses the point of view of the Russian Orthodox and thereby provides an illustration of the tension which sometimes exists between Ukrainians and Russians in reference to history and Marian devotion. The presence of the icon in Moscow is a source of anger and pain for Ukrainians. In their view, the icon belongs to Ukraine; it was commissioned there and was first maintained in the *Pirogoscha* Church in Kiev. The transfer of the icon to the city of Vladimir and later to Moscow was simply a theft. Not without justification, therefore, Ukrainians feel the icon should be returned to its rightful owners.<sup>195</sup>

An icon which recalls the style of the *Oranta* on the “Indestructible Wall” in Saint Sophia Cathedral is the *Great Pangea*, dating from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century and probably painted by a monk of the Monastery of Caves. This icon “combines poetic femininity with solemn majesty”.<sup>196</sup> The Virgin is presented in a variant of the *orante* type. Similar in style to the mosaics of the Kievan period, it “has all the traits of the monumental painting characteristic of the Kievan school.”<sup>197</sup> In recalling the *Oranta* and the “Golden Age” of Kievan Rus, the *Great Panagia* is associated with the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine.

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<sup>193</sup> *Icons of Ukraine*, 14-15.

<sup>194</sup> Averintsev, 613.

<sup>195</sup> Krushinski expounds on this point and expresses his personal anger and frustration in “Найважливіша й Найдавніша Українська Ікона Богоматер” (“The Most Important and Ancient Ukrainian Icon of the Mother Of God”) (Unpublished manuscript, Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 9).

<sup>196</sup> Milayeva, 11.

<sup>197</sup> Hordynsky, 10.



*The Great Pangea, an outstanding example of the orante type icon from the period of Kievan Rus. Its style reflects that of the Oranta mosaic in Saint Sophia Cathedral. In recalling the Oranta, this icon associated with the Golden Age and the continuing Marian presence.<sup>198</sup>*

Another important icon is *Our Lady of Pochayiv*, which is located at the Pochayiv monastery near, Kiev. In 1597, the monastery was given an icon by Anna Hoi'ska, a local resident. The icon had acquired a reputation for possessing miraculous power, because soon after Anna had received the icon as a gift from the Greek Metropolitan Neophit 1559, it began to emit a bright light and her brother was healed of blindness. The icon, known as the "Mother of God of Pochayiv," is still in existence today

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<sup>198</sup> "13th-century Great Panagia from Yaroslavl." Public domain image accessed at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panagia#/media/File:Oranta.jpg>.

and is one of the most famous Ukrainian icons of Mary.<sup>199</sup> The icon is associated with miraculous events which will be described in chapter 9.



*The Pochayiv Icon of the Mother of God. It is enclosed in a gold diadem. Revered for its miraculous power, this icon is located in the Pochayiv Monastery, and is a reason that place is an important destination for pilgrimage.<sup>200</sup>*

These three icons have been presented at length because references to them appear frequently in the writings of the Ukrainian Marian collection. There are, however, a substantial number of other icons which are mentioned less often. Although a detailed presentation of each of these icons is not possible within the context of the present study, these three popular icons indicate the artistic and spiritual richness which Ukrainian icons represent.

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<sup>199</sup> *Icons of Ukraine*, 32. Maele. 750. Horsynsky, 10.

<sup>200</sup>:"Pochaevskaya." Public domain image accessed at: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pochaevskaya.jpg>.

## 6.7 Icons and the Continuing Marian Presence

The continuing Marian presence is observable in icons in various ways. Icons can have place in folklore, such as the *Virgin Hodigitria of Volhynia* located in the late 14th century Church of the Pokrov in Lutsk, which, like the *Pochayiv Mother of God*, is associated with miraculous powers and has inspired stories and legends.<sup>201</sup> Icons sometimes are moved from place to place, which can cause despair when icons are moved out of Ukraine and in a sense create separation from the *Bohoroditsa* for the faithful. As an example, the peregrinations of *Our Lady of Vladimir* have already been mentioned. Some icons are lost, especially from the first centuries of Kievan Rus and Volhynia. For instance, the location of the 13th century *Virgin of Ivgoryskaya* is unknown and its appearance is preserved only in copies or drawings.<sup>202</sup>

Despite such difficulties, icons maintain a central place in popular Marian devotion. Father Boyakovski, in *By Means of the Pathways of Our Faith*, offers twenty-seven sermons, each of which is devoted to a particular Marian icon, geographic location, or period of Ukrainian history. Each icon is situated historically in terms of its origin, location, and subsequent history. The sermons present icons from princely times of Kievan Rus up to the middle of the 20th century. One sermon deals with the icons used by the Cossacks.<sup>203</sup> Geographically, the selection of icons includes many locations in Ukraine and even extends beyond its borders. For example, an icon is considered from Yasna Gora in present-day Poland.<sup>204</sup>

The sermons also contain numerous legendary stories. These stories describe episodes of Marian intercession such as conversions, miraculous healings, and protection from military threat. Marian protection is always depicted in practical spiritual terms - Mary liberates the faithful from all dangers and difficulties, above all from mortal sin. All these intercessory actions take place in association with devotion to Marian icons.<sup>205</sup>

In his presentation of these stories, stories Father Boyakovski is not encouraging a simplistic and credulous piety. His purpose is entirely practical - he wants the faithful to know that Marian assistance is always

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<sup>201</sup> Milayeva, 22.

<sup>202</sup> Milayeva, 20.

<sup>203</sup> Boyakovsku, 36-42.

<sup>204</sup> Boyakovski, 60-65.

<sup>205</sup> Boyakovski, 29-185.

readily available. The history of Mary icons in Ukrainian devotion amply demonstrates her faithfulness as a protector of the Ukrainian people. Father Boyakovski emphasizes this point by including a chapter on the icon of *Our Lady of Perpetual Help*.<sup>206</sup> Mary is always present for the faithful.

Father Boyakovski's sermons illustrate how icons have fulfilled a teaching role. In addition to presenting important doctrines, such as the Incarnation and the Divine Maternity, icons have a specifically Christological and soteriological orientation, because through icons Mary acts as a doorway to deliverance from sin and to entrance into eternal life. Similarly, icons teach that Mary constantly provides practical assistance and protection. These aspects of Marian intercession are essential elements of the continuing Marian presence.

Icons also contribute to the continuing Marian presence through their place during important events in Ukrainian life. For example, baptisms take place before an icon of the *Bohoroditsa*. Through the presence of icons, she helps to weave wedding wreaths and to decorate the wedding tree and loaf. When a woman has difficulty during childbirth, she is given water to drink, which was first used to wash an icon of the Holy Virgin. During times of need or danger, the *Bohoroditsa* is always present to help those who ask for her intercession and protection.<sup>207</sup>

For the Ukrainian *diaspora*, icons could also be a reminder of the difficulties the Ukrainian Catholic Church was suffering in their home country. At the same time, icons are a reminder of separation from homeland. The *diaspora* had little or no access to the original icons and could only bring limited number of copies with them to North America. Sources for copies in New World were scarce. The writings of the Ukrainian Marian Collection frequently lament the fact icons are not readily available to the faithful in America.<sup>208</sup> This circumstance indicates that for Ukrainian Catholics Marian icons are a part of their national identity and the lack of access to them restricts the ability of the faithful to practice Marian devotion in its fullness.

This lack of access to icons is a reason that the concept of a travelling icon developed with the *diaspora*. A traveling icon brings the

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<sup>206</sup> Botakovski, 99-104.

<sup>207</sup> Hryhor Luzhnitsky, "Напередодні 1000-річчя Хрещення Руси-України - Культ Божої Матері на Україні." ("On the Eve of the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine - The Cult of the Mother of God in Ukraine." ) (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 4)

<sup>208</sup> See, for example, the discussion of "Mary Our Hope and *Pokrov*" in chapter 10.



*Bohoroditsa* to the faithful when they cannot come to her. Marian presence and intercession becomes available in a direct way which was not always possible otherwise. The faithful can assemble at a particular place, such as a church or private residence, which is reasonably close to their homes.<sup>209</sup>

The *diaspora* came to North America seeking a better life and liberation from oppression and persecution. They brought their Marian devotion with them and desired that the *Bohoroditsa* be present with them to guide their quest for liberation. In their view, her intercession, exercised through her icons, was indispensable for that liberation to become a reality.

### **6.8 The Pokrov and its Importance in Devotion**

Besides icons, another example of Slavic devotion is the veneration offered to the *Bohoroditsa's* protecting veil, or "*Pokrov*." Like the icons of the *Bohoroditsa*, the *Pokrov* is an expression and a channel of her power, protection, and maternal pity for her children when they are in danger. Averintsev states that "the image of the *Pokrov* became a central theme for [Slavic] iconography, popular imagination, and poetry."<sup>210</sup>

The great significance of the *Pokrov* for Slavic spirituality is explained by a Marian apparition which "has a central position in the whole body of the [Slavic] Christian civilization."<sup>211</sup> According to tradition, this apparition took place in the Blachernae Cathedral in Constantinople during the 9th century. Primary sources for this apparition are not extant. The account of Antin Kushchinski in a manuscript from the Ukrainian Marian Collection presents the essential elements of the story as it is commonly recounted and illustrates how it has entered popular devotion.<sup>212</sup>

As Kushchinski relates the story, an enemy army was attacking the Greek capital of Constantinople. The people of the city had gathered for prayer in the Blachernae Cathedral. Among them was the Byzantine Saint Andrew "the Fool." Looking up into the dome of the church, he saw

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<sup>209</sup> Travelling icons will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 11 in the discussion of the preparation for the celebration of Millenium of Christianity in 1988.

<sup>210</sup> Averintsev, 617.

<sup>211</sup> Averintsev, 617.

<sup>212</sup> Antin Kushchinsky. *Свято Покрови Пресвятої Богородиці (The Feast of the Pokrov of the Most-Holy Bohoroditsa)*. Unpublished manuscript, Marian Library Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 9).

the *Bohoroditsa* spreading her *Pokrov* over the people to protect them from the invading army. Besides this immediate deliverance of the city from danger, other miraculous events soon took place. During an all-night vigil, a curtain near the altar began to emit an invisible power and the image of the *Bohoroditsa* became visible on it. Another miracle occurred when a young servant, a man who was mute, prayed to the Virgin in the Cathedral and received the gift of speech.<sup>213</sup>

Although the apparition had limited influence on liturgy and devotion in Byzantium, when Christianity came to Kievan Rus, devotion to the *Pokrov* was quickly adopted and had an immediate impact:

But in Byzantium itself this vision had no liturgical consequences. Not so in Russia. A new feast of *Pokrov* was established, not only an original creation of [Slavic] liturgical piety, but also one of the most important solemnities of the [Slavic] liturgical calendar, equal to the Dormition ... and little less than the Nativity and Easter. Innumerable Russian churches, including the famous orientalising multicolor cathedral at Red Square, are consecrated in the name of Mary's loving Protection.<sup>214</sup>

A possible explanation for the development of the Slavic feast of the *Pokrov* is the strong and self-evident connection which the Slavic temperament recognizes between the Divine Maternity and Marian protection. Slavic sensibility for Marian protection thus made the image of the *Pokrov* attractive and powerful. An example of this sensibility is the following liturgical acclamation, which is used throughout the year: "Rejoice Thee, o our joy, and protect us from any evil with thy venerable mantle."<sup>215</sup>

This aspect of the Slavic temperament can be observed at important moments in Ukrainian history. Kushchinsky mentions three historical occasions during which Ukraine adopted the feast of the *Pokrov* as a national expression and celebration of the *Bohoroditsa's* protection:

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<sup>213</sup> Kushchinsky, *The Feast of the Pokrov*.

<sup>214</sup> Averintsev, 617. References to Russia again include Ukraine. Father Petras points out in his written comments that there is a liturgical celebration of the protection (*Pokrov*) of Mary in the Greek Church on October 28, a national feast called "Ohi Day."

<sup>215</sup> Averintsev, 617.

- a. Prince Yaroslav Wise placed Ukraine , its people and its army under the Pokrov of the *Bohoroditsa* in 1037 on the day of the consecration of the Annunciation Church on Golden Gate in Kiev.
- b The Cossack Hetman Philip Orlik in 1710 produced a constitution for the Cossacks and Ukraine in which the feast of the *Pokrov* was given third place in importance after Christmas and Easter.
- c. General T. Chuprynki, commander of the Ukrainian Resistance Army, on October 14, 1947, affirmed the importance of the feast of the *Pokrov* and instructed that it be celebrated as a national holiday.<sup>216</sup>

In each of these instances, the feast was affirmed by a governmental authority who encouraged nation-wide celebration. Kushchinski emphasizes that these declarations make Ukraine unique in its devotion to the *Bohoroditsa*, In addition, he notes that each of these declarations, which encourage or require celebration of the feast of the *Pokrov*, are still in effect for the Ukrainian people.<sup>217</sup>

The feast of the *Pokrov* is celebrated on October 14 (October 1 on the Julian calendar). The date of the feast in the autumn has led to it acquiring associations with the harvest and marriage,<sup>218</sup> Yet the underlying meaning of the feast is the continuing Marian presence as a protectress. The feast has always been especially important to the Cossacks, who adopted the *Pokrov* as a mascot.<sup>219</sup>

As a unique expression of Slavic Marian devotion, the feast of the *Pokrov* is also important to the Ukrainian Catholic *diaspora*. Hundreds of references to the feast are documented in the Ukrainian Marian Collection, because the *Pokrov* is an essential aspect in iconography, popular devotion, and poetry.<sup>220</sup> Icons of the *Pokrov* appear, for example, on a greeting cards in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

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<sup>216</sup> Kushchinsky, *The Feast of the Pokrov*.

<sup>217</sup> Kushchinsky, *The Feast of the Pokrov*.

<sup>218</sup> Vlaksina discusses the relation of the feast of the Pokrov to the autumn harvest and marriage.

<sup>219</sup> Icons of Ukraine, 27.

<sup>220</sup> Averintsev, 617.



МАТИ БОЖА ПСКРОВА  
УКРАЇНСЬКИХ СКИТАЛЬЦІВ

маль. Юліян Буцманюк 221

*A Ukrainian greeting card showing the Bohoroditsa spreading her Pokrov over suffering Ukrainian prisoners and members of the diaspora. The title is difficult to translate literally. Its meaning refers to the Pokrov of the Mother of God as protection for the who wander or have no home.*

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<sup>221</sup> “Mother of God, Protection (*Pokrov*) of Wanderers.” (Ukrainian Catholic Collection., Box 6).

## **6.9 Summary**

This chapter has developed the theological basis for the veneration of icons and the *Pokrov*. As an essential means by which the continuing Marian presence among Ukrainian Catholics has always been maintained, they indicate unique aspects of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion. The writings of the *diaspora* in the Ukrainian Marian Collection often make reference to this uniqueness. The next two chapters will explore the historical circumstances within which these unique aspects evolved and correlate them to the central theme of this study, i.e. the thematic trajectory *Bohoroditsa, Pokrov* and liberation.

## Chapter 7: The Marian Presence in Ukrainian History – The First Centuries and the Golden Age

*“The thousand-year history of Ukraine is one majestic hymn in honor of the Bohoroditsa.”*<sup>222</sup>

The history of Ukraine has had a profound influence on the Marian devotion of Ukrainian Catholics. While the previous two chapters of this study have explained the theological sources of that devotion and its main characteristics, this chapter will present the historical circumstances which have conditioned that devotion. This historical presentation is necessary since Ukrainian Marian devotion cannot be separated from Ukrainian history.<sup>223</sup>

This chapter will provide a simplified outline of that history by briefly describing geographic factors and historical events which have influenced the spiritual life of Ukraine and Marian devotion there. The objectives of this exposition are:

- a. Document the centuries long sufferings of the Ukrainian people, which has produced their desire for liberation and prompted them to seek liberation through the protection and guidance of the *Bohoroditsa*.
- b. Demonstrate a continuing Marian presence throughout Ukrainian History.

### **7.1 The Geography of Ukraine and its Influence on Marian Devotion**

Ukrainian geography is essential for understanding both Ukrainian history and historical influences on Marian Devotion. Ukraine is a country of approximately 230,000 square miles in the Slavic lands north and northwest of the Black Sea. The present-day boundaries

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<sup>222</sup> “Тисячирічна історія християнства на Україні це один величній гимн на честь Пресвятої Богородиці.” Bishop Miroslav, “Reflections on the Nativity of the Bohoroditsa”: in *Мольби Прійни Непорочна . . . Книга II (Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II)*, 16. (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982.)

<sup>223</sup> Chaillot, 123.

represent only the latest stage of a constantly shifting political environment which has resulted from a long series of military invasions and foreign conquests.

When Ukraine first came into existence as Kievan Rus in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, her territory extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and from the Don and Volga rivers to the Carpathian Mountains and the River Vistula. In later centuries, parts of Ukraine became subject to the Mongols and the Cossacks. In more recent centuries, Ukraine has been part of Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Austria-Hungary.

The geography of Ukraine explains why it has been the setting for so much political strife and military conflict. Many Ukrainian lands consist of steppe or gently rolling countryside. These wide-open spaces allow for free movement by military forces and are not easily defensible. The value of Ukrainian land for agriculture has made it an attractive target for military invasions from surrounding countries.

The most important river is the Dnieper, which divides Ukraine into western and eastern portions. This division is important in the history of Christianity because eastern Ukraine is dominated by the Russian Orthodox Church, while portions of western Ukraine are home to much of the Ukrainian Catholic population.<sup>224</sup> The city of Kiev on the Dnieper, where the *Oranta* is located, is the historical and spiritual capital of Ukraine.

This geography has influenced Marian devotion. The wide geographical extent of the original Kievan lands and the large number of ethnic groups with which the Ukrainian people have had contact during their history means they have absorbed influences on Marian devotion from many sources. The devotion of the Cossacks to the *Pokrov* is one important example. In later times, through the influence of the Polish Lithuanian commonwealth, Ukraine encountered developments in Mariology and Marian devotion from the Latin West, such as the Immaculate Conception and the Rosary.

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<sup>224</sup> Geographic information on Ukraine is based on “Ukraine” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ukraine>.



*Kievan Rus, the original Ukrainian homeland, in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Its territory extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and from the Don and Volga rivers to the Carpathian Mountains and the River Vistula. The great geographic extent of Kievan Rus exposed it to influences on Marian devotion from many of the surrounding populations and geographic areas. Present-day Ukraine corresponds roughly to the southern third of the original are of Kievan-Rus.<sup>225</sup>*

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<sup>225</sup> “Principalities of Kievan Rus.” Public domain image accessed at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Principalities\\_of\\_Kievan\\_Rus%27\\_\(1054-1132\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Principalities_of_Kievan_Rus%27_(1054-1132).jpg).



## 7.2 Important Events in Ukrainian History<sup>226</sup>

880-883 - Founding of Kievan Rus by Prince Oleg	of both Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires
957 - Baptism of Saint Olga	1853-1856 - Crimean War
980-1015 -Reign of Saint Vladimir	1879 - Emigration to North America begins
988 - Baptism of Saint Vladimir	1914-1918 - World War I; invasion by Germany and Austria-Hungary
988 - Conversion of Kievan Rus and beginning of the Golden Age	1917 - Russian Revolution
1015-1051 - Reign of Prince Yaroslav the Wise	1917-1921 - Ukrainian War of Independence
1017-1024 - Construction of Golden Gate	1918- 1921 - Russian Civil War
1037 - Completion of Saint Sophia Cathedral and the <i>Oranta</i>	1919-1920 - Polish Soviet War
12 <sup>th</sup> century - Fragmentation of Kievan Rus	1922 - Ukraine becomes part of Soviet Union
1199-1349 - Galicia–Volhynia	1932-1933 - <i>Holodomor</i> (great famine)
1239-1240 - Mongol Invasion	1941 - German Invasion of Soviet Union during World War II
c. 1400 Appearance of Cossacks	1943-1955 - Ukrainian Insurgent Army
1569 - Beginning of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth	1943-1944 - Soviet Reconquest
1595-96 - Union of Brest	1945- 1991 - Ukraine part of post-war Soviet Union
1646 - Union of Uzhorod	1988 - Millennial celebration of Christianity
1648 - Khmelnytsky Uprising	1991 - Break-up of Soviet Union and Ukrainian Independence
c. 1657-1687 - The Ruin	
1700-1721- Great Northern War	
1709 - Battle of Poltava	
1772, 1793, 1795 - Partitions of Poland; Ukraine becomes part	

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<sup>226</sup> This outline is not intended to be a comprehensive presentation. Compiled from W.E. D. Allen, *Ukraine: A History*, Serhii Plokhyy, *Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* ( New York: Basic Books, 2015) and Olejsandr Palii, *A History of Ukraine* (Samit-book, 2018).

### **7.3 Ukrainian History from a Marian Perspective**

As the geographic description above has suggested, the history of Ukraine is extremely complex. The following summary is a simplified and generalized presentation of a selection of events from Ukrainian history which have some relationship with the development of Marian devotion. The accompanying chart lists these events.

### **7.4 The Beginning of Ukraine and the Conversion of Kievan-Rus**

The exact circumstances of the establishment of Kievan Rus are subject to debate among historians, since complete historical records for the time period do not exist. The most important extant source is the medieval *Russian Primary Chronicle*.<sup>227</sup> This document exists in several versions and was probably written several centuries after the establishment of Kievan Rus.

Historians trace the beginning of Ukraine as a political entity to the founding of Kievan Rus in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Viking Prince Oleg.<sup>228</sup> When Princess Olga accepted Christian baptism in 957, she became the first member of the Kievan nobility whose conversion is historically documented.<sup>229</sup> She is still venerated by Ukrainians as a saint. Her conversion, although significant, initially had limited influence.<sup>230</sup>

The key event in the history of Christianity in Ukraine is the conversion of Prince Vladimir the Great to Christianity in 988. The exact motivation for Vladimir's conversion is a subject of dispute between Catholics and Orthodox. Possibly he was genuinely attracted to the Christian religion.<sup>231</sup> After examining both Latin and Greek Christianity,

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<sup>227</sup> The present study will use the version Samuel Hazard Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, trans. and ed., *The Russian Primary Chronicle – Laurentian Text* (Cambridge MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1953). The differences between version of *The Russian Primary Chronicle* are not relevant for the present study.

<sup>228</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 59-61. “Vikings on the Dneiper,” chapter 3 in Serhii, Plokyh “Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine. New York: Basic Books, 2015. describes the role of the Vikings in the founding of Kievan Rus.

<sup>229</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 86-87.

<sup>230</sup> The booklet Mikailo Vavrik. “Перша Хрестителька України (First Baptized of Ukraine)” *Voice of the Good Shepherd* XL 11-12 (Hempstead New York: Basilian Fathers, 1955), describes St. Olga’s importance within the origins of Christianity in Ukraine.

<sup>231</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 96-98.

he adopted the faith of Constantinople because of the beauty of its liturgy.<sup>232</sup> Alternatively, his conversion may have been a result of political factors - as a reward for success in a military campaign, Vladimir was offered marriage with the Christian sister of Emperor Basil of Constantinople.<sup>233</sup> The first alternative is the Orthodox view, which they advocate to support their position that Kievan-Rus and Ukraine were never Catholic, in the sense that they were never subject to the jurisdiction of Rome. In the view of Catholics, Kievan Rus was initially truly Catholic, because it received Christianity from the Catholic Church, albeit in the form of the liturgy in the area of Constantinople.<sup>234</sup>

This disagreement regarding the origins of Christianity is of more than historical or academic interest. The division between Catholic and Orthodox has been a continual source of difficulty since the Schism of 1054. For example, differing interpretations of the origins of Christianity in Ukraine had political consequences during the 1988 millennial celebrations of the coming of Christianity to Russia and Ukraine; this topic will be discussed in more detail in chapter 11.

Whatever Prince Vladimir's intentions, his conversion led immediately to the adoption of Christianity by much of the Kievan Rus population. This seminal event took place some 66 years prior to the Great Schism of 1054. Kievan-Rus received Christianity when the Universal Church was still undivided and Catholic. The importance of the Catholic origins of Christianity in Kievan Rus was a topic for Pope John Paul II in his 1988 letter *Donum Baptismi Magnum*. Writing to the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church during the Millennial observances of that year, the Holy Father emphasized the Catholic identity of the-conversion of Kievan-Rus:

Thus, at the time when there was still full communion between the Church of Rome and that of Constantinople, the Church of Kiev sprang up in a context of spiritual communion with those Churches and with the neighboring Churches of Europe, forming with them the one Church of Christ. Vladimir made Kiev part of

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<sup>232</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 110-111; Stephen C. Gulovich, *Windows Westward: Rome, Russia, Reunion* (New York: The Declan X. McMullen Company, 1947), 90-91.

<sup>233</sup> Gulovich, *Windows Westward*, 93-95.

<sup>234</sup> Gulovich, *Windows Westward*, 90.

the rich architecture of the Universal Church, preserving the tradition of the East and his own people's sense of identity.<sup>235</sup>

### **7.5 The Golden Age and the Beginning of Marian Devotion**

The mass conversion under Prince Vladimir initiated the “Golden Age.” During this period, Kievan Rus maintained political stability through expansion and unification. This prosperous period saw a flourishing of architecture and the construction of the first Marian churches.

During the reign of Prince Vladimir and that of his son and successor, Yaroslav the Wise, the continuing Marian presence in Ukraine first came into existence. Kievan-Rus had received Marian devotion in its Eastern form, and it quickly spread. The distinguishing feature of this devotion is that Ukrainian Catholics developed an especially strong veneration for the protection of the *Bohoroditsa* and her *Pokrov* to a degree which far exceeded the Marian devotion in other parts of the Eastern Church.<sup>236</sup>

The 1947 pastoral letter "Concerning the Cult of the Holy Virgin Mary among the Ukrainian People" offers an ecclesial viewpoint on the origins of Marian devotion among the Ukrainian people.<sup>237</sup> Written by

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<sup>235</sup> John Paul II, *Epistula Donum Baptismi Magnum Myrosloao Ivano Cardinali Lubachivsky Archiepiscopo Maiori Leopolitano Ucrainorum Ad Catholicos Ucrainos Millennio transacto a Baptismo Regionis Rus' Kioviensis*. February 14, 1988. Latin text accessed at [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/letters/1988/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_19880214\\_card-lubachivsky.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19880214_card-lubachivsky.html).

English translation accessed at: English translation accessed at [https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=3701\\_](https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=3701_)

The Holy Father makes the same point, that Kievan Rus received Christianity when the Universal Church was still entirely Catholic, in paragraph 4 his Apostolic Letter *Euntes in Mundum* on the Millennium of the Baptism of Kievan Rus. January 25, 1988. Latin original accessed at:

[http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost\\_letters/1988/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_19880125\\_euntes-in-mundum-universum.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost_letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19880125_euntes-in-mundum-universum.html). English translation accessed at:

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3700>.

<sup>236</sup> Averintsev, 617.

<sup>237</sup> Nicholas Wojakowski, *Über den Kult der Heiligen Jungfrau Maria in Ukrainischen Volke: Hirtenbrief an die Ukrainische Geistlichkeit und an die Gläubigen* (On the Cult of the Holy Virgin Mary among the Ukrainian People: Pastoral Letter to the Ukrainian Religious and to the Faithful) (München: Verlag

Father Nicholas Wojakowski, the apostolic visitor of Catholic Ukraine of the Byzantine Rite in Germany, the letter is addressed to Ukrainian priests and faithful in Germany. Father Wojakowski's purpose is to show how devotion to Mary has been present among the Ukrainian people from the very time of the founding of Kievan Rus:

The proof of this is our Ukrainian people, who already since the beginning of Christianity in Ukraine a possessed a veneration of the Holy Virgin Mary. There is no epoch in our history in which one could not record the expressions of the deepest and most heartfelt veneration of the Holy Virgin Mary by our people, especially the countless examples of her perpetual care for our people.<sup>238</sup>

Father Wojakowski also writes how during this time period Mary was chosen to be venerated as Queen of Ukraine:

Our people have prided themselves from the earliest times with a completely special veneration and love for the holy Virgin Mary and were the first among all the Slavic populations, through Prince Yaroslav the Wise, to call her to be Queen of the Ukrainian people. Our people demonstrate this special veneration not only through the usual expressions of piety, but also proclaim it with all of their knowledge and ability, through their spiritual capabilities, their love, their trust, and their hope in the realms of art, literature, and music.<sup>239</sup>

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der Katholiker Kirche Bayern, 1947). This pastoral letter is included in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

<sup>238</sup> *Beweis dessen ist auch unser ukrainisches Volk, da schon seit Beginn des Christentums in der Ukraine sich eine besondere Verehrung der Heiligen Jungfrau Maria verbreitete. Es gibt keine Epoche in unserer Geschichte, in der die Ausdrücke tiefster und herzlichster Verehrung der Heiligen Jungfrau Maria seitens unseres Volkes nicht verzeichnet wären, ebenso aber auch die zahlreichen Beweise Ihrer immerwährenden Obhut über unserem Volke.*

Wojakowski, 3. All translations of German and Ukrainian texts are by the author of this dissertation.

<sup>239</sup> *Unser Volk rühmt sich seit den entlegensten Zeiten einer ganz besonderen Verehrung und Liebe zur Heiligen Jungfrau Maria und hat als erstes unter sämtlichen slavischen Völkerschaften durch den Fürsten Jaroslaw den Weisen Sie zur Königin des ukrainischen Volkes ausgerufen. Seine besondere Verehrung bewies unser Volk nicht nur durch gewöhnliche Äußerungen der Frömmigkeit,*

To substantiate the assertion that devotion to Mary in Ukraine is as old as the nation itself, Father Wojakowski references several historical witnesses. First among these is the great medieval chronicler Ilarion, whose *The Word Concerning Law and Grace and Our Praiseworthy Prince Vladimir* is a primary source for the antiquity of Ukrainian Marian devotion. In addition, Father Wojakowski lists over a dozen other historical sources.<sup>240</sup>

The first rulers of Kievan Rus placed great trust in the protection and help of the *Bohoroditsa*.<sup>241</sup> Although Marian devotion began with Vladimir, it is really during the time of Prince Yaroslav the Wise that Mary truly became Queen of Ukraine. Yaroslav was continuing a trend established by Vladimir and made it a much more explicit and visible.<sup>242</sup> Both rulers built Marian churches. The Cathedral of Saint Sophia has already been mentioned and will be discussed in more detail in chapter 9.

Another important Church was the Church of the Tithes, which Vladimir erected as a place of prayer and veneration for an icon of the Dormition. The Church was supported by means of a tithe from the taxes paid by the Ukrainian people.<sup>243</sup> Yaroslav improved the church in 1039 after the icon exhibited miraculous power. He also constructed another Church in Volhynia in the town of Vladimir, named after his father. This church was dedicated to the *Bohoroditsa* and is the final resting place of Vladimir and Olga.<sup>244</sup>

An outstanding example of the Marian presence during the Golden Age is Yaroslav's construction of the Golden Gate of Kiev.<sup>245</sup> He fortified the city of Kiev by building a wall with three gates around it. The most important of these gates was named the Golden Gate, because it was it was the major entrance into the city through which visitors would have to pass.

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*sondern bekundete sie auch durch all sein Wissen und Können, durch seine geistigen Fähigkeiten, seine Liebe, sein Vertrauen und seine Hoffnung auf dem Gebiete der Kunst, Literatur und Musik.* Wojakowski, 3. Maele, 757, similarly notes that Marian devotion was present in Ukraine prior to many other nations.

<sup>240</sup> Wojakowski, 4-8, lists these sources with detailed citations of documentation of the antiquity of Marian devotion in Ukraine. Maele, 747-748, discusses the Importance of Ilarion as a source for the antiquity of Marian devotion to her and as a record of the first churches constructed in veneration of her.

<sup>241</sup> Wojakowski, 4.

<sup>242</sup> Wojakowski, 4.

<sup>243</sup> Maele, 748.

<sup>244</sup> Maele, 748.

<sup>245</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 137.

Yaroslav erected a church dedicated to the Annunciation on top of the Golden Gate. Both were covered in brass and by all accounts were extremely beautiful and impressive in their appearance. The location of the church has a special significance in military defensive terms because it is placed above the primary entranceway to the city. Yaroslav found no better way to put his city of Kiev, the capital city of Kievan Rus, under the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*, than to erect the Church of her Annunciation above the Golden Gate.<sup>246</sup>

The construction of the Golden Gate indicates that a close connection existed between Marian devotion and the military at the earliest stages of Ukrainian history.<sup>247</sup> This connection may appear strange to Western Christians, but for Ukrainians it is logical that Mary's intercessory power extends through the military. Later sections of this dissertation will further develop this point.

The Golden Age is remembered with nostalgia and fondness by Ukrainians even today.<sup>248</sup> The mythological importance of this time period is an essential aspect of Ukrainian spirituality. The significance of Kiev to the Ukrainian people is summarized in the following manner by the historian Klyuchevski:

Russian historians and the Russian population generally have never failed to treat the memory of bygone Kiev with a sympathy hard to understand when we consider the chaotic impression produced upon the mind by a study of its greatest period . . . there are few traces of Kievan Rus and its condition of life to be found now surviving in our land ... Yet many a poetical and religious legend has been preserved concerning the ancient seat of Saint Vladimir, including the proverb that, as to Rome, all roads lead to Kiev. The Russian nation still knows and remembers the city of princes and heroes, of the Cathedral of St Sophia and the Cloister of Petcherski, and loves and reverences its memories above any subsequent capitals of the land . . . Kiev, with all its faults and failings, has never lost its hold upon the popular affections, and historians ... have always agreed in painting the bygone life in the city in the brightest colors.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Wojakowski, 4-5.

<sup>247</sup> Maele, 748.

<sup>248</sup> Writings in the Ukrainian Marian Collection frequently refer to the Golden Age of Kievan Rus with nostalgia, See the sample texts in chapter 4 for examples.

<sup>249</sup> The quotation from Klyuchevski is taken from the translation in Gulovich, *Windows Westward*, 100-101. Note that at the time this excerpt was written,



*The Golden Gate of Kiev as it exists today in a modern reconstruction completed under the supervision of the Soviet government in 1982. Prince Yaroslav the Wise constructed the original as the main defensive gate within the wall surrounding the city. Although the architectural design selected for the reconstruction was controversial (no drawing of the original exists), the modern structure accurately depicts the imposing nature of the original. The Marian presence is readily visible through the Church of the Annunciation placed on top of the gate. The presence of the Church as part of a primary defensive fortification of the city is a manifestation of Marian devotion during the earliest stage of Ukrainian history, since Prince Yaroslav erected the church to place Kiev and his kingdom under the protection of the Bohoroditsa.<sup>250</sup>*

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Ukraine was still part of Russia (i.e, the Soviet Union), so the adjective Russian includes ethnic Ukrainians.

<sup>250</sup> “Golden Gate Kiev”. Public domain image accessed at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Golden\\_Gate\\_Kiev\\_2018\\_G1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Golden_Gate_Kiev_2018_G1.jpg). Information regarding the renovation can be found at “The Fascinating history of the Golden Gate of Kiev,,: accessed at [https://www.ukraine.com/attractions/places-of-interest/golden-gate-of-kyiv//](https://www.ukraine.com/attractions/places-of-interest/golden-gate-of-kyiv/).



## Chapter 8: The Marian Presence in Ukrainian History – Centuries of Suffering

### 8.1 Schism and its Influence on Eastern Marian Devotion

The Great Schism of 1054, which split the previously unified Catholic Church into Latin (Western) and Orthodox (Eastern) Churches, is significant for Ukraine because the Eastern churches became separated from developments in Mariology and Marian devotion in the West. Gulovich, for example, suggests that the Schism “immobilized the Marian devotion in the East.”<sup>251</sup> This term may seem strong, but Gulovich writes from a Western perspective. Prior to the schism, theological ideas and religious practices were readily exchanged between East and West. Gulovich proffers the example of the celebration of Christmas, which began in Germany and then spread to the rest of the Christian world.<sup>252</sup>

After the Schism, attitudes hardened in the East and religious leaders there sought to avoid any influence from the Latin West. This produced the so-called “immobilization” of devotional practices, including Marian ones.<sup>253</sup> Immobilization, however, was not stagnation. Although the East did not experience the developments in Marian devotion and theology which occurred in West after the Eleventh century, Eastern Marian devotion there followed its own course in which it remained fervent and rich.

Both Catholic and Orthodox Churches have existed in Ukraine since the Great Schism. The history of their relationship is complex and beyond the scope of this study. At times, depending on the political situation, Catholics had difficulty practicing their faith. This loss of religious freedom was one cause of the desire for liberation among Ukrainian Catholics.

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<sup>251</sup> Stephen C. Gulovich "045 - Mary in the Eastern Church." *Marian Reprints*, Paper 71; 1955, 5. Accessed at [http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian\\_reprints/71](http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints/71)

<sup>252</sup> Gulovich, “Mary in the Eastern Church,” 4.

<sup>253</sup> Gulovich, “Mary in the Eastern Church,” 5.

## **8.2 Political Changes, Invasion, and Fear of Latinization**

After the death of Yaroslav the Wise in 1054, Kievan Rus was subjected to political pressures which ultimately led to fragmentation into individual principalities and the end of the Golden Age. In 1169, Kiev was sacked by the Suzdal prince Andrey Bogolyubsky. During the 13th century, the area of the former Kievan Rus was overrun by the Mongol invasion from the east. The territory was devastated and Kiev itself was sacked again and almost destroyed.<sup>254</sup>

During these invasions, the Saint Sophia Basilica in Kiev first experienced significant damage.<sup>255</sup> The “Indestructible Wall” and the *Oranta*, however, remained intact. Their survival is another example of how Mary's presence has endured in Ukrainian history despite loss and devastation.

After the Mongol invaders dispersed, further political changes took place. Among them was a developing competition between Poland and Lithuania for control of the geographic area which encompassed Ukraine, a competition which produced a Westernizing influence. The Cathedral of Saint Sophia experienced further damage on several other occasions during this period of political and military conflict. The *Oranta* always survived.<sup>256</sup>

The westernizing influence from Poland and Lithuania created fear of Latinization among Ukrainians, who were afraid they might lose their Eastern rite liturgy and unique forms of devotion. This fear was a consequence of the doctrinal immobilization described above and was a major reason the reunion announced at the Council of Florence in 1439 failed. Gulovich explains why the fear of Latinization was important for eastern Christians:

Should an [Eastern Christian] understand Latinization to mean purely ritualistic change, in his mind, particularly if he is a [Slav], this is tantamount to denationalization, to rejection of his religion... To the [Eastern Christian] rite is the reflection of his traditions, his ideals, his dreams; it is the picture of his soul. To

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<sup>254</sup> Allen, *History of Ukraine*, 35.

<sup>255</sup> V. N. Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya, *St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev: Guide* (Kiev: Miestetsvo Publishers, 1978), 16.

<sup>256</sup> These events are enumerated in chapter 9.

ask that he give up his rite means to him that he must give up his own self.<sup>257</sup>

Because Slavic believers share the same essential mystical spirituality, the internalization of religious rite and identity to which Gulovich refers explains why Ukrainian Catholics want to maintain their own liturgical rite and devotional practices. This desire includes the maintenance of their own forms of Marian devotion. Rite and devotional *praxis* are a very part of the Ukrainian Catholic identity.

### **8.3 Reunion with Rome - Mary as the Mother of Unity**

The fear of Latinization continued to cause great difficulties after the Council of Florence. The Westernizing influence grew after Ukraine became part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569. The Latin Church was seen to be more vibrant and less corrupt than its Eastern counterpart. A certain sympathy for the Western form of Christianity gradually developed. Interference from the Orthodox hierarchy, which sometimes prevented Catholic clergy from exercising their ministry, increased the desire for reunion.

The challenge for Church leaders who desired reunion with Rome was to overcome the fear of Latinization. After several years of negotiation with the Holy See, the Union of Brest in 1596 brought the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church into full communion with Rome in a manner that preserved the Eastern rite for Ukrainian Catholics. Later, in 1646, the Union of Uzharov brought the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church into full communion with Rome as well.<sup>258</sup>

The Unions of Brest and Uzhorod made it possible for Ukrainian Catholics to practice their faith in full communion with Rome. Both the Ukrainian Greek and Ruthenian Greek Catholic Churches were able to maintain their own ecclesiastical hierarchy and their own form of the liturgy. They also preserved the unique aspects of their Marian devotion.

Despite fears of Latinization, the influence of Poland and the West had beneficial aspects during the period following the Union of Brest. One example is the founding of the Congregation of Mary by the Basilian

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<sup>257</sup> Gulovich, *Windows West*, 153.

<sup>258</sup> Sophia Senyk. The Union of Brest: An Evaluation in *Four Hundred Years of the Union of Brest: A critical Re-evaluation*, 1-16 (Lueven: Peeters, 1998) summarizes the history of the Union of Brest.

Fathers (later reformed by Jesuit Missionaries), which helped to revitalize religious life.<sup>259</sup> Contact with the West led to the spread of new forms of devotion, such as the rosary.

Anniversaries of the Union of Brest have been the occasion for the issue of magisterial documents which explain the significance of the reunion. An example is the encyclical of Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, promulgated on December 23, 1945 in recognition of the 350th anniversary. In a detailed historical account, the Holy Father describes how the condition of the churches in the western Ukraine adjacent to Poland and the Carpathian mountains had deteriorated significantly by the end of the 16th century. Reunion with Rome was essential to restore their ecclesiastical discipline and to maintain the ministry of the Church in that area.<sup>260</sup>

The Union of Brest was opposed by Orthodox Church leaders. Pius XII enumerates the sufferings of the Ukrainian Church had to endure after reunion and how Ukrainian Catholics have maintained their faith and Marian devotion. He praises a supporter of the reunion, Josaphat Kuntzevitch, the Ukrainian archbishop of Polotsk and Vitebsk, who was murdered on November 12, 1623 by hostile ecclesiastical leaders. “The hallowed blood of this martyr too became in a manner the seed of the Church.”<sup>261</sup>

During the period of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth, the ruling kings did not support the Ukrainian ecclesiastical hierarchy and therefore the Ukrainian bishops had no choice but to rely on the Roman Pontiff for protection.<sup>262</sup> When, in 1632, Polish rulers tried to invalidate the Union of Brest and confiscate the properties of the churches, the Ukrainian Church remained loyal to Rome.<sup>263</sup> After the partitions of Poland, the Ukrainian Church endured more hardships as part of the Russian Empire. An example is the persecution of Basilian monks by the Orthodox church, which prevented them from administering their own order and providing sacraments to the faithful.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Maele, 751-752.

<sup>260</sup> Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, 8-9. Josaphat is revered as a saint by Ukrainian Catholics. See, for example, I Nazarko, “Святий Йосафат – Почитатель Богоматері” (Holy Josafat – Devotee of the Mother of God”) *Svitlo* (May, 1968), 129-130.

<sup>261</sup> Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, 15.

<sup>262</sup> Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, 16.

<sup>263</sup> Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, 17.

<sup>264</sup> Pius XII *Orientales omnes ecclesias*, 18.

Pius XII provides examples of how reunion benefited Marian devotion. Attendees of diocesan schools were able to join the sodalities of the Blessed Virgin established by the Jesuits.<sup>265</sup> Reunion created an environment in which religious orders, such as the Servants of Mary Immaculate, were able to carry out their apostolate.<sup>266</sup>

Fifty years after Pius XII, Pope John Paul II writes that a significant aspect of the Union of Brest is that it is a prototype of Christian unity.<sup>267</sup>

In recalling the Union of Brest we must ask ourselves what this event means today. It was a union which concerned only a particular geographical region, but it is relevant for the entire field of ecumenism. The Eastern Catholic Churches can make a very important contribution to ecumenism. The Council's Decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* reminds us that "the Eastern Churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome have a special role to play in promoting the unity of all Christians ...: first of all by prayer, then by the example of their lives, by religious fidelity to ancient Eastern traditions, by greater mutual knowledge, by collaboration, and by a brotherly regard for objects and attitudes."<sup>268</sup>

The ecumenical significance of the Union of Brest is evidence of a continuing Marian presence in Ukrainian history, because reunion demonstrates how Mary is the Mother of Unity:

We cannot fail to entrust the yearning for full Christian unity to the Mother of Christ, she who is ever present in the work of the Lord and of his Church. chapter Eight of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* points to her as the one who goes before us on our earthly pilgrimage of faith and is tenderly present to the Church which, at the end of the second millennium, is working to re-establish among all those who believe in Christ that

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<sup>265</sup> <sup>265</sup> Pius XII *Orientalia omnes ecclesias*, 28.

<sup>266</sup> <sup>266</sup> Pius XII *Orientalia omnes ecclesias*, 44.

<sup>267</sup> John Paul II *Apostolic Letter of The Supreme Pontiff John Paul II For The Fourth Centenary of the Union of Brest*, November 12, 1995. Accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/1995/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_19951112\\_iv-cent-union-brest.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19951112_iv-cent-union-brest.html)

<sup>268</sup> John Paul II, *For The Fourth Centenary Of The Union Of Brest*, 20.

unity which the Lord wills for them. Because she is the Mother of the one Christ, she is the Mother of unity.<sup>269</sup>

The long tradition of Ukrainian Marian devotion is another manifestation of how Mary is the Mother of Unity:

The Most Holy Virgin already present everywhere in our midst both in so many sacred buildings and in the life of faith of so many families continuously speaks of unity, a unity for which she constantly intercedes. If today, in commemorating the Union of Brest, we recall the marvelous wealth of veneration that the Christian people of Ukraine have offered to the Mother of God, we cannot but draw from this admiration for the history, spirituality and prayer of those peoples the consequences for unity which are so closely linked to those treasures.<sup>270</sup>

On the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Union of Uzhorod, John Paul II made similar remarks. He reminded the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church of the difficulties they faced after reunion: “You have paid dearly for this union. In fact, you have never been without the experience of the Cross . . . From the way in which the Ruthenian faithful have remained steadfast in the face of successive trials and tribulations, the light of Christ has shone ever more brightly on your people, your families and communities in Eastern Europe and in the New World.”<sup>271</sup> Like the Union of Brest, the Union of Uzhorod is a witness to the importance and real possibility of ecclesial unity and, once again, the Holy Father invokes Mary as the Mother of Unity: “. . . your spiritual identity is intimately connected with *the search for the unity of all Christians*. . . . In this search, your guide and comfort will be the Most Holy *Theotokos* whom you venerate with tender devotion in the Liturgy.”<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> John Paul II, *For the Fourth Centenary Of The Union Of Brest*, 13.

<sup>270</sup> John Paul II, *For the Fourth Centenary Of The Union Of Brest*, 13.

<sup>271</sup> John Paul II. *Homily for the Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite on the Occasion of the 350th anniversary of the Union of Uzhorod*. October 27, 1996, 3. Accessed at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1996/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_hom\\_19961027\\_anniversario-unione-uzhorod.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1996/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19961027_anniversario-unione-uzhorod.html).

<sup>272</sup> John Paul II. *Homily for the Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite on the Occasion of the 350th anniversary of the Union of Uzhorod*. October 27, 1996, 4.

#### **8,4 The Cossacks as an Instrument of Marian Protection**

At the same time that the Western influence in Ukraine through the Union of Brest increased, the Cossacks to the southeast of Ukraine were rising in power. The Cossacks are important for Marian devotion because the common folk of Ukraine viewed them as protectors against an oppressive Polish monarchy.<sup>273</sup> The Cossacks adopted the *Bohoroditsa* as their protectress and patron saint.<sup>274</sup> In the popular imagination, the Cossack as protector is closely associated with Mary's protection and her *Pokrov*.<sup>275</sup>

The Cossacks appear with some frequency in the materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Writers invoke them with pride as folk heroes who fought for the liberation of Ukraine. For instance, one article describes the Cossacks as they ride into battle under the banner of Mary.<sup>276</sup>

The Cossacks in the vicinity of Ukraine lived at Zaporozhe, a settlement along the Don River southeast of Ukraine and northwest of the Sea of Azov. Such settlements, called a *sich*, were constructed as a fortress and functioned as a home base. The Cossack leader was referred to as a *hetman* and areas under his control were called a *hetmanate*.<sup>277</sup>

An example of Cossack Marian devotion is provided by the Hetman Ivan Mazepa, who in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century erected a church in honor of the *Bohoroditsa* in the region of the province and town of Chernihiv. A miraculous icon of Mary was venerated there. During an epidemic in 1696, the icon was carried in procession around the town, and the epidemic immediately came to an end.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Albert Seaton, *Osprey Men-at-Arms 13: The Cossacks* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing Ltd, 1972), 12.

<sup>274</sup> *Icons of Ukraine: Commemorating the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine 988-1088* (Washington D.C.: Chopivsky Family Foundation, 1988), 27.

<sup>275</sup> Vlaskina, Nina. "The Age-Old Cossack Feast of the Protecting Veil: A Contemporary Interpretation of a Traditional Calendar Date." *Folklore* 60, 2015. Accessed at <http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol60/vlaskina.pdf>.

<sup>276</sup> "On the Day of the *Pokrov*," discussed in detail in chapter 4.

<sup>277</sup> Seaton, 12-13.

<sup>278</sup> Maelle, 749.



*A Ukrainian Christmas card with the title “Christmas in Zaporozhe.” Cossack warriors and townspeople celebrate the birth of Christ.<sup>279</sup>*

Three historical events in the period subsequent to the Union of Brest are examples of how the Cossacks have entered the Ukrainian national consciousness as manifestations of Mary’s continuing presence in Ukrainian history. In each case, the Cossacks fought for the liberation of Ukraine.

First, resistance activities of the Cossacks led to military confrontation with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. With popular support, the Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytski lead a rebellion in 1648 which briefly took control of Kiev. Khmelnytski proclaimed an independent Ukraine, but was unable to sustain independence and was forced to make an alliance with Russia which eventually led to Ukraine becoming subject to the Russian Tsar.<sup>280</sup> Nevertheless, Khmelnytski remains a national hero in Ukraine, a Cossack leader who is a symbol of the Ukrainian aspiration for independence.

The second event is the period known as the “The Ruin” (1657-1686). A war between Russia, Poland, Turks and Cossacks took place for control of Ukraine, devastated the land, and caused hundreds of thousands of deaths. The Ruin ended when the “Eternal Peace” was established

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<sup>279</sup> “Christmas at Zaporozhe.” (Ukrainian Marian Collection).

<sup>280</sup> Allen, 104-119. Seaton, 13-14.



between Russia and Poland as victors in the war. Ukraine was divided between them as spoils of war. Most of Ukraine became part of Russia.<sup>281</sup> Once again, the Cossacks had fought in the cause of liberation and once again, the *Oranta* survived a period of devastation.

Third, after “The Ruin,” the Cossacks continued to strive for control in Ukraine. In the first decade of the 18th century, under the leadership of Hetman Ivan Mazeppa, they formed an alliance with Sweden against Russia during the Great Northern War (1700-1721). The hopes of the Ukrainian people that the Cossacks would win their independence were dashed when the Cossack and Swedish forces suffered a devastating defeat at the Battle of Poltava in 1709 against a Russian army led by the Russian Tsar Peter the Great.<sup>282</sup> Like Khmelnytski, Mazeppa is another Cossacks leader who is revered in Ukraine as a national hero.

Despite these defeats, the Cossacks have retained their status as liberators of the common people and an instrument of Marian protection. This historical role as protectors and would-be liberators of Ukraine has granted the Cossacks a place in Ukrainian national identity:

The Ukrainian nobility, in the main, were little disposed to take the part of their own countrymen against the Poles; many of them embraced the Roman Catholic faith and entered the Polish king’s service. And it was largely because of this that the small landowner or peasant either joined the Ukrainian Cossacks or looked to them for protection and leadership. In this way the Cossack became a symbol of Ukrainian nationality, a symbol with which both townsman and peasant identified himself<sup>283</sup>

The Cossacks were heavily pressured by the Russian government during the time of the Tsars. By the 19th century, the Cossacks had almost completely disappeared. Today only the small band of the Cuban Cossacks in Crimea preserves their medieval customs.<sup>284</sup>

A striking characteristic of the Cossacks is their strong association with the feast of the *Pokrov*.<sup>285</sup> When the Cossacks converted to Orthodoxy, they received the feast of the *Pokrov* from Kievan Rus and developed an intense devotion to Mary’s protecting veil. In the popular

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<sup>281</sup> Allen, 104-119.

<sup>282</sup> Allen, 190-198.

<sup>283</sup> Seaton, 12.

<sup>284</sup> Seaton, 21-22.

<sup>285</sup> Vlaksina discusses these customs and traces their historical evolution.

imagination of the Ukrainian common folk, the Cossack example of devotion to the protection of the *Pokrov* was naturally extended into protection of Ukraine by the Cossacks themselves.

Although the Cossacks practiced the Orthodox faith and struggled militarily to liberate Ukraine from the Catholic rulers of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, one should not conclude that the Cossacks were specifically anti-Catholic in orientation. The Cossacks also fought against Orthodox Tsarist Russia. The catastrophic defeat of the Cossacks and their Swedish allies by the Russian Tsar Peter the Great at the battle of Poltava in 1709 was a major event in Ukrainian history, which led to centuries of oppression. The Cossacks fought against any oppressor of Ukraine.

It is not surprising that present-day Ukrainian Catholics might view the Cossacks through a mythological lens as a symbol of their struggle for national liberation. The Cossacks are a historical memory, folk heroes who fought on behalf of ordinary Ukrainians under the protection of the *Pokrov*. This historical memory explains the frequent references to the Cossacks in the Ukrainian Marian Collection.

### **8.5 Emigration and the Desire for Liberation**

During the 19th century, nationalism grew among Ukrainian writers as their people suffered under the repressive government of the Tsars. This literary movement fueled the national aspiration for political liberation.<sup>286</sup> Ukrainian Catholics, suffering from the oppression of the Russian Orthodox Church and from a lack of full acceptance by Latin Catholics in Poland, experienced the additional difficulty of an inability to practice their faith in their own rite. Pope Leo XIII, addressing Latin Catholics in Poland, acknowledged these difficulties and expressed the care and advocacy which he his pontificate exercised on behalf of Ukrainian Catholics:

Permit Us to repeat an exhortation about the Ruthenians. Though you differ from them in origin and rite, be joined to them more closely in will and loving association as becomes those who share the same region, the same state, but especially the same faith. For the Church considers them to be deserving of good will and loves

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<sup>286</sup> Allen, *History of Ukraine*, 240-256.

them as her children to whom she, with wise discretion, permits legitimate customs and their own rites.<sup>287</sup>

Leo XIII speaks here of the struggle of Ukrainian Catholics in Poland to practice the liturgy in their own rite. Political repression and the absence of religious freedom caused the waves of emigration which began in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. That emigration was described in chapter 1. Emigration of Ukrainian Catholics is a strong indication of their desire for liberation and their willingness to trust in the protection of the *Bohoroditsa* as they sought freedom in the New World.

### **8.6 World War I and the First Ukrainian Armies of Liberation**

World War I brought even greater calamity to Ukraine when Russia was invaded by the German army. After Russia was defeated in 1917, Ukraine was annexed by Germany. The victorious German Army occupied Kiev, but the *Oranta* was again unharmed.

During World War I, Ukraine was divided between the Austro-Hungarian empire in the west and the Russian Empire in the east. Both empires collapsed as a result of the war. Ukraine, along with other ethnic minorities in eastern Europe, glimpsed the possibility of freedom. Ukrainian armies were formed to realize that hope.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Leo XIII, *Caritatis*, March 18, 1894, 11. Accessed at [http://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_19031894\\_caritatis.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_19031894_caritatis.html).

<sup>288</sup> There were several Ukrainian armies in existence during this period. A full accounting of them is beyond the scope of this study. Abbott and Pinak, 30-98, for more information.



*The Marian presence with the Ukrainian military. A Ukrainian soldier prays before a vision of the Holy Virgin and the Christ child. The Ukrainian text of the Christmas card translates to "At the Birth of Christ."<sup>289</sup>*

Ukraine entered a brief period of independence after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the defeat of Germany in 1918 by the Western Allies. When Ukraine became a principal battlefield during the Russian Civil War (1918-1921) and the Soviet-Polish War (1920), Ukrainian armies had to fight for their newly found independence. The history of this period is extremely complicated, because several ethnic groups fought for control of various geographic regions in Eastern Europe. This struggle was especially acute in western Ukraine.<sup>290</sup>

<sup>289</sup> "Ukrainian soldier prays before a vision of Mary and the Christ Child." Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 6.

<sup>290</sup> See, for instance, the extensive multi-page chart which outlines the history of this period in Abbott and Pinak, 21-24.

These Ukraine Armies of Liberation of this period are an example of a continuing Marian presence. Ukrainian Catholics view them as an implement of the *Bohoroditsa's* protection and as important actors in another stage of the nation's struggle for liberation. Although military force was ultimately unsuccessful, the soldiers are remembered with pride. For example, an article in the Ukrainian Marian Collection describes one of these armies riding into battle under the banner and protection of the *Pokrov*.<sup>291</sup>

### **8.7 Marian Consolation in response to Communist Repression and Famine**

Ukraine was now a part of the fledgling Soviet Union. Life under the Communist Soviets was a devastating experience for the Ukrainian people.<sup>292</sup> Both Lenin, the first Soviet leader in the 1920s, and his successor, Stalin, in the first years of the 1930s, undertook measures to control and repress the Ukrainian people through political intimidation and seizure of property. This effort included an artificially produced famine, the *Holodomor*, which resulted in the deaths of millions of Ukrainian citizens. The conversion of agriculture to the communist schema of collectivization created extensive economic hardship. The Communists persecuted the Ukrainian Catholic Church by harassing and imprisoning clergy, especially bishops, and confiscating church buildings and property.<sup>293</sup>

The *Holodomor* was the subject of a 2003 message by John Paul II to the Catholic archbishops of Ukraine on the 70th anniversary of the tragedy. The Holy Father recognizes that the scars of this event are still present and entrusts the healing of the Ukrainian people to the Mother of God:

Millions of people suffered an atrocious death due to the nefarious success of an ideology that caused suffering and bereavement in many parts of the world throughout the 20th century . . . I want to . . . commemorate the countless victims of the great famine instigated in Ukraine by the Communist regime. It was an inhuman scheme put into effect in cold blood by those in power at

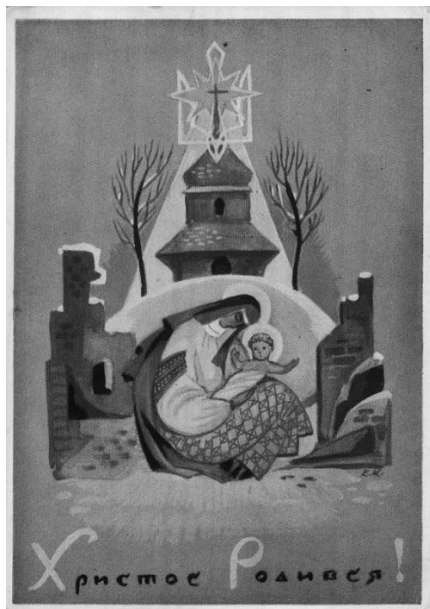
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<sup>291</sup> "On the Day of the Pokrov," discussed in detail in chapter 4.

<sup>292</sup> Muzyczka, Ukraine, 509.

<sup>293</sup> "Gold, Mourning, and Blood – Ukraine: A Tragedy without Frontiers," 8.

the time . . . How can we forget, in this regard, the destruction of so many families, the grief of countless orphans, the confusion of the whole of society? . . . I hope that the Ukrainian people will be able to look back at the events of history with reconciled hearts, and I entrust all who are still suffering from the consequences of those painful events to the interior consolation of the All Holy Mother of God.<sup>294</sup>



*A continuing Marian presence in the sufferings of the Ukrainian people. A Ukrainian Christmas card depicts Mary and Child before a ruined Ukrainian church building. The Star of Bethlehem shines from the top of the church. The text translates as “Christ is born!”<sup>295</sup>*

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<sup>294</sup> John Paul II, *Message on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Holodomor*, November 23, 2003, paragraphs 1,3 and 5.

Accessed at [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/pont\\_messages/2003/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_20031123\\_holodomor-ucraina.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/pont_messages/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20031123_holodomor-ucraina.html).

<sup>295</sup> “Mary and the Christ Child before a ruined Ukrainian Church.” (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 6).

## **8.8 World War II – The Ukrainian Insurgent Army Fights under the Pokrov**

Ukraine was the scene of yet another military invasion during the summer of 1941, when once again a German army entered its territory. Much of Ukraine was conquered by the autumn of 1941. The Soviet Army suffered one of its greatest catastrophes of World War II in the enormous encirclement battle around the city of Kiev. During this battle, the *Oranta* in Kiev found herself in the very epicenter of one of the most destructive battles in all of military history. Once again, the *Oranta* and the “Indestructible Wall” survived a foreign invasion which caused untold damage to Kiev and Ukraine.

During the later stages of World II, Ukrainian armies were again formed to fight for independence. Some Ukrainian soldiers formed units which joined with the German army after the 1941 invasion and fought against the Red Army of the Soviet Union. Other soldiers fought as partisans against the Germans. A separate force, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, was formed in 1943 to fight for national liberation against the Red Army after it had recaptured Ukraine from the Germans in 1943 and 1944.<sup>296</sup>

The Ukrainian Marian Collection contains several references to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which indicate this force has close Marian associations. For instance, the army was sworn into service for the first time on October 14, 1943, the feast of the *Pokrov*. The army leadership deliberately selected that date to place the army under the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*. A banner of the army, pictured below, depicts Ukrainian soldiers beneath the *Pokrov*.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Abbott and Pinak, 115-119.

<sup>297</sup> “На Порозі Одинацяого Року Боротьби Української Повстанської Армії Сприводу Свята УПА – Покрова Прс. Богородици” (“On the Eve of the Eleventh Year of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on the Occasion of the feast of the UIA – of the Holy *Pokrov* of the *Bohoroditsa*.”) *Ukrainian Worker* (October 17, 1952), 39, describes how the army was founded on the day of the feast of the *Pokrov* (October 14, 1943), how the army fought under the *Pokrov*.



*A banner of the Ukrainian Liberation Army, depicting the soldiers of the army under the protection of the Bohoroditsa and her Pokrov.<sup>298</sup>*

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army continued to fight the Red Army even after the end of World War II. Most of it was overcome and destroyed within two to three years after the end of the war in Europe in May 1945. Some elements held out until 1955.<sup>299</sup> Unfortunately, the defeat of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army resulted in Ukraine remaining subject to the Soviet government. The army's commander, General Roman Chuprynka, is another military leader who is remembered as a national hero for his leadership in the struggle for Ukrainian liberation.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> "Banner of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army." (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 6)

<sup>299</sup> Abbott and Pinak, 115-119.

<sup>300</sup> "On the Eve of the Eleventh Year of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on the Occasion of the feast of the UIA – of the Holy *Pokrov* of the *Bohoroditsa*."



Survivors of this army, both commanders and veterans from the ordinary ranks, are documented in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. References are also made to veterans' organizations which were formed after World War II. Veterans are mentioned in a Marian context with references to the *Pokrov*.<sup>301</sup> Like their counterparts during the First World War, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army is remembered as an actor in the struggle for liberation and is another example of a continuing Marian presence.

The historical memory of the Ukrainian armies of liberation, along with the Cossacks before them, testify to a strong appreciation and respect for the military. This tradition may appear at first to be a surprising aspect of Marian devotion. For Ukrainian Catholics, there is no incongruity, because military protection is a self-evident extension of the protection of Mary's *Pokrov*.

### **8.9 Post-World War II: Renewed Repression, Apparition, and Millennium**

With the conclusion of World War II, Ukraine was once again a member republic of the victorious Soviet Union. Although, Stalin, the Soviet dictator, had tolerated the Christian Churches to some degree during the war as a means of arousing and supporting resistance to the German invasion, once the war was over the repression of the Church gradually returned. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was effectively outlawed. Church activities were suppressed, and clerical leaders were imprisoned and killed.<sup>302</sup>

The repression of the Ukrainian Catholic Church by the Communist authorities continued during the post war-period into the 1980s. As previously described, it was during the 1980s that the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled and most its material reflects this communist repression. The materials in the Ukrainian Marian Collection should be understood within this context of oppression and a concomitant longing for freedom.

On April 24, 1987, one year to the day after the nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear plant, an apparition of Mary was reported in the Ukrainian village of Hryshiv. This event attracted much attention at the

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<sup>301</sup> For example, the article by Antin Kushchynski, "Свято Покровительки Української Війська (Feast of the Protectress of the Ukrainian Army) in Ukrainian Life, October 21, 1961, 42.

<sup>302</sup> "Gold, Mourning, and Blood – Ukraine: A Tragedy without Frontiers, 12-17."

time, both in the secular press and from the Soviet government. The Hryshiv apparition will be treated in more detail in a later chapter.<sup>303</sup>

The year 1988 was noteworthy, since it was the Millennium of the coming of Christianity to Ukraine through the conversion of Prince Vladimir. Celebrations and observances took place both in Ukraine and in Catholic communities in North America. The Millennium was a time of reflection on the origins of Christianity in Ukraine and on the continuing Marian presence throughout the one thousand years of Ukrainian history. The Millennial celebration is documented extensively in the Ukrainian Marian Collection and chapter 11 will look at some of those materials.

It is at this point that the relevance of the above historical sketch concludes for an examination of the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The extant materials date from or prior to the year 1988. As a concluding note, however, Ukraine did achieve independence after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. Since that time, Ukraine has remained an independent country for first time since the end of the Golden Age of Kievan Rus. Independence has not brought peace to Ukraine, but the aspiration for independence has been at least partially fulfilled.<sup>304</sup>

### **8.10 A Continuing Marian Presence**

The historical information in this chapter and the prior one has described the origins of Marian devotion in Ukraine and provided a series of examples of historical events which indicate how a Marian presence has endured in Ukrainian history. As a concluding note to this historical summary, it is worth noting that Ukrainian history has formed the Ukrainian national identity in two ways which are important for Marian devotion. One is a form of nostalgia, while the other is imminently practical.

The first way is the mythological significance of the Golden Age of Kievan Rus, the period when Marian devotion began. The writings in the Ukrainian Marian Collection frequently refer to figures and events from the Golden Age in connection with Marian devotion. Perhaps

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<sup>303</sup> The best source in the Ukrainian Marian Collection for the Hryshiv apparition is by Josyp Terelia, "Hryshiv and What I Saw There," in *Beacon* November/December 1988, 31-36.

<sup>304</sup> This study will not examine recent political events in Ukraine in detail since they are not relevant for understanding the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The recent border war with Russia and the Russian annexation of Crimea are examples of the ongoing difficulties which Ukraine has suffered after independence.

unconsciously, the desire for liberation is a desire to return to the time of the Golden Age, when Ukraine was formed and Marian devotion first flourished.

The second way is the connection between the *Pokrov* and the aspiration for liberation. The *Bohoroditsa* has always protected Ukrainians throughout their long centuries of suffering and accompanies them on their journey to liberation. Her faithfulness encourages Ukrainian Catholic to turn to her for protection and liberation. Veneration of the *Bohoroditsa* for her constant protection includes a perhaps unexpected emphasis on the military as an extension of the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*, since the military, as an instrument of liberation, fights to protect Ukrainians from foreign oppression. The connection between *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov*, liberation and the military illustrates the central theme of this study.

Today, in 2020, the *Oranta* still stands on the “Indestructible Wall” in Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. Her presence there symbolizes her maternal care and faithfulness for over one thousand years. In return, throughout their difficult history, Ukrainian Catholic have maintained a fervent and tender devotion to the *Bohoroditsa*. Maelde concludes his exposition on Marian devotion in Ukraine by noting that Ukrainians with good reason call Mary their Queen, and he refers to Ukraine as “a cradle of devotion to the Mother of Christ.”<sup>305</sup> His comments provide a good summary of what the historical presentation in this and the preceding chapter has attempted to provide. History, however, is only one way the continuing Marian presence has been preserved, and this study will now turn to that presence in popular devotion.

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<sup>305</sup> “un berceau de la devotion envers la Mère du Christ.” Maele, 732



*A continuing Marian Presence in Ukrainian history. A Ukrainian Christmas card depicts three major figures from Ukrainian history visiting the infant Christ with Mary and Joseph. Each figure is significant for the Ukrainian desire for independence and associated in some way with Marian devotion. In back are Prince Vladimir and an officer of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, probably General Chuprynka. Kneeling in front is the Cossack leader Khmelnytski. The Ukrainian text translates as “Christ is born.”<sup>306</sup>*

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<sup>306</sup> “Ukrainian historical leaders at the Nativity” (Image from Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 6).

## Chapter 9: The Continuing Marian Presence in Popular Devotion

The previous chapters have presented examples of the continuing Marian presence among Ukrainian Catholics by examining historical events, the liturgy and Marian dogma (above all the Divine Maternity and its power), the *Pokrov*, and icons. This chapter will present a survey of other examples, from a more popular perspective, which demonstrate additional ways the Marian presence has endured. These examples were selected because they contain the both the essential characteristics of Ukrainian Catholics Marian devotion and because they illustrate the thematic trajectory of *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov* and liberation.

### 9.1 The Oranta and the Cathedral of Saint Sophia

Because of its important place in the popular imagination of Ukrainian Catholics., the Saint Sophia Cathedral and its *Oranta* are an appropriate subject to begin a discussion of popular devotion. According to the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev was built in 1037.<sup>307</sup> At the time of its construction, it was the central structure of the city.<sup>308</sup> The use of Sophia in the name is a reference to divine wisdom, but also a reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Dormition.<sup>309</sup> From its beginning, the Cathedral was recognized as a masterpiece of art. It also became a cultural center, where important political functions took place. The Cathedral also served as a location for a library and scriptorium.<sup>310</sup>

Despite repeated damage and restoration during the centuries, the interior of the Cathedral retains its original 11th century appearance.<sup>311</sup> The chancel and central cupola are decorated by mosaics which are the

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<sup>307</sup> *Russian Primary Chronicle*, 137. Some versions of the Chronicle cite the year 1017.

<sup>308</sup> V. N. Achkasova and I. F. Totkaya, 14.

<sup>309</sup> Averintsev, 621. Averintsev notes that by the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the dedication of a church to Holy Sophia had become identical to a dedication to the feast of the Dormition.

<sup>310</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totkaya, 15-16.

<sup>311</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totkaya, 37.

original artwork from the initial construction.<sup>312</sup> It is among these mosaics that the *Oranta* is found. With a height of six meters, it dominates the Cathedral's interior and exceeds in size the four-meter representation of Christ *Pantocrator* which adorns the interior of the cathedral's domed roof.<sup>313</sup> Bands of mosaics below the *Oranta* contain biblical scenes, including Christ distributing the Eucharist to His disciples, and the Church Fathers.<sup>314</sup> On the arch columns before the chancel, another Marian mosaic presents a scene of the Annunciation.<sup>315</sup>

The *Oranta* mosaic depicts the Virgin Mary praying with uplifted hands. The mosaic utilizes colors in a style which is unusually bold for the time of its construction.<sup>316</sup> She wears a blue dress, which stunningly stands out from the gold background of the cupola. Her *Pokrov* is a purple *omophorion* with gold lining, which she wears about her shoulders.<sup>317</sup>



*The Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kiev in its present-day restoration. The Oranta is located on the “Indestructible wall” in the vault of the chancel.*

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<sup>312</sup> *Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Kiev: Mistetsvo, 1980

<sup>313</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya, 47.

<sup>314</sup> Powstenko, 111-114; 117-122.

<sup>315</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya, 47-49.

<sup>316</sup> Powstenko, 114-116.

<sup>317</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya, 51-53.

The wall of the Cathedral on which the *Oranta* stands has withstood wars, invasions, and other catastrophes throughout the centuries, even when the rest of the church was severely damaged. For this reason, the wall is referred to by Ukrainians as the “Indestructible Wall.” The following examples are historical occasions during which the Cathedral was damaged, but the *Oranta* and the Indestructible Wall survived:

a. In 1169, Kiev was sacked by the Vladimir-Suzdal prince Andrey Bogolyubsky.<sup>318</sup> This event was the beginning of a 460 year period of neglect and deterioration of the Cathedral.

b. In 1249, Kiev was sacked by invading Mongols. Although the city was nearly destroyed, the Cathedral remained intact, although it was extensively damaged and looted.

c. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Kiev was oppressed by feudal lords from Lithuania and Poland and by Tartars from the region of Crimea, who frequently robbed the town and Cathedral.

d. In 1416, another Mongol raid burned and looted Kiev.

e. Kiev was again sacked in 1482 by the Tatars.

f. After the 1596 Union of Brest, the Orthodox Church was no longer able to maintain the cathedral and it fell into further disrepair. The interior structure began to fail and artwork, such as murals, was destroyed.

g. In 1697, a fire destroyed the buildings of the nearby monastery.

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<sup>318</sup> Vladimir-Suzdal was one of the successor states after the break-up of Kievan Rus. Its capital was the city of Vladimir. During his sack of Kiev, Bogolyubsky took the icon of the Mother of God from the St. Sophia Cathedral and moved it to Vladimir as part of his effort to make his capital the leading city in the region of the former Kievan-Rus. For this reason, the icon became known as our Lady of Vladimir. This episode is described in bitter terms by Kushchinsky (see “Legendary Stories” below) and is also mentioned in *Icons of Ukraine.*, 14-15.

<sup>319</sup> This chronology of successive sackings and destruction in Kiev was compiled from the article “St. Sophia Cathedra,” in Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine, accessed at <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5C%5CA%5CSaintSophiaCathedral.htm>. The historical account in Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya, 16-18, was also used.

In 1699, Peter the Great initiated a restoration which included the Cathedral. This work was completed in 1767.<sup>320</sup> The Cathedral was the subject of further archaeological investigation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in an effort to determine its original layout and artwork. In the 1930s, an extensive restoration was begun under the Soviet-Ukrainian government, which resulted in the magnificent Cathedral and museum which exist today.<sup>321</sup> As was pointed out in chapter 8, during the great battle around Kiev during World War II in 1941, the restored Cathedral and the *Oranta* again survived.

The Saint Sophia Cathedral and the survival the *Oranta* on the “Indestructible Wall” together form a national symbol for Ukrainian Catholics of the *Bohoroditsa*’s unflinching faithfulness to them. The *Oranta* is mentioned in such terms in the materials of the Ukrainian Marian Collection. An example will be presented in chapter 10.<sup>322</sup> The *Oranta* has been a seminal visual representation of the *Bohoroditsa* and her protection for Ukrainians, which has encouraged and strengthened them during their long historical quest for liberation.

## **9.2 Oranta Commemorative Coin**

A secular example provides an indication of the place the *Oranta* occupies in the culture and consciousness of the Ukrainian people. The National Bank of Ukraine in 1997 issued a set of non-circulating gold coins which depict the *Oranta*. The issue of this coin was part of a series with the title “Spiritual Treasures of Ukraine.”<sup>323</sup> Other subjects in this series with associations to Marian devotion include the Tithe Church in Kiev, the Pechersk-Lavra Monastery, and the Pechersk-Larva Cathedral of the Dormition.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya 19

<sup>321</sup> Achkasova and I. F. Totskaya 19-22.

<sup>322</sup> See the excerpt from Vasil Vavrik, “The Cult of the Mother of God - the Pearl of Tradition of the Ukrainian People” discussed on pages 159-160.

<sup>323</sup> “Commemorative issue, Spiritual Treasures of Ukraine - 250 Hryven Oranta Coin.” Accessed at: <https://en.numista.com/catalogue/pieces92889.html>. Due to copyright issues, an image of the coin cannot be included in the present study, but the obverse and reverse can be seen at this web address. The face value of 250 hryvnias is equivalent to about 9 United States dollars, while the bullion value is almost \$1,000.

<sup>324</sup> A complete list of the “Spiritual Treasures of Ukraine” series is located at: <https://www.ua-coins.info/en/all/category/duhovnye-sokrovischa-ukrainy>.



The obverse of the *Oranta* coin contains an image of Saint Sophia Cathedral beneath the text “Ukraine.” The reverse contains an image of the *Oranta* with her name in horizontal text. Due to copyright issues, an image of the coin cannot be included in this study, but they can be viewed on-line.<sup>325</sup>

The presence of the *Oranta* in the world of banking and finance is an indication of her prominent place in the Ukrainian national consciousness. The *Bohoroditsa* is part of a “spiritual treasury” which is recognized by and belongs to all Ukrainians. Although the issue of this coin occurred in 1997, about a decade after the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled, it is a striking illustration of one way in which the *Oranta* is still present in Ukrainian culture.

### **9.3 Folklore and Legendary Stories**

Marian Devotion is expressed in legendary stories. Examples are found throughout the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Some appear in isolation in articles or booklets, while about forty were published in a series of articles in *Svitlo* magazine in 1988 and 1989.<sup>326</sup> A significant portion of these stories originate from the time Ukraine was subject to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.<sup>327</sup>

These legends vary in form, content, and degree of historicity. Some are related to historical or biblical events, while others are a form of *kazka*, a Slavic fairy tale. Mary appears as a character in each legend in connection with some reference to Christ. A specialized study is necessary to consider the full literary content, cultural context, and devotional meaning of these stories. This study will confine itself to a discussion of a few examples which have been selected because they illustrate important themes in Ukrainian Marian devotion.

One of the oldest legends is found in *A Tale of Igor’s Regiment*, which Kushchinski identifies as “the best work of Ukrainian literature of the 12<sup>th</sup> century” and as “a great testimony to the veneration of the *Bohoroditsa* among the Ukrainian Army of that time.<sup>328</sup>” The hero, Prince

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<sup>325</sup> Both <https://en.numista.com/catalogue/pieces92889.html> and <https://www.ua-coins.info/en/list/2025-oranta-50> present images of the *Oranta* coin.

<sup>326</sup> “Svitlo” is a Ukrainian word meaning “light.”

<sup>327</sup> Muzyczka, *Ukraine*, 509.

<sup>328</sup> “[В] найкращому творі українського письменства 12-го століття” and “велике свідцтво про почитання Матері Божої серед війська українського тієї доби.” Antin Kushchinsky, *Найважливіша й Найдавніша Українська*

Igor Svyatoslavich, is travelling back to Ukraine after being a prisoner of war for two years. Before returning to his home in Kiev and his wife Yaroslavna, who has been patiently waiting for him, he goes to Borychev (a district of Kiev) to offer thanks before the Icon of the *Holy Mother of God of Pirogoshcha*. Only then does he come home.<sup>329</sup>

For the Prince, devotion to Mary as a protector during wartime and a liberator from captivity is a higher priority than returning home immediately to a loving wife. The Prince wanted to render thanks to the *Bohoroditsa*, something he would naturally do before an important icon of her. Although the story may not be entirely historical, his actions demonstrate the strong Marian devotion among the Ukrainian Army in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the soldiers' trust in her protection. The story, which is frequently recounted, is an example of a continuing Marian presence within the thematic trajectory *Bohoroditsa- Pokrov-Liberation*, albeit at a personal, rather than a national level.

Yet the story, as related by Kushchinski, has a polemical point as well. The icon in the story is better known as *Our Lady of Vladimir*, one of the most popular icons in Ukraine. In his article, Kushchinski calls the icon by the name *Pirogoshcha*, the name of the Church of the Dormition in Kiev where the icon resided before it was removed (or, in Kushchinski view, stolen) and eventually taken to Moscow. Kushchinski's uses the term *Pirogoshcha* to emphasize that the icon is *Ukrainian*, not Russian, and that it is an ancient symbol of Marian devotion in Kievan Rus which does not properly belong to its Russian captors in Moscow. Kushchinski's strong feelings regarding the true origin of this icon, evident throughout the discussion of its history in his article, indicates how important the *Pirogoscha Icon of the Mother of God* is in Ukrainian devotion.

A different aspect of Marian presence is illustrated by the story "The Most Pure Virgin, the Spinner."<sup>330</sup> The Holy Virgin is sitting in heaven in front of her spinning wheel. She looks down on the world and sees humanity suffering from sin. Amid her great compassion for the lost souls she sees, she hears God telling her that He will send his Son to redeem the world and free it from the curse of sin and the devil. Mary

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*Икона Богоматери* (The Most Important and Ancient Ukrainian Icon of the Mother Of God) (Unpublished manuscript, Marian Ukrainian Collection, Box 4). The author of *A Tale of Igor's Regiment* is unknown.

<sup>329</sup> Kushchinski, "The Most Important and Ancient Ukrainian Icon of the Mother Of God." In his article, Kushchinsky argues that the icon in Moscow is a copy, and the original is in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

<sup>330</sup> Antin Lomotsky, ed., "Пречиста Діва Прядільниця" ("The Most Pure Virgin, the Spinner") *Svitlo* (March 1988), 113.

responds by expressing her desire to be the Mother of God's Son – she wants to comfort and clothe Him - and realizes that she has conceived. An angel comes to Mary and asks her why she is happy. Mary replies that she will be the servant of the Lord. Mary asks the angel to bring her wool so that she can spin a garment for her Child. A group of angels does so, and Mary begins to spin yarn which is white as snow. The angels take some of this yarn and distribute over all the world. The yarn falls into damp soil and eventually grows into a plant whose leaves and branches contain delicate strands of wool. For this reason, Ukrainians still call the plant “God’s Clothes.”<sup>331</sup>

The story can be understood as a retelling of the Annunciation episode in the gospel of Luke. Mary, predestined in heaven, is chosen to be the Mother of God because of her compassion for sinners and her desire to serve God. As indicated in chapter 5, compassion for sinners is an important aspect of the Slavic conception of Mary's character. Her role in this story is therefore as the *Bohoroditsa* of maternal pity. She responds to the angel's questions with words that recall Luke 1:38. The presence of wool, a material taken from the fleece of sheep, connotes Christ the Lamb of God. The wool's white color, referred to as white as snow, recalls Isaiah 1:18 and establishes an association with the forgiveness of sins and with grace. The use of the image of damp soil is an image in Slavic devotion which symbolizes universal motherhood.<sup>332</sup> The distribution of Mary's yarn throughout the world and its transformation into wool can therefore be interpreted as a picture of the forgiveness of sins through Mary's mediation of grace.

The naming of the plant as “God’s Clothes” indicates that Mary's wool represents something that is divine and protective, or, in other words, it is divine grace. In this sense, the legend depicts Mary, motivated by maternal pity, as one who brings Christ to a sinful world in need of a Redeemer. She is present as an essential *Mediatrice* of salvation, a depiction which confirms to the Slavic sensibility that sinners everywhere are dependent on her help. This Marian presence as a *Mediatrice* of grace, who is always available to help sinners, is an essential aspect of the Slavic perception of Mary's continuing presence throughout history.

Another story, “In the Town” also uses the image of a flower in association with Mary.<sup>333</sup> The setting is the home of Joseph, Mary and

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<sup>331</sup> A footnote to this legend indicates that the scientific name of this plant is *stachis palustris*.

<sup>332</sup> Averintsev, 616.

<sup>333</sup> Antin Lomotsky, “У Городі” (“In the Town”) *Svitlo* (September 1988), 274.

Jesus on the outskirts of Nazareth. The child Jesus is playing with small stones. Mary, who always tries to be with him as much as possible, is sitting next to him. Jesus piles up the stones and constructs a miniature building. As he does so, the stones turn into jewels. The reflection of sunlight off the jewel attracts the attention of some of the local villagers. They come and gather around the bejeweled building.

This episode, taking place during the heat of the day, has made Jesus thirsty and he asks Mary for water. The Mother of God obediently goes to the town well and then realizes she does not have a cup to draw water. She plucks a flower growing next to the well and it is transformed into a lovely cup. The Most-Pure is able to draw water and Jesus' thirst is satisfied. The flower is known as "Cup of the Mother of God."

This story illustrates a close connection between Jesus and Mary. The *Bohoroditsa* wants to be with Jesus as much as she can. Where Jesus is, Mary is there as well. Jesus is divine – he can turn ordinary stones into jewels – and he draws people to Himself. Mary therefore is always in the divine presence, even when Jesus is surrounded by other people. Yet Jesus is also depicted as fully human - he becomes thirsty on a hot day - and Mary is willing and able to take care of him. Her ability to do so is realized even if a special action of grace, such as the transformation of a flower into a cup, is necessary. Mary is thus always present with her divine Son and able to exercise her power to do whatever He requires of her. The legend thus illustrates her Divine Maternity and the power which derives from it.

The efficacy of Mary's maternal activity correlates with the Ukrainian Catholic perception of her maternal pity. If she is able to meet the needs of the God-Man when he is thirsty, surely she can meet the needs of ordinary sinners. Because she is always in the divine presence, her Divine Maternity has a special power that makes her an effective intercessor and protector. Finally, although Jesus draws people to himself, the effort of doing so requires Mary's maternal support and care, and therefore she is an essential co-worker with Him.

A final example, "How the Mother of God Reanimated a Spring," has a biblical basis in the Visitation narrative and takes place while Mary and Joseph are on the journey to visit Elizabeth.<sup>334</sup> After travelling for hours along a road, they arrive tired and thirsty at a barren field. The only shelter from the hot sun is provided by a solitary, withered tree next to the

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<sup>334</sup> R. Z. Podav, "Як Мати Божі Оживала Джерело" ("How the Mother of God Reanimated a Spring") *Veselka* (XII August September 1965), 10.

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road. After sitting down in the feeble shade of the tree, they meet a shepherd boy who is passing by with his flock and ask him if there is a spring nearby. The boy replies that there is, although the water is insufficient to sustain himself and his flock.

He runs to the spring and returns with a small horn filled with muddy water. As soon as Mary stretches out her hand to touch the horn, the water in it immediately becomes clean and pure. After Mary and Joseph drink from the horn, she takes it to the spring and sprinkles water there and then does the same for the tree and the surrounding field. The spring becomes an abundant source of pure fresh water, the tree is restored with full foliage, and the field is covered with grass.

Their thirst quenched, Mary and Joseph are able to rest under the full shade of the transformed tree. The flock of sheep can graze in the field. The boy asks Mary if she is an angel from heaven sent to save him and his sheep. Mary just smiles. As they depart to resume their journey, the shepherd boy takes a branch from the tree and makes a pipe. The music of his playing is so beautiful that his hungry sheep stop their grazing and look up at him. He is playing in honor of God and the woman traveler who reanimated the spring.

This legend is another illustration of the power of the Divine Maternity – in this case, barrenness becomes life. The *Bohoroditsa* transforms a spring, a tree and a field from barren lifelessness to vibrant life. Since this reanimation takes place as she carries the unborn Christ Child within her, the transformation of the scene can be understood as an allegorical representation of the results of her mediation of grace, which regenerates fallen human nature. She is motivated by maternal pity for suffering humanity, which is represented by the poor shepherd boy and his flock. In her humility, she does not identify herself when asked for her name. It is the unborn Christ's presence which is most important to her.

These four legends are a fraction of over fifty examples in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. They were selected because they illustrate the essential aspects of Ukrainian Marian devotion – veneration of icons, the *Bohoroditsa*'s maternal pity for sinners, her protective intercession and her role as a channel of divine grace. A Christological connection is present in each story – the child in the *Pirogoshcha* icon, the conception of Christ at the Annunciation, an infant Jesus at play, or the unborn Christ Child during the Visitation. The above interpretations of these legends are subjective. The analysis is intended only to indicate how they can be construed as illustrations of the thematic trajectory of *Bohoroditsa* (her Divine Maternity and maternal pity) to protection (in the form of

intercession and help) to liberation (in the form of liberation from sin and suffering.)

#### **9.4 Marian Aspects of Poetry**

Like legendary stories, many examples of poetry are found throughout the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Poetry is another aspect of the presence of Marian devotion in Ukrainian culture. The following examples have again been selected to illustrate characteristics of Ukrainian Catholic devotion. All translations are by the author.

“Pochayiv at Lourdes” is prefaced with quotations from Rev 12:1 (the Woman Clothed with the Sun) and Revelation 12:17 (the struggle of Mary and her children with the dragon.)<sup>335</sup> The opening section of the poem describes Mary’s appearance at Lourdes:

*A miraculous star appears there ,  
The clearest among the stars.  
The virgin pure and beautiful  
Queen of the Blue Mountains.*

*The moon under her feet ,  
The Virgin clothed with the sun.  
Twelve bright stars there  
Crown her forehead.*

*That is Mary, our Mother  
and the Mother of the Lord Christ.  
Full of grace and tenderness  
From heaven she descended to us.*

*She blesses God's people,  
And pours love everywhere.  
She admonishes the sinful world,  
And takes everyone under her Pokrov.<sup>336</sup>*

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<sup>335</sup> Прума, Vasil. “Почайв У Лурді” (“Pochayiv at Lourdes”) (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 5).

<sup>336</sup> “Сяє зірка там чудова,  
Найясніша серед зір:  
Діва чиста й прехороша  
Королева синіх гір.

The apparition of Mary is depicted in a manner which uniquely combines Our Lady of Lourdes, the Woman of Revelation 12 and the *Pokrov* of the Mother of God. Essential characteristics of the *Bohoroditsa* are described - She is the Most-Pure (“full of grace”) and motivated by maternal pity (“our Mother,” “tenderness,” “admonishes a sinful world.”) These qualities are inseparable from her role of protectress (“takes everyone under her *Pokrov*.”)

In a further and uniquely Ukrainian expression of Marian devotion, the poem concludes by associating the Pochayiv Monastery, the site of Marian apparitions in Ukraine, with the Grotto of Lourdes:

*In that Rock is a wonderful Grotto :  
Full of miracles of the great Virgin,  
Brethren , let us go to work,  
Brethren , let us go to work,  
That "Pochayiv" might become like Lourdes!*

*That it might become a house of prayer  
The meeting place of the brother ,  
A source of faith and inspiration  
For Ukrainians of all lands.<sup>337</sup>*

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Місяць під її ногами,  
Сонце Діву одягло.  
Зір дванадцять там яскравих  
увінчали їй чоло.

То Марія наша Мати  
и Мати Господа Христа.  
Повна ласки й благодати —  
Із Небес до нас зійшла.

Божий люд благословляє,  
Розливає скрізь любов.  
Грішний світ наминає,  
Всіх бере під свій покров.” Прума.

<sup>337</sup>“ В тій Скалі чудова Грота:  
Повна чуд, великих див  
Братя, станьмо до роботи,

The author of the poem is inspired by the many miracles which have occurred at Lourdes to express his desire for Pochayiv to become a similar place where Ukrainians of all lands could gather in faith and fellowship. When this poem was written, such a gathering was hardly possible due to the persecution of Ukrainian Catholics by the Soviet government. The parallel with Lourdes is poignant for the author, since both Lourdes and Pochayiv are sites of Marian apparitions on a rock - the Grotto of Massabielle at Lourdes and the rock with the *Bohoroditsa*'s footprints at Pochayiv. Both are sites where miraculous events have occurred through Marian intercession. The poem becomes a call for Ukrainians to work for liberation ("Brethren, let us go to work") and therefore illustrates the thematic trajectory of *Bohoroditsa – Pokrov - Liberation*.

"The *Pokrov* of the Most-Pure Virgin Mary," written by Stepan Hauk on his 90th birthday, illustrates how the *Pokrov* is a central devotional element.<sup>338</sup> The author pleads for Mary to cover her children, who cry out for help, with the protection of her *Pokrov*:

*Why now in this holy temple  
Have so many of your children come together?  
They call to You in a pleading chorus:  
Protect us Mother with your Pokrov.*

*Both for Dormition and for Christmas,  
One feeling only leads us here,  
Love, which is calling to you again,  
Take us Mother under Your Pokrov.*

*Like Yaroslav and our ancestors in the Sich,  
Who begged you and asked for strength,*

---

Браття, станьмо до роботи,  
Щоб "Почаїв" в Люрді цвів!

Щоб став домом для моління  
Місцем зустрічі братів,  
Міццю Віри і Надхніння  
Українців всіх країв." Прума.

<sup>338</sup> Stephen Hauk, "Покров Пречистої Діви Марії) ("The Pokrov of the Most-Pure Virgin Mary") *Svitlo* (May, 1979).



*We beg you in an evil hour,  
By Your Pokrov cover us now.*<sup>339</sup>

The poem is a recurring petition to be placed under the protection of the *Pokrov*. Mary is invoked twice as Mother. The image of the people, motivated by love for their spiritual mother and gathered in the holy temple on the feasts of the Dormition and of Christmas, indicates this petition is offered by and on behalf of all Ukrainian Catholics. The reference to Yaroslav the Wise and the Cossack *Sich*, which establishes a connection with the Golden Age of Kievan Rus and folk-heroes of Ukrainian history, extends the scope of the prayer to all Ukraine. The reference to “this evil hour” alludes to the difficulties Ukraine was experiencing under the persecution of the Soviet Government and expresses a desire for Mary to liberate Ukraine through the protection of her *Pokrov*. Consequently, all the elements of the thematic trajectory *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov* and Liberation are present in this poem.

The national aspiration for liberation is particularly strong in the short poem “Oh, Mother of God:”<sup>340</sup>

*O Mother of God, O flower of paradise,  
Ukrainian children implore you!  
Do not let us perish in captivity,  
Return us to our Ukraine !*

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<sup>339</sup> “Чого ж це нині в цей храм святий  
Зійшлося так багато Твоїх дітей?  
Кличуть до Тебе благальним хором:  
Покрий нас Мати своїм Покровом.

І на Успення й на Рождество,  
Сюди чуття одно лиш нас вело -  
Любов, що кличе до Тебе знов,  
Візьми нас Мати під Твій Покров.

И за Ярослава і батьки в Січі  
Тебе благали, просили сили  
Тебе благаєм в лихій годині,  
Своїм Покровом, покрий нас нині.” Наук.

<sup>340</sup> М. Pidgriyanka “О, Мати Божа” ) (“Oh , Mother of God:”) in *Мольби Прийми Непорочна . . . Книга II* (Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II), 31 (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982).

*Where our ancestors died in wounds ,  
Do not let children live there in chains ,  
Let us gather the offerings of our harvest ,  
Return us to our Ukraine!*<sup>341</sup>

The Ukrainian people are portrayed as trusting children who call on the Mother of God for assistance and protection. The plea for protection connotes the *Pokrov*, as does the expressed desire to celebrate the harvest in Ukraine (a subtle reference to the feast of the *Pokrov*, celebrated in October at harvest time.) The plea for protection recognizes the bondage of present difficulties (“do not let us perish in captivity”) and (“do not let the children there live in chains.”) The suffering of the people is described in terms which evoke the memory a tragic history (“our ancestors died in wounds”). The repeated petition to return to Ukraine expresses sorrow among the Ukrainian *diaspora* in which ethnic Ukrainians are scattered abroad in Europe and the Americas. All the elements of *Bohoroditsa*, *Pokrov* and Liberation are expressed in these brief verses.

The laudatory character of Ukrainian Marian devotion is expressed with simplicity in “Most Heavenly, Most Wonderful”:<sup>342</sup>

*Most Heavenly, Most Wonderful ,  
Virgin Mary ,  
You are the only Mother to us all  
Dearest to thy Son  
Mother of God, Mary !*

*The most honored , the most glorious ,*

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<sup>341</sup> “О Мати Божа, о райський квіте,  
Тебе благають українські діти!  
Не дай в неволі нам пропадати,  
Україну нашу верни нам мати!

Де наші предки вмирали в ранах,  
Не дай там жити дітям в кайданах,  
Позволь зібрати жертв наших жниво,  
Україну нашу верни нам, Діво!” *Pidgriyanka*.

<sup>342</sup> “Пренебесна Пречудесна” (“Most Heavenly, Most Wonderful”) in *Мольби Прийми Непорочна . . . Книга II* (Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II), 17 (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982).

*Virgin Mary ,  
Cherubim, Seraphim  
They glorify Thee with the Saints ,  
Mother of God, Mary !*

*A star clear and beautiful ,  
Virgin Mary ,  
You are our hope in heaven  
And protectress in need ,  
Mother of God, Mary !<sup>343</sup>*

Mary, addressed as Mother of God, receives praise through a series of titles – Most Heavenly, Most-Pure, Most-Honored, Most-Glorious, clear and beautiful star. The reference to the Cherubim and Seraphim recalls the laudatory line from the liturgy “more venerable than the Cherubim and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim” Praise of the *Bohoroditsa* naturally includes acknowledgement of dependence on her help and protection– she is “our hope in heaven” and “protectress in need.” These simple verses succinctly illustrate the connection in Ukrainian Catholic spirituality between the Divine Maternity (Mary is repeatedly invoked as Mother of God) and her intercession and protection.

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<sup>343</sup> “Пренебесна, Пречудесна,  
Діво Маріє,  
Ти нам Мати всім єдина  
Наймиліша в Твого Сина  
Мати Божа, Маріє!

Найчесніша, найславніша,  
Діво Маріє,  
Херувими, Серафими  
Величають Тя з Святими,  
Мати Божа, Маріє!

Зоре ясна і прекрасна,  
Діво Маріє,  
Ти надія наша в небі  
І заступниця в потребі,  
Мати Божа, Маріє!” Unattributed.

“Mary Blessed Virgin” is another example of laudatory devotion, in this case with a universal dimension:<sup>344</sup>

*Mary Blessed Virgin Mary,  
All nations bow to You ,  
Rejoice, temple of grace ,  
Our hope for joy.*

*Immaculate Queen Mother,  
Allow us children to give to you  
Sincere thanks for the love,  
For Your mercy, Your Pokrov.*

*You will we serve forever.,  
To glorify your soul and heart:  
Rejoice, Mother of God  
Who gave salvation to the world.*

*Kind Mother, Only Mother,  
Pray in heaven to your Son,  
That the west with the east in unity  
Might sing a song of gratitude.<sup>345</sup>*

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<sup>344</sup> “Маріє Діво Благословенна”( “Mary Blessed Virgin”) in in *Мольби Прийми Непорочна . . . Книга II* (Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II), 30 (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982).

<sup>345</sup> “Маріє Діво благословенна,  
Тобі складає поклін вселенна,  
Радуйся храме благодости,  
Надіє наша радости.

Пренепорочна Царице Мати,  
Позволь нам дітям Тобі віддати  
Подяку щиру за любов,  
За Твої ласки, Твій покров

Тобі будемо во вік служити,  
Душею, серцем Тебе славити:  
Радуйся Мати Божая  
Спасення світу давшая.

Мати ласкава, Мати єдина,  
Вимоли в небі у Твого Сина,

The opening stanza expresses the universality of the Divine Maternity (“all nations bow to you”) and acknowledges human dependence on Mary’s help (“our hope for joy.”) Praise of the Virgin again naturally leads to acknowledgement of her active intercession and protection, when later stanzas evoke her as Queen and offer thanks for her love, mercy, and *Pokrov*. The verses maintain a Christological connection when they indicate the desire of Mary’s spiritual children to serve her forever because she is the Mother of the Savior. The theme of the universality of the Divine Maternity recurs in the last stanza, which expresses hope for unity between the Eastern and Western Churches and peoples. The typical aspects of devotion are present in these verses in an especially ecumenical context.

These five examples of Marian poetry are a sampling of dozens of others which are found throughout the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Many others could be proffered with content similar to what is presented above. There are abundant references to Mary’s virtues, her titles, and the power of her intercession and *Pokrov*. A volume of poetry could be constructed from this material, which so admirably expresses the essential characteristics of Ukrainian Marian devotion and the trajectory *Bohoroditsa -Pokrov-Liberation*. In this manner, poetry, like legendary stories, is an important way that a continuing Marian presence is expressed in Ukrainian Marian devotion and culture.

### **9.5 Marian Apparitions**

Apparitions are another example of a recurring Marian presence. A difficulty for the researcher is that most of the apparitions in Ukraine lack formal original source documentation and therefore accounts of them are usually legendary stories.<sup>346</sup> This does not mean, however, that some of these apparitions are not important for Marian devotion.

One reason for the lack of documentation is that several of the reported apparitions took place centuries ago. Apparitions in recent decades do have some original source documentation. In some cases, they

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Щоб захід з сходом в Єності  
Співали пісню вдячності.” Unattributed.

<sup>346</sup> For example, the *Guide to the Marian Apparitions Collection* of the Marian Library does not list any material relating to Ukraine.

have been reported in newspapers and other media and have caused a response from government authorities.

No apparition in Ukraine has received official approval by the Catholic Church.<sup>347</sup> The lack of ecclesiastical approval is not necessarily a reflection on the veracity of the apparitions. The Ukrainian Catholic Church was, in practical terms, illegal in Ukraine after the end of World War II and its hierarchy suppressed. There has been no opportunity for competent Church authorities to conduct a formal investigation into the apparitions in accordance with the guidelines of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

In most cases, information about the apparitions is only available in informal, secondary sources. Examples of such sources, written primarily for a popular readership, can be found in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. These materials are nevertheless useful for a researcher, regardless of their accuracy, because they demonstrate how Marian apparitions have been assimilated into popular devotion. They both reflect and influence the characteristics of devotion.

The content of these apparitions is varied. The exercise of Marian intercession as protection from a military threat is a recurring pattern. Apparitions are the occasion for miraculous events which sometimes involve the presence of icons. The message of the apparition may include the promise of protection from persecution by a hostile government. There may even be no verbal message at all.

Other than the *Pokrov* and the events at the Pochayiv monastery, apparitions are not a major topic for discussion in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The following presentation of apparitions is therefore not intended to provide a comprehensive account of each of them. The discussion has the more modest objective of illustrating how these apparitions are present in the writings of the Ukrainian *diaspora*.

The earliest significant apparition is of course the *Pokrov* in Constantinople in the 10th century. This apparition has been previously described. The importance of the *Pokrov* is that, although it is a legendary event, it established a tradition by which apparitions are associated with the *Bohoroditsa's* protection. In the case of the *Pokrov*, her protection delivered the city of Constantinople from the danger threatened by the presence of an enemy army. Although this apparition did not take place in Ukraine, it has become an essential element in Marian devotion there

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<sup>347</sup> For instance, the reliable website [www.miraclehunter.com](http://www.miraclehunter.com) does not mention any apparitions in Ukraine. This website provides listings and documentation of all Marian apparitions which have received some form of ecclesiastical approval.

and is by far the most important apparition for the *diaspora*. There are literally hundreds of items in the Marian Ukrainian Collection which refer to this apparition.

Several apparitions have occurred at the Pochayiv Monastery, one of the most important in Ukraine and second in size and significance only to the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev.<sup>348</sup> By tradition, Mary first appeared at this location on May 17, 1198, to the monk Ivan Turkulov.<sup>349</sup> A second and more important apparition occurred in 1216. The monks in monastery saw Mary appear in a pillar of fire and standing on a rock. The rock is still venerated and depicted in iconography, since it supposedly contains impressions of the footprints of Mary. Because the rock has become the source for reports of miraculous healings, the Pochayiv monastery has become a popular destination for pilgrimage.<sup>350</sup>

The miraculous powers of the icon *Our Lady of Pochayiv* were tested during another apparition which occurred at the Pochayiv monastery in 1675. A Turkish army had advanced on Kiev and surrounded the monastery. Under threat of destruction, the monks publicly displayed the Icon of the Mother of Pochayiv and prayed before it. Mary appeared and spread her *Pokrov* over the monastery. The Turkish army retreated.<sup>351</sup>

References to the apparitions at the Pochayiv Monastery are much less frequent in the Ukrainian Marian Collection than those to the *Pokrov*. When Pochayiv is invoked, as in the example from Kupranets, the context is a nostalgic memory of miraculous Marian protection.<sup>352</sup> Like the *Pokrov* apparition, there is also a close association with deliverance from a military threat.

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<sup>348</sup> Two good sources for the importance and history of the Pochayiv Monastery are Ivan Dubilko, *Почаївський Манастир в Історії Нашого Народу*. (The Pochayiv Monastery in the History of Our People.) (\*Winnipeg: Research Institute of Volyn, 1986) and Metropolitan *Ilarion*, *Свята Почаївська Лавра* (The Holy Pochayiv Lavra). (Winnipeg: Research Institute of Volyn, 1961.) *Ilarion*,

<sup>349</sup> О. Kupranets, “Появи Пресвятої Богородици у Укпаїни” (“Apparitions of the Most-Holy *Bohoroditsa* in Ukraine”) in *Мольби Прийни Непорочна . . . Книга II* (*Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II*), 72 (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982.)

<sup>350</sup> *Ilarion*, 291-293. Kupranets, 72. This story is also mentioned on the Mary Page of the Marian Library in the article “Our Lady of Pochayiv” accessed at <https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/o/our-lady-of-pochaev.php>.

<sup>351</sup> Maele, 750. Also Kupranets, 72-73.

<sup>352</sup> Kupranets, 72-73.



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*The Pochayiv Monastery, located in western Ukraine, is one of the most important and best-known Ukrainian monasteries.*<sup>353</sup>

More recently, an apparition of Mary was recorded in the western Ukrainian village of Seredne beginning in 1954. The only extended account of the Seredne apparitions in the collection is incomplete and taken from a series of articles in *Svitlo* magazine.<sup>354</sup> A young girl named Hana experienced at least seventeen apparitions beginning on December 21. The first apparition was so bright that people came to the apparition site from neighboring villages, because they thought there was a fire. Mary was wearing a blue veil. In later visions, Anna saw Mary in various ways, accompanied by the angels, the sun, the moon and the Holy Trinity. Miraculous healings were reported in the surrounding area.<sup>355</sup>

Seredne is very rarely mentioned in the Marian Ukrainian collection, and the existing material consists of news reports. The present author was unable to locate a reference to Seredne in devotion or instructional writings in the collection. Seredne had simply not achieved any significant recognition among the *diaspora* and had not influenced their devotional praxis. This apparition is therefore not of any real relevance for the present study.

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<sup>353</sup> “The Pochayiv Lavra Monastery” (Public domain image accessed at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Панорама\\_Почайівська\\_лавра\\_02.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Панорама_Почайівська_лавра_02.jpg)).

<sup>354</sup> A portion of this series is preserved in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. See “The Recent Apparitions of the Blessed Mother in Seredne (1954-1955) Part IV *Svitlo* (March 1960), 154.

<sup>355</sup> Kupranets, 73; “The Recent Apparitions of the Blessed Mother in Seredne (1954-1955) Part IV *Svitlo* (March 1960), 154



The most recent apparition with documentation in the Ukrainian Marian Collection began in the village of Hryshiv on April 26, 1987. This date is exactly the one-year anniversary of the nuclear reactor disaster at Chernobyl in Ukraine. The apparition therefore occurred near the end of the period in which the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled and was therefore too new to have exercised any significant influence on Marian devotion. Its significance is primarily of a political nature and illustrates the difficult relationship between the Ukrainian Catholics and the Communist Soviet authorities.

The visionary was a 12-year-old girl named Maryna Kizyn. While walking to school, she saw an apparition of a woman holding a child above the vacant village church. She immediately returned home to tell her mother. Although her mother did not initially believe Maryna, both of them were able to see the apparition from the garden behind their house.<sup>356</sup>

News of the apparition spread quickly and soon thousands of people from neighboring areas flocked to the abandoned church. Among them was Josyp Terelia, a Ukrainian dissident who had recently been released from prison by the Soviet authorities. Terelia's account of his experience, *Hryshiv and What I Saw There*, was published originally in Ukrainian and later in an English translation in *Beacon* magazine.<sup>357</sup> His account is the only original source documentation of the apparition in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. As such, it illustrates the political nature of the events at Hryshiv, since Terelia recounts to a greater extent the opposition of the Soviet authorities, rather than the content of the actual apparition.

Upon his arrival in Hryshiv on May 9, Terelia found that access to the local church building was blocked by police and other government authorities. After he spent the day organizing resistance to the police, access to the church was restored. Terelia himself had a vision of Mary above the church that same evening.<sup>358</sup>

The bright light over the church remained for three weeks and then gradually began to fade away.<sup>359</sup> The apparition site continued to attract thousands of daily visitors. The Ukrainian Marian Collection contains newspaper articles which describe the growing concern of the Soviet government, because it considered such gatherings to be an illegal form of religious assembly. Soviet authorities felt so threatened by the happenings

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<sup>356</sup> Terelia, 31.

<sup>357</sup> The Ukrainian Marian Collection preserves a portion of the Ukrainian original.

<sup>358</sup> Terelia, 34-35.

<sup>359</sup> Terelia, 34.

in Hryshiv that they took the unprecedented step of publishing a statement condemning the apparitions and accusing the Catholic Church of fabricating them in order to discredit Gorbachev's program of *perestroika*.<sup>360</sup>

The message of Hryshiv remains unclear, since Mary did not provide a verbal message.<sup>361</sup> The timing of the apparition on the anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster and one year prior to the celebration of the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine also remains a topic of speculation.<sup>362</sup> Whatever its authenticity or significance (the apparition has never been investigated or approved by ecclesiastical authority), it did have the effect of increasing awareness of the Ukrainian Catholic Church during the period immediately prior to the Millennial celebrations in 1988. This increase in awareness was the real significance of the apparition for the *diaspora*, and the Ukrainian Collection does not contain writings which refer to this apparition as a part of devotion *praxis*.

The apparition does have some connection with the notion of liberation. In his Hryshiv account, Terelia notes that apparitions had occurred previously at the same location. During the time of the Khmelnytsky uprising, Mary appeared, and the villagers planted a willow tree as a memorial. Near the beginning of the 19th century, a spring came forth by the church with healing powers. In 1855, a woman in the village had a dream in which Mary told her to use the water from the stream to protect the villagers against an outbreak of cholera. On May 12, 1914, a bright light appeared over the church and villagers in attendance heard the voice of Mary encouraging them to be faithful and warning them that they would have to endure another 80 years before they would finally achieve liberation.<sup>363</sup> These prior apparitions indicate that Hryshiv was associated with Mary and the liberation of Ukraine prior to the events of 1987. It is therefore possible to view the Hryshiv apparitions as Mary's way of reassuring Ukrainian Catholics that her 1914 promise of liberation would soon be fulfilled, an event that did come to pass four years later.

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<sup>360</sup> See for example, Martin Sieff, "Vision of Virgin Mary Draws Millions to Ukrainian Village" *Our Way* (January, February, March 1988).

<sup>361</sup> The opinion piece by Patrick F. Brennan, "Message of Hryshiv Still Uncertain" in *America* (August 12, 1988), reports that some Catholics consider Hryshiv as a fulfillment of Fatima, or as Mary's way of telling Ukrainians they were chosen to convert the Soviets. There is no reliable documentation for either assertion.

<sup>362</sup> Terelia suggests the timing has eschatological significance as a sign of the approaching end of the present age. Terelia, 31-32. More than thirty years after the event, it is difficult to agree with him.

<sup>363</sup> Terelia, 32-34. Again, none of these apparitions have ecclesial approval.

## **9.6 Ukrainian Marian Devotion and the Military**

For the Slavic temperament, the extension of the *Bohoroditsa*'s protection to military affairs is a natural and self-evident manifestation of the power of her Divine Maternity. This characteristic of Ukrainian spirituality was present during the earliest stages of Kievan Rus. Both Prince Vladimir and his sons, such as Yaroslav the Wise, erected churches on sites with military significance or in gratitude for a military victory. The location of the Church of the Annunciation on top of the Golden Gate of Kiev is a prominent example of Marian protection in association with military fortifications.

Mary's victory giving power was not merely spiritual but extended to the physical, and even to the purely military . . . Her role of Lady of Victory, the military patroness of the city, explains why nearly every ancient Slav town and city had at least one church dedicated to her.<sup>364</sup>

A striking aspect of the Ukrainian Marian Collection is the large amount of material which is related to the Ukrainian military. There are accounts of specific military organizations, from time of the first rulers of Kievan Rus, to the Cossacks in medieval times, and finally to the Ukrainian Resistance Army during World War II. Armies ride into battle under banners with an image of the *Pokrov*. Authors refer to episodes from military history with pride and praise soldiers for their sacrifices as part of the struggle of Ukraine to achieve political liberation.

These characteristics are well illustrated in the article "On the Day of the *Pokrov*," written on the occasion of the celebration of the feast of the *Pokrov*.<sup>365</sup>

From Yaroslav the Wise, during the times of princes and Cossacks, up to our modern military tradition, the images of the holy *Pokrov* were proudly displayed on the flags of Ukrainian military units. Flags with the image of the holy *Pokrov* proudly

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<sup>364</sup> Kucharek. 231

<sup>365</sup> "У День св. Покрови" ("On the Day of the Holy *Pokrov*") (Ukrainian Marian Collection).

flew over the Cossack army during its campaigns and battles<sup>366</sup> [these campaigns] show the whole world that the power of Ukrainian weapons is irresistible when it is governed by the great and clear idea of liberation. The Mother of God blessed the Ukrainian soldiers because of this great goal.<sup>367</sup>

This depiction is not jingoistic flag waving. It is an expression of the Marian presence in the struggle for liberation. The reader feels the pride of the author as he describes the image of the *Pokrov* on the flag of the advancing Cossack armies. Mary is depicted as the protectress of Ukrainian armies, and the cause of these armies is just because they fight for her and for the idea of national liberation.

In the aftermath of World War I, when Ukraine briefly achieved independence, the Cossack tradition had a strong influence on the formation the Army of Liberation which fought at that time during the Russian Civil War and other military conflicts. Here again, the *Pokrov* is present as symbol of the struggle for liberation under Marian presence:

The Ukrainian people took over the Cossack military tradition of the holy *Pokrov* unconditionally and wholeheartedly. With the new national liberation movement and with the gaining of the freedom of Ukraine, glorious traditions of the unforgettable past felt like a cornerstone in the formation of Ukrainian armies. And on the battle flags of the Ukrainian army shined the image of the holy *Pokrov*, the veil that symbolized then and symbolizes now the immortality of our liberation idea.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> “Від Ярослава Мудрого, почерез княжі й козацькі часи, кризь нашу вже новітню військову традицію образи святої Покрови гордо мають на прапорах українських військових з’єднань. Прапори зі зображенням св. Покрови гордо майоріли над козацьким військом під час його походів і боїв.” In “On the Day of the Holy *Pokrov*.”

<sup>367</sup> “показали всьому світові, що сила української зброї непоборна, коли нею керує велика й ясна визвольна ідея. На цю велику ціль українських лицарів благословила Мати Божа.” In “On the Day of the Holy *Pokrov*.”

<sup>368</sup> “Козацьку військову традицію св. Покрови перебрав український нарід беззастережно та всеціло. З новим національно-визвольним рухом й зі здобуттям волі України, славні традиції незабутньої минувшини лягли як наріжний камінь, при формуванні українських армій. І на бойових прапорах українського війська замаєв знову образ св. Покрови, що символізував тоді і символізує тепер невмирущість нашої визвольної ідеї.” In “On the Day of the Holy *Pokrov*.”

Although this army was unsuccessful, another opportunity to fight for liberation arose during World War II after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which fought against the occupation of the Soviet Red Army during the latter stages of World War II, continued the tradition of entering into battle under the *Pokrov*: “The image of the Mother of God, the guardian of the Ukrainian army and our weapons, was on the flags of our army during our liberation struggles of 1917 to 1921. Under the same flags of the holy *Pokrov*, the glorious Ukrainian Insurgent Army of our generation came into being.”<sup>369</sup>

This article concludes with a prayer for Marian intercession which is full of military imagery as it draws on the resolve of the Ukrainian people to persevere with Mary's assistance in their struggle for liberation:

We will ask the Holy *Pokrov*, the guardian of the Ukrainian armed forces, to arm us with strength, grant us endurance and give our people the opportunity to go to the last decisive battle, in which the victorious banners of the Ukrainian army with the image of Holy *Pokrov* will wave. With this banner, the Ukrainian army in the past fought its glorious battles for our sacred rights. Until the last portion of his strength, the Ukrainian soldier will go forth again with this banner and with it he will surely win.<sup>370</sup>

This article is not an isolated example. Similar military imagery in reference to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army is used in the article “Feast of the Plow and The Sword.”<sup>371</sup> The author, Mikhaylo Shelest, first describes the feast of the *Pokrov* as a celebration of the fall harvest, a time

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<sup>369</sup> “Образ осінньої Богоматері, опікунки українського війська й нашої зброї майорів на прапорах наших армій в періоді наших визвольних змагань 1917-1921 років. Під такі самі прапори, із св. Покровою станула потім теж і славна Українська Повстанська Армія вже нашого покоління.” In “On the Day of the Holy *Pokrov*.”

<sup>370</sup> “Будемо просити св. Покрову, опікунку української збройної сили, щоб зброїла нас силою, дарила ви тривалістю і дала нашому народові нагоду піти в той останній вирішальний бій, у якому знову залопотять переможні знамена українського вояцтва з образом св. Покрови. З цим то знаменем українське військо в минулому зводило свої славні битви за наші святі права. До останнього свого змагання український лицар піде знову з цим знаменем і з ним він напевно переможе.”

<sup>371</sup> Mikhaylo Shelest, “Feast of the Plow and The Sword” (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 4).

of thanksgiving by farmers and plowman. A successful harvest was only possible with the protection of the *Pokrov*, and therefore the harvest was a sign of the *Bohoroditsa*'s presence and help among the Ukrainian people. The author then associates the *Pokrov* with military history, from the period of the Zaporozhian Cossacks to the time of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Shelest describes this latter army fighting under the *Pokrov* with sword in hand for the independence of Ukraine.<sup>372</sup>

Other articles in the Ukrainian Marian Collection also reference the *Pokrov* in a military context.<sup>373</sup> These texts are an indication that the recurring theme of the *Pokrov* in association the Ukrainian military is a manifestation of a continuing Marian presence throughout history.

### 9.7 Summary

This chapter has provided a series of examples of popular Marian devotion and how it is enculturated. They illustrate a variety of ways through which Ukrainian Catholics of the *diaspora* express their devotion to the *Bohoroditsa* and rely on her protection. At the same time, the simplicity and uniqueness of Ukrainian Catholic Marian devotion are both present, especially in the thematic trajectory *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation*.

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<sup>372</sup> Mikhaylo Shelest, *Feast of the Plow and The Sword*.”

<sup>373</sup> For instance, “Свято св. Покрову- свято української війська.” (“The Feast of the Holy *Pokrov* is the Feast of the Ukrainian Army”), published in *Ukrainian Thought* (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 6), similarly recounts military episodes from Ukrainian history in which its armies fought under the *Pokrov*. “On the Eve of the Eleventh Year of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on the Occasion of the feast of the UIA – of the Holy *Pokrov* of the *Bohoroditsa*» (published in *Ukrainian Worker*, October 17. 1952, p. 39) describes how the army was founded on the day of the feast of the *Pokrov* (October 14, 1943), how the army fought under the *Pokrov*, and provides details about the life of first its commander, General Roman Chuprynka.



*A Ukrainian soldier at Christmastime. A Christmas card depicts a soldier of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army standing before a church and beneath the Star of Bethlehem. Like many Ukrainian Soldiers of that army, he is equipped with a German uniform and weapon; his shoulder patch and helmet insignia identify him as Ukrainian. The text translates as “Christ is born.”<sup>374</sup>*

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<sup>374</sup> “Ukrainian Soldier at Christmas time.” (Ukrainian Marian Collection), Box 6.

## Chapter 10: Illustrative Texts

The following examples of texts from the Ukrainian Marian Collection illustrate important themes in Ukrainian Marian devotion. The intention of this chapter is to permit these texts to speak for themselves with only enough commentary to indicate which devotional themes are present. Portions of each text are presented in translation for the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the Ukrainian language and to provide a sense of how Ukrainian Catholics themselves describe their Marian devotion.

The texts have been selected from among hundreds of such specimens. As is the case with legendary stories and poetry, an entire volume could be constructed of translations of such texts. This dissertation will confine itself to four representative examples.

### 10.1 Under the Pokrov of the Most-Pure

As a reflection on the meaning of the feast of the *Pokrov*, the article “Under the Pokrov of the Most-Pure” illustrates several themes in Ukrainian Marian devotion.<sup>375</sup> For example, the author explains that when Jesus gave Mary to the apostle John on Calvary (John 19:26), everyone was placed under the protection of Mary's intercession. A specific application to Ukraine follows:

Throughout history, the Most-Pure Virgin likewise took care of the Ukrainian people and was their constant intercessor before God. With a spirit of holy faith and out of a feeling of deep gratitude, the people venerated Mary with their prayers, processions, and the construction of temples in her honor; we glorified her in the form of various feasts and holidays.<sup>376</sup>

Prayers, processions and church construction are examples of a continuing Marian presence. The author next traces the origins of the feast

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<sup>375</sup> “Під Покровом Пречистої” “Under the Pokrov of the Most-Pure.” (Ukrainian Marian Collection. Box 4).

<sup>376</sup> “Впродовж історії Пречиста Діва опікувалася також українським народом і була перед Богом його безнастанною Заступницею. в душі святої віри і з почуття глибокої вдячності наш нарід славив Марію своїми молитвами, про цесіями, будуванням храмів на її честь; прославляв її у формі різних свят і празників.” In “Under the Pokrov of the Most-Pure.”



of the *Pokrov* back to its source in the apparition in the Blachernae the Cathedral in Constantinople. The apparition is described in this manner:

During the pagan attack on Constantinople, the inhabitants of the city prayed to the Most-Pure and asked her for help. The Blessed Virgin then appeared surrounded by angels and saints and with her *omophorion* covered the people gathered in the Blachernae Church of the *Bohoroditsa*. It was October 1, 911. The city really stood; the enemies retreated. A year later, the grateful people annually celebrated the memorial of that wonderful protection with a separate feast of the *Pokrov* of the Mother of God.<sup>377</sup>

The feast of the *Pokrov* and its associated devotion came to Ukraine with the adoption of Christianity there. Thereafter, the *Pokrov* became an essential element of Mary's enduring presence among the Ukrainian people and they in turn became her people:

With the adoption of Christianity in Ukraine, this holiday was also accepted among our people, and soon became one of their favorite holidays. From their childhood in Christianity, the Ukrainian people, as one of the first in Europe, had the good fortune to be the people of Mary. In 1037, the son of Saint Vladimir, Prince Yaroslav the Wise, gave the whole of Rus-Ukraine under her *Pokrov*. And from then until today, the Ukrainian people recognize and venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary as their Queen, and the Blessed Virgin covers them with her maternal *omophorion* and intercedes for them before God.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>377</sup> “Підчас нападу поган на Царгород, мешканці міста молились до Пречистої і просили в неї Помочі. Пречиста явилась тоді вкочуженні ан гелів і святих і покрила своїм омофором нарід, зібраний у Влахернський Бого родичній церкві. Було це 1 жовтня 911 року. Місто Справді встоялось, вороги відступили. Вдячний нарід опісля рік річно святкував пам'ятку тієї чудесної охорони окреим празником Покрови Матері Божої.” In “Under the *Pokrov* of the Most-Pure.”

<sup>378</sup> “З прийняттям християнства в Україні ні це свято прийнялось також серед на шого народу, і в скорому часі стало од ним з його найбільш улюблених празників, Вже від свого дитинства в християнстві український народ, одним з перших в Європі, мав щастя бути на родом Марії. 1037 року син св. Володи мира, князь Ярослав Мудрий віддав ці лу Русь-Україну під її покров. І від тоді аж тсьогодні український народ Визнає і почитає Пречисту Діву Марію, як свою Царицю, а Пречиста покриває його своїм материнським

Mary, as Queen of Ukraine, is another example of the enduring Marian presence. The author recalls the time of Kievan Rus as the beginning of Marian devotion in Ukraine. At that time, Mary was recognized as Queen of Ukraine and she placed the people under the protection of her *Pokrov*. She is still venerated as Queen of Ukraine in the present day.

## **10.2 The Most Holy Virgin among the Ukrainian People**

The article “The Most Holy Virgin among the Ukrainian People” by the Basilian Father O. Kupranets, begins by using musical imagery to describe the *Bohoroditsa* in superlative terms.<sup>379</sup> While music is one of the greatest gifts and works of God, “We Christians, especially Catholics, have a much better work than music . . . it is an incomparably more majestic instrument, the music of which cannot be compared to all other instruments combined . . . This wonderful instrument of heavenly music of the heavenly composer, the Lord God, is the Most-pure Virgin Mary.”<sup>380</sup> As an instrument created by God, Mary is a harp which is available to anyone who wishes to play on it: “We are convinced that all those who, with proper feeling, plucked the strings of the Heavenly Harp with their requests, never received a false sound, but always received the sound, the grace, they wanted. There has never been a case when someone who turned to the heavenly Mother with a sincere heart was not heard.”<sup>381</sup>

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омофором і за ступається за нього перед Богом.” In “Under the *Pokrov* of the Most-Pure.”

<sup>379</sup> O. Kupranets, “Пресвята Богородиця в Українському Народі” (“The Most Holy Virgin among the Ukrainian People” In “Мольби Принйми, Пренепорочна . . . in (*Receive Our Prayers, Most Immaculate . . .*), 48-50. (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1977.)

<sup>380</sup> “Ми християни, особливо католики, маємо куди кращий твір від музики . . . Це без порівняння величніший інс трумент, якого музика не може і рівнятися з усіма інструментами, разом узятими,. . . Цим прекрасним інструментом небесної музики, небесного композитора, - Господа Бога Пречиста э Діва Марія.” Kupranets, 48..

<sup>381</sup> “перекоуємося, що всі ті, які з належним чуттям ударили своїми просьбами в струни Небесної Гарфи, ніколи не дістали фальшивого звуку, а завжди діставали той звук, ту ласку, якої бажали. Ніколи не було випадку, щоб той, який зі щирим серцем звертався до небесної Матері, не був вислуханий.” Kupranets, 48.

By comparing Mary to a harp which anyone can play, Kupranets beautifully expresses how Ukrainian Catholics realize that Mary is a reliable source of help and that they can always depend on her. His primary point, however, is that she has always been present and available in this role. He proceeds to demonstrate this continuing Marian presence with a series of historical examples. The first one is the founding of Kievan Rus:

Our Ukrainian people did not begin to worship the Mother of God today, and her veneration dates back to the moment when our Grand Duke Saint Vladimir the Great converted to Christianity in 988, and with him our Ukrainian people. That the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary among our people greatly increased in a short time is evidenced by one historical fact, namely that Vladimir's son, Grand Duke Yaroslav the Wise, one of the most powerful monarchs of the time, placed the entire Ukrainian people "forever and ever" under the care of the Blessed Virgin, proclaiming her in 1037 the Queen of the Ukrainian people. By this act he was hundreds of years ahead of other nations.<sup>382</sup>

The *Bohoroditsa* has been present with Ukrainians since the coming of Christianity to their country and she has been their Queen for almost a thousand years. Kupranets then indicates three ways that the Marian presence was continued by the successors of Yaroslav the Wise:

When our princes went to war with the enemy or returned from it, they always asked the Mother of God for help or thanked her for it. Many princes used the image of the Most-Pure Virgin on their seals. However, these were not the only ways of our princes to show devotion to the Most-Pure Virgin, because there were many more of them. But perhaps the best manifestation of veneration of

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<sup>382</sup> "Наш український народ не почав сьогодні почитати Божу Матір, а почитання Її сягає своїми початками тієї хвилини, коли наш великий князь св. Володимир Великий у 988 р. прийняв християнство, а wraz із ним наш український народ. Що почитання Пречистої Діви Марії в нашому народі в короткому часі дуже сильно зросло, про те свідчить один історичний факт, а саме, що вже Володимирів син, Великий Князь Ярослав Мудрий, один із наймогутніших тодішніх монархів, віддав цілий український народ "на віки вічні" під опіку Пречистої Діви, проголошуючи Її 1037 р. Царицею Українського народу. Тим актом він випередив інші народи на сотні літ." Kupranets, 48.

the Most-Pure Virgin in our old princely state is the numerous churches and monasteries that have survived to this day.<sup>383</sup>

Military events, princely seals, and the construction of churches and monasteries are three ways by which the Marian presence has continued. Among these, Kupranets gives the most attention to two examples of the buildings. The first occurs with Vladimir the Great, who built the so-called Tithe Church in Kiev in honor of the Mother of God. It is the first Marian church in Ukraine. The second example is the “largest and most glorious monastery in Ukraine - the Kiev-Pechersk Larva.”<sup>384</sup> Its construction was begun by Saint Theodosius of Pechersk and from it monastic life spread throughout Ukraine. The main church of this monastery, dedicated to the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin, stood for about 900 years, before it was destroyed by the Communists in 1941.<sup>385</sup>

Kupranets continues by explaining the importance of Marian devotion among the Cossacks from medieval times and to the present day. His reference to the Cossacks is an example of the nostalgia with which modern day Ukrainian Catholics look back on their medieval ancestors. He asks if Marian devotion died out after the breakup of Kievan Rus:

No, it passed on to future generations. When there were no princes and our great lords, their place was taken by Cossacks, burghers and peasants. And they considered the Most-Pure Virgin to be their best guardian and benefactor. We see that in Cossack times many beautiful churches were built in honor of the Most Pure Virgin. The Cossacks, in their main settlement, in the Zaporozhian *Sich*, had a church under the name of the *Pokrov* of the Mother of God; the Cossacks revered and loved the Most-Pure Virgin.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> “Коли наші князі вибиралися на війну з ворогом чи поверталися з неї, то завжди просили Божу Матір про поміч або дякували за неї. Багато князів уживало на своїх печатках образу Пречистої Діви. Однак це не були одинокі способи вияву набожності до Пречистої Діви наших князі, бо їх було багато більше. Та чи не найкращим виявом набожності до Пречистої Діви в старій нашій княжій державі є оці численні церкви и монастири, що збереглися до наших днів.” Kupranets, 48-49.

<sup>384</sup> “найбільший і найславніший монастир в Україні - Києво-Печерський Лавру.” Kupranets, 49.

<sup>385</sup> Kupranets, 49.

<sup>386</sup> “Ні, воно перейшло в дальші покоління. Коли не стало князів і великих наших панів, їх місце зайняли козаки, міщани й селяни. І вони вважали за

Kupranets further emphasizes the importance of Marian devotion among the Cossacks by quoting the poem “Irzhavets,” by the famous Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko. The poem describes how difficult it was for the Cossacks to be separated from the Most-Pure Virgin. When the Cossacks left the Zaporozhian *Sich*, they took nothing with them except the image of the Mother of God. Before it, they shed their tears and asked for help. Later in the poem, when the Cossacks were in exile among the Tartars, the Cossacks received comfort and consolation from the image in midst of the bitter sufferings of their daily life. Although the Tatars allowed the Cossacks to live in the Tatar land, they did not allow the Cossacks to build a church in which they could place and revere the image of the Most-Holy Mother. The Cossacks were in pain because their shrine, with the image of the Mother of God, had to be in a dilapidated tent. They cried, and the Mother of God wept with them, her faithful sons.<sup>387</sup>

After the time of the Cossacks, Marian devotion continued to flourish, even in times of oppression under foreign rulers. Kupranets refers here to the period when Ukraine suffered under the domination of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Devotion to Mary is now presented in terms reminiscent of the *Ave Maris Stella* in the West:

The veneration of the Most-Pure Virgin among the Ukrainian people grew more and more because our people came to better understand and know the Most-Pure Virgin Mary. They also saw the great benefits that flowed from this veneration, especially when our people were completely subject to their enemies. And it was at that time that the veneration of the Mother of God was perhaps the strongest and most sincere, because the Mother of God was the only clear star in the dark sky of the life of our people.<sup>388</sup>.

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свою найкращу опікунку й добродійку Пречисту Діву. Ми бачимо, що в козацьких часах збудовано дуже багато прекрасних церков в честь Пречистої Діви. Козаки в своєму головному осідку, в Запорізькій Січі, мали церкву під іменем Покрову Божої Матері, Козаки почитали й любили Пречисту Діву.” Kupranets, 49.

<sup>387</sup> Kupranets, 49, based on Shevchenko.

<sup>388</sup> “Почитання Пречистої Діви в українському народі з кожним часом усе більше зростало, бо наш народ усе краще доходив до розуміння й пізнання Пречистої Діви Марії, як теж бачив великі користі, що випливали з цього почитання, особливо ку тих часах, коли наш народ знайшовся в повній залежності від своїх ворогів. І саме в тому часі почитання Богоматері було

The use of Marian icons in devotion was especially important during this difficult historical period. Yet the Marian presence continued. “And she, for her part, helped our people, in particular, all those faithful children who sincerely prayed before Her Miraculous Icons, which were in different parts of Ukraine.”<sup>389</sup>

The use of icons is often associated with miraculous events and Ukrainians do not hesitate to turn to the divine power which they believe icons transmit. As an example of a miraculous event involving icons, and as a final example of a continuing Marian presence, Kupranets concludes his article with an account of the 1675 Marian apparition at the Pochayiv Monastery:

In 1675 . . . the Turks attacked the monastery in Pochayiv, which housed the miraculous Icon of the Mother of God. They would have slaughtered all the monks and people who were hiding from them behind the monastery walls . . . the whole time the monks were calling for help from the Queen of Heaven. And indeed, the Mother of God listened to their requests . . . the sky opened and the Mother of God appeared, unfurling a white *omophorion* over the monastery. And so, she protected the monastery from the Turks, who after that retreated and no longer attacked the monastery.<sup>390</sup>

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може най сильніше та найщиріше, бо Божа Мати була одинокою ясною зорею на темному небі життя нашого народу.”

<sup>389</sup> “І вона зі свого боку допомагала нашому народові, зокрема ж усім тим вірним своїм дітям, які щиро молилися перед її Чудотворними Іконами, що були в різних місцевостях України.”

<sup>390</sup> “У 1675 році . . . Турки напали на ма настир у Почаєві, в якому була чудотворна Ікона Божої Матері. Вони були б вирізали всіх монахів і людей, що сховалися перед ними за монастирськими мурами . . . цілий час монахи звивали помочі в Небесної Цариці. І дійсно, Мати Божа вислухала їх просьби . . . небо розкрилося й Мати Божа явилася, розгортаючи над монастирем білий омофор. І так захоронила Вона манас тир перед Турками, які після цього відступили й уже більше не нападали на монастир.” Kupranets, 49-50.

### 10.3 The Cult of the Mother of God - the Pearl of Tradition of the Ukrainian People

“The Cult of the Mother of God-the Pearl of Tradition of the Ukrainian People” by the Basilian Father Vasil Vavrik, is a historical survey of Marian devotion and thereby documents a continuing Marian presence.<sup>391</sup> The opening paragraph emphasizes that Mary has always been present with the Ukrainian people: “The history of the Ukrainian people is extremely rich in Christian tradition. One of the best features of the tradition is the ancient, deep, general and constant veneration of the Most-pure Virgin Mary. This veneration among our people stretches in a golden thread from princely times to the present day.”<sup>392</sup>

The continuing presence of Mary is expressed with a typically nostalgic reference to the princely times, the times in which Kievan Rus was founded. The very first expression of Marian devotion is the construction of churches dedicated to her. Such expressions of devotion have imprinted a permanent character on Ukrainians:

The cult of the Mother of God over the centuries has left an indelible mark on the soul, culture and history of our people. Her veneration covers all its strata. And her holy icon becomes an inseparable member of every Ukrainian family and a valuable treasure of every house. It is right that our people gave her the most honorable titles of Mother, Queen and Patroness.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Vasil Vavrik, “Культ Божої Матері - Перла Традиції Українського Народу” (“The Cult of the Mother of God - the Pearl of Tradition of the Ukrainian People” in “Мольби Принйми, Пренепорочна . . . (*Receive Our Prayers, Most Immaculate . . .*), 41-44. (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1977.)

<sup>392</sup> “Історія українського народу надзвичайно багата на християнську традицію. Одна з найкращих рисок тієї традиції, це давнє, глибоке, загальне і постійне почитання Пречистої Діви Марії. Це почитання в нашому народі тягнеться золотою ниткою від княжих часів аж по сьогодні.” Vavrik, 41.

<sup>393</sup> “Культ Божої Матері в ході віків витискає незатерту печать на душі, на культурі й історії нашого народу. Її почитання охоплює всі його верстви. А Її св. ікона стає нерозлучним членом кожної української родини й цінним скарбом кожної хати. То ж слушно наш нарід надав їй найпочесніші титули Матері, Цариці й Покровительки.” Vavrik, 42.

The reference to the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir indicates the prominent connection between Marian devotion and iconography. Devotional *praxis* is "inseparable" from this icon of Mary. The titles by which Mary is invoked echo the common theme of the Ukrainian Marian Collection - Mary is a mother (*Bohoroditsa*), she is a patroness (a term which implies the protection of the *Pokrov*) and she is queen (who is present with the Ukrainian people throughout their centuries of oppression and guides them on the path towards liberation.)

Vavrik describes Marian devotion as the "precious pearl of tradition and of our people."<sup>394</sup> The tradition referred to is the tradition of the Eastern Church, by means of which Ukrainian Catholics "nurture the best feature of the spirit and culture of the Ukrainian people."<sup>395</sup> This tradition begins with the early Church Fathers such as Saint Justin, Saint Irenaeus, Tertullian, Saint Ephraim of Syria, and Saint Epiphanes of Cyprus. Later Church Fathers who occupy a special place in the Catholic Ukrainian understanding of the development of Mariology include Saint Roman the Melodist, Saint John of Damascus, Saint Cosmas of Maium, and Saint Andrew of Crete. This patriarchal trajectory is an example of how Ukrainian Catholic authors are aware of the significance of the writings of certain Eastern Church Fathers for the development of Christian doctrine and Marian devotion.

An equally important pearl in the tradition of Mariology is the Council of Ephesus. Ukrainian Catholics revere this council for its definition of Mary as the Mother of God, the *Theotokos*, from which their equivalent word *Bohoroditsa* is derived. For Ukrainian Catholics, this title also expresses the *Bohoroditsa*'s power, and thus the author states: "from now on, the Eastern Church will cry out for hundreds of years: "Most Holy *Bohoroditsa*, save us!"<sup>396</sup>

Vavrik, however, extends the conciliar definition to the use of the title "Virgin Mary." This additional title is construed as a natural and organic corollary of the definition of Mary's Divine Maternity - she could only give birth to Christ as a virgin. The Council of Ephesus is the source of this title and its subsequent frequent use in the Eastern Church.<sup>397</sup>

Another important source for Mariology is the Eastern liturgy and Vavrik makes specific reference in this regard to the Liturgy of Saint John

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<sup>394</sup> "прецінна перла традиції й нашого народу." Vavrik, 42.

<sup>395</sup> "ми плекаємо найкращу рису духа й культури українського народу." Vavrik, 42.

<sup>396</sup> "Пресвятая Богородице, спаси нас!" As previously discussed in chapter 3, this petition is found in the Liturgy. Vavrik, 42.

<sup>397</sup> Vavrik, 42.



Chrysostom. Other liturgical sources include ritual prayers and chaplets, such as the Akathist Hymn. This Marian doctrinal presence makes the Eastern liturgy distinct from its Western counterpart. “The cult of the *Bohoroditsa* is something very specific to the Eastern Liturgies. They have a particularly Marian character, and to a much greater extent than all Western liturgies. Eucharistic science and Marian science are two points that are clearly stated in these liturgies”<sup>398</sup>

Vavrik continues that the liturgies of the Eastern Church contain the totality of Mariology. The content of Marian doctrine is complete and no longer subject to further theological development. The liturgy is consequently a permanent and unchanging summary of what the Eastern Church believes about the *Bohoroditsa*: “In our ecclesiastical rule, prayers, akathists and *paraklesis* is the whole of the Marian theology of the Eastern Church, which is absolutely closed. Here all the signs and virtues of the Mother of God are systematically sung with great love and piety, and in the first place Her Virginity, Motherhood, *Pokrov* and intercession.”<sup>399</sup>

When Ukraine received the cult of the Mother of God from Constantinople, the cult “found fertile soil and soon bore generous fruit.”<sup>400</sup> An example of this fruit is the actions of the first princely rulers, beginning with St Vladimir himself and the construction of the first cathedral in Kiev:

Not only bishops and priests, but also our princes and kings become apostles and zealots of this cult. The strongholds of this

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<sup>398</sup> “Культ Богородиці є чимсь дуже питомим для східніх Літургій. Вони мають особливо Марійський характер і то в багато більшій мірі, як усі західні Літургії. Наука Евхаристійна і наука Марійська, це дві точки, що передусім ясно виступають у цих Літургіях” Vavrik, 42. The article attributes this quote to a liturgical expert named Maximilian.

<sup>399</sup> “У нашім церковнім правилі, молебнях, акафістах і параклісі знаходиться замкнена прямо вся Марійська теологія Східньої Церкви. Тут систематично з великою любов’ю і пієтизмом оспівані всі прикмети й чесноти Божої Матері, а на першому місці Її Дівичтво, Богоматеринство, Покров і заступництво.” Vavrik, 42.

<sup>400</sup> “Апостолами й ревнителями цього культу стають не тільки єпископи і священники, але й наші князі й королі. Твердині цього культу, це наші святині й монастирі в честь Богоматері. Перша церква в честь Богоматері не тільки в Україні, але й на цілій Слов’янщині, це величній собор Успення Божої Матері, збудований св. Володимиром Великим. Він у день посвячення цього собору перед іконою Успення Божої Матері заносить особну молитву до неї в імені цілого народу.” Vavrik, 43.

cult are our shrines and monasteries in honor of the Mother of God. The first church in honor of the Mother of God, not only in Ukraine but also in the whole Slavic region, is the majestic Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God built by Vladimir the Great. On the day of the consecration of this cathedral, before the icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God, he offered a special prayer to her on behalf of the entire nation.<sup>401</sup>

Prince Yaroslav the Wise is also mentioned for his construction of the Church of the Annunciation on the Golden Gate of Kiev and for his public entrustment of the Ukrainian people to the care of the *Bohoroditsa*.<sup>402</sup> As discussed in chapter 7, the action of Prince Yaroslav is connected with the military concern to provide adequate fortification for the city of Kiev under the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*. Vavrik makes further reference to this military aspect of Marian devotion with a series of other historical examples, some of which include the veneration of icons:

- a. The military leader Volodymyr Monomakh records in his memoirs that he owes his victory over the Polovetsians to God and the Most-pure Virgin Mary.
- b. Before going on campaign against the Polovetsians in 1103, Ukrainian princes made vows to God and the Most-pure Virgin Mary.
- c. Prince Igor Svyatoslavich, the hero of the epic "A Tale of Igor's Regiment", after his escape from captivity visited the famous icon of the Mother of God of *Pirogoshcha* to thank her for her help and rescue. (This episode is included as one of the legendary stories presented in Chapter 9).
- d. King Danylo of Galicia, after a successful campaign in Czech lands, hurried with gratitude to the icon of the Mother of God in Kholm and puts rich gifts at her footstep.<sup>403</sup>

Vavrik next presents a popular view of the place of monasteries in devotion. As important centers of the cult of the *Bohoroditsa*, monasteries are centers from which veneration of her has spread to the entire Ukrainian people. Monasteries express Marian devotion through sermons, the

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<sup>401</sup> Vavrik, 42.

<sup>402</sup> Vavrik, 43.

<sup>403</sup> Vavrik, 43.

painting of icons and the writing of books. They are a place where the faithful celebrate holidays and feasts. Every monastery has a miraculous icon of the *Bohoroditsa*.<sup>404</sup>

Like the monasteries, Saint Sophia Cathedral is an important locus of Marian devotion. Vavrik mentions the importance of the *Oranta* and the “Indestructible Wall” to the Ukrainian people as a symbol of the *Bohoroditsa*’s enduring presence among them and in their history:

In the Saint Sophia Cathedral of Prince Yaroslav the Wise in Kiev, behind the throne, there is an icon – a mosaic of the Mother of God. She prays with uplifted hands for the prince and the nation. Our people named this icon the “Indestructible Wall”. And this is because the people live the legend that, just as that icon has endured every ruin to this day, so our people, with the help of the Mother of God, will happily survive every ruin and still know the ancient glory.<sup>405</sup>

Vavrik concludes with the following summary which reaffirms the continuing presence of Mary among Ukrainian as their protectress and Queen during their centuries of unflagging aspiration for political independence:

Yes, we believe that the fervent devotion of our people to the Most-Pure Virgin Mary throughout many, many hundreds of years is the best guarantee that the Mother of God of our people will not fail us, that she will follow us before God and that the time of our freedom will come. And then our people will once again, as before, flock by hundreds and thousands to the thrones of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the spirit of our tradition, to honor her as the Mother of God and as the Mother and Queen of the Ukrainian people.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Vavrik, 43.

<sup>405</sup> “У Софійському соборі князя Ярослава Мудрого в Києві за престолом є ікона - мозаїка Божої Матері. Вона піднесеними руками молиться за князя і на рід. Цій іконі наш нарід дав назву “Нерушима Стіна”. А це тому, бо в народі живе передання, що як та ікона перетривала всяку руїну по сьогоднішній день, так і наш нарід за поміччю Божої Матері щасливо переживе всяку руїну і за знає ще давньої слави.” Vavrik, 44.

<sup>406</sup> “Так, ми віримо, що гаряче набоженство нашого народу до Пречистої Діви Марії через довгі-довгі сотки років, є найкращою запорукою, що Божа

## 10.4 Mary Our Hope and Pokrov

The article “Mary Our Hope and Pokrov” appeared in “Our Road” magazine in 1984.<sup>407</sup> The opening paragraph describes her protection in this way:

Every person who needs strong support for the spiritual life must seek it in Mary. She will help us; she will find our weaknesses and lead us to holiness. . . . She, as a mother, cares for us, nurtures us, protects us from evil, sustains us in good, and shares the grace which Christ merited with his sufferings and death on the cross.<sup>408</sup>

Mary’s protection is thus an aspect of her maternal care and her role as a mediatrix of grace. The author continues by explaining that Mary is venerated because of her role in the plan of salvation and therefore veneration of Mary is closely connected to the praise which is due to God: “For indeed the veneration of the Most-Pure Virgin Mary is nothing but a continuation of that great song of praise to God, to which every man is obliged by faith, love, and the righteousness of his life.”<sup>409</sup> As a result, Marian devotion has a close Christological connection in which Mary leads us to Christ and responds with maternal love and care to those who surrender to mediation. In providing this assistance, Mary becomes a teacher: “Therefore, if we want to best honor God, we must ask Mary to

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Мати нашого народу не опустить, що вона вставиться за ним перед Богом та що прийде час нашої волі. А тоді наш нарід знов, як колись, сотками й тисячами попливе до престолів Пречистої Діви Марії, щоб в душі нашої традиції віддати Їй честь, як Божій Матері і як Матері й Цариці Українського народу.” Vavrik, 44.

<sup>407</sup> “Марія – Наша Надія і Покров” (“Mary our Hope and Pokrov”) *Our Way* (April, May, June 1984).

<sup>408</sup> “Кожна людина, яка потребує сильної опори для свого духовного життя, мусить шукати її у Марії. Вона допоможе нам, Вона скріпить наші ослаблені сили і доведе до святости . . . Вона, як мати опікується нами, виховує, захищає перед злом, підтримує в доброму та на діляє ласками, які Христос вислужив Своїми муками й смертю на хресті.” In “Mary Our Hope and Pokrov.”

<sup>409</sup> “Бо і справді почитання Пречистої Діви Марії є нічим іншим, як продовженням тієї велич-ної пісні прослави Бога, до якої зобов'язана кожна людина вірою, любов'ю і праведністю свого життя.” In “Mary our Hope and Pokrov.”

help us to learn how. We must unconditionally surrender to her leadership. Mary responds to such devotion with her love in such a way that is often strange to us. She leads souls devoted to her to her son Jesus Christ.”<sup>410</sup>

The practical aspects of making such a surrender to Mary include the veneration of icons, an expression of a continuing Marian presence: “It seems that our ancestors were able to appreciate this long ago. Numerous remote places with miraculous icons of the Mother of God were known in Ukraine, to which many worshipers hurried, and Mary repaid their trust in her and generously distributed her graces.”<sup>411</sup> The author laments that the veneration of icons is less frequent in present day Ukraine. The common destinations of pilgrimage in the past, such as the Pochayiv monastery, are less accessible because of the opposition of the atheistic communist government of the Soviet Union. Governmental authorities are attempting to erase the memory of these holy locations and some miraculous icons have disappeared.

The article was written in North America, but the author is cognizant of the plight of the Ukrainian Catholics still living in their home country under the repressive rule of the communist regime. Ukrainian Catholics in North America must use copies of icons, since they do not have access to the originals. The lack of original icons does not in any way deter the enthusiasm of the author in recommending their use as a means of seeking Mary’s intercession and assistance. Faced with the disappearance of icons, in both a spiritual and physical sense, the author reminds readers of the proper function of icons in devotion and for that reason the originals are not necessary:

Can we here, in the free world, forget the many graces with which the Blessed Virgin so generously, so kindly endowed our people? We must restore the veneration of her icons! Although, in fact, we do not have a single miraculous icon from our homeland, does not Mary still listen to our prayers when we use one of the copies? The

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<sup>410</sup> “Тому, якщо хочемо найкраще вшанувати Бога, мусимо просити Марію, щоб нас того навчила. Мусимо беззастережно віддатися під її провід. На таке віддання Марія відповідає своєю любов’ю в такий спосіб, що часто аж дивно нам стає. Вона веде віддані їй душі до Свого Сина Ісуса Христа. In “Mary our Hope and Pokrov.” In “Mary our Hope and Pokrov.”

<sup>411</sup> “Здається, наші батьки вміли це оцінити вже давніше. Знаними були в Україні численні відпустові місця з чудотворними іконами Божої Матері, до яких поспішало багато богомольців, а Марія відплачувалася за те довір’я до Неї та щедро роздавала свої ласки.” In “Mary our Hope and Pokrov.”

icon only helps us to direct our attention, and we place our prayers in the hands of the Blessed Virgin, asking her to offer them to the Lord.<sup>412</sup>

The final sentence of the article echoes the spirituality of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort in an expression of concern and advocacy for the welfare of fellow Ukrainians still living and suffering in the home country: “True devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is a powerful means of sanctification, and at the same time it is the most successful way to help our brothers in Ukraine.”<sup>413</sup> Marian devotion is thus an important way that Ukrainian Catholics can support the aspirations of Ukraine for political liberation.

### **10.5 Summary: The Continuing Marian Presence and Popular Devotion**

The examples presented in this chapter indicate how writers of the Ukrainian *diaspora* expressed the significance that the continuing Marian presence has in Ukrainian Catholic popular devotion and imagination. The *Oranta* and the *Pokrov* are venerated as visible manifestations of Marian intercession and protection. Folklore has assimilated the *Bohoroditsa* into legendary stories and poems, which express her maternal care, her pity, and her personal qualities of holiness and purity.

The wide assortment of texts assembled in the Ukrainian Marian Collection display the characteristics of popular devotion. The materials examined in this chapter are only a small sample selected from among hundreds of specimens. All of them speak with love and warmth regarding the *Bohoroditsa* and her power as a protectress. Praise of her protection is also an opportunity for writers to express pride in the influence of Marian devotion on the national character of the Ukrainian people and her long history of a faithful presence among them.

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<sup>412</sup> “Чи можемо ми тут, у вільному світі, забути теро ті численні ласки, якими Пресвята Діва так щедро, так ласкаво наділяла наш народ? Ми мусимо відновити почитання її ікон! Хоч, вправді, не маємо тут ні одної чудотворної іко ни з наших Рідних Земель, але чи Марія не ви слухає наших молитов, коли будемо почитати одну з копій? Ікона тільки помагає нам зосе редити нашу увагу, а свої молитви ми склада ємо на руки Пречистої, просячи її, щоб зане сла їх Господеві.” In “Mary our Hope and *Pokrov*.”

<sup>413</sup> “Правдива набожність до Пресвятої Богори ці — це могутній засіб освячення, а при тому це найуспішніший спосіб допомоги нашим бра там в Україні.” In “Mary our Hope and *Pokrov*.”

## Chapter 11: The Millennial Celebrations of 1988

### 11.1 A Time of Pride, Self-Evaluation and Opposition

The year 1988 saw the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coming of Christianity to Kievan Rus in 988. The commemorations were conducted with pride in a thousand year history of Christianity in Ukraine and with joy and thanksgiving for the constant faithfulness of the *Bohoroditsa*. Because of that continuing Marian presence, Ukrainian Catholics believed that the Millennial Celebration was a time that they could remind Latin rite Catholics about the importance of Marian devotion. For example, the Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Losten stated that: “We have much to offer the entire Catholic Church . . . our deep spirituality and our affection and devotion to the Holy Mother of God, the Blessed Mother, which the Roman Church has lost! We hope we can teach the Roman Church that the Mother of God is alive and well and we should venerate her.”<sup>414</sup>

Nevertheless, the Millennium was a time of conflicting emotions. At the time, the Ukrainian Catholic Church was still illegal in Ukraine and subject to severe repression by the Soviet Government.<sup>415</sup> The Russian Orthodox Church refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Catholic Churches in Ukraine and excluded Ukrainian Catholics from the celebrations in Ukraine itself. An example of such exclusion occurred in June, when the Russian Orthodox Church hosted a commemoration in Moscow which was attended by representatives of the Vatican led by the Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli.<sup>416</sup> The reasons for this opposition were twofold – a fear of loss of influence on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church, and a fear of latent nationalism by the Soviet Government, which believed a resurgent Catholic Church in Ukraine would create opposition to communist rule in a manner similar to what was taking place at that time in Poland.<sup>417</sup>

With support from the Soviet Government, the Russian Orthodox Church defended the exclusion of Ukrainian Catholics. Its ecclesial leaders agreed with the official government position that Kievan Rus was equivalent to the Soviet Union and therefore there was no distinction

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<sup>414</sup> Walsh, 37.

<sup>415</sup> Catherine Walsh, “Ukrainian Catholics and the Millennium” *St. Anthony Messenger* (December 1988), 35.

<sup>416</sup> Walsh, 36.

<sup>417</sup> Walsh, 36.

between the ethnic Russians and other ethnic groups, such as Ukrainians. According to this line of reasoning, only a Russian Church existed. A Ukrainian Church could not and did not exist. Prince Vladimir was Orthodox. Kievan Rus, Russia, and the Soviet Union were always Orthodox. The Millennial celebration, consequently, was “The Millennium of Orthodoxy.”<sup>418</sup>

Despite the attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church, celebrations took place in various important centers of Christianity outside Ukraine in which Ukrainian Catholics could take part. In July, the Vatican was the site of a week-long celebration, which culminated in a liturgy attended by Ukrainian Catholics and celebrated by Pope John Paul II.<sup>419</sup> The Bishops of the United States marked the Millennium in November at a special liturgy for both Latin and Byzantine Rite Catholics at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.<sup>420</sup>

The Millennium was also a time of hope and pride for Ukrainian Catholics. Reflection on their history, particularly on the origins of Christianity in Kievan Rus, was a source of affirmation of national identity. The media coverage of the celebration drew much-desired attention to the plight of the Catholic Church in Ukraine.<sup>421</sup> Even the United States Congress became aware of the persecution of Ukrainian Catholics and passed a Joint Resolution which condemned the oppression and called on the Soviet government and the Russian Orthodox Church to enact reforms and grant religious freedom to Ukrainian Catholics.<sup>422</sup>

This study will not examine the records of the actual celebrations, although there is extensive documentation of them in the material of the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The following discussion will be confined to expressions of the meaning of the Millennium for Ukrainian Catholics of the *diaspora* and an explanation of why Marian devotion was an important aspect of the celebrations. In that way, the Millennial celebrations served as a reminder not only of Ukrainian Catholic identity, but also of the continuing Marian presence.

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<sup>418</sup> “Soviet claim to millennium misleading to millions” *America* (December 31, 1987).

<sup>419</sup> Walsh, 36.

<sup>420</sup> Walsh, 37.

<sup>421</sup> Walsh, 36.

<sup>422</sup> “Joint Resolution of United States Congress” (Ukrainian Marian Collection, Box 9).



## 11.2 The Millennial Celebrations in the Ukrainian Marian Collection

Preparations for the celebration of the millennium took place for several years prior to 1988. A uniquely Ukrainian aspect of the preparations involved travelling icons of Mary, a practice which is popular among the *diaspora*.<sup>423</sup> Beginning in 1977, copies of the Icon of the Mother of God of Kiev travelled among the Ukrainian Catholics in Illinois and Saskatchewan. The purpose was to make it possible for more Ukrainian Catholics to have an opportunity to pray before an icon. The itinerary made stops in the homes of dozens of families. Photographic records of this travelling icon can be found among the material in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. Beginning on the five-year anniversary of this practice in 1982, the travelling icon was used to raise awareness of the upcoming Millennial anniversary.<sup>424</sup>

The Ukrainian Marian Collection preserves a reflection, “The Purpose of the Millennium,” written by Bishop Michael Hrynchyshyn.<sup>425</sup> Writing for his fellow Ukrainian Catholics, the Bishop refers to the coming of Christianity to Kievan Rus as “the most important event in the history of the Ukrainian people . . . ours is a Christian culture. The values of the Gospel and of the Christian faith have permeated our way of living, our customs, our traditions, our way of thinking, of acting and reacting.”<sup>426</sup> He encourages Ukrainians to reflect on the Baptism of Kievan Rus because this practice will have spiritual benefits. “By returning to our roots, by rediscovering our past, we should acquire a fresh and deeper appreciation of the gift of faith that we as a people received ten centuries ago . . . as Ukrainian Catholics we have a priceless Christian heritage to cherish.”<sup>427</sup>

Such reflection on their rich heritage provides consolation for Ukrainians Catholics during times of difficulty. The desire for liberation

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<sup>423</sup> Muzyczka, *Ukraine*, 509.

<sup>424</sup> “Our travelling Icon” in *Мольби Прийми, Пренепорочна . . . (Receive Our Prayers, Most Immaculate . . .)*, 139-140. (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1977). V. Ivashko, “Почитання Їкони Почаївської Божої Матері в Саскатунській Єпархії” (Devotion to the Icon of the Pochayiv Mother of God in the Saskatoon Eparchy) in *Мольби Прийми Непорочна . . . Книга II (Receive Our Prayer Most-Immaculate . . . Book II)*, 96 (Chicago: Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Father Nicholas, 1982).

<sup>425</sup> Michael Hrynchyshyn, “The Purpose of the Millennium” (Ukrainian Marian Collection., Box 4).

<sup>426</sup> Hrynchyshyn, “The Purpose of the Millennium.”

<sup>427</sup> Hrynchyshyn, “The Purpose of the Millennium.”

is in the background when Bishop Hrynchyshyn concludes his reflection by reminding Ukrainian Catholics of ongoing and past persecution and encourages them to draw spiritual strength from their historical heritage:

Many of our brothers and sisters are enduring an intense persecution for the faith that has been handed down to them . . . To identify with these brothers and sisters, as well as with those who lived in bygone years when the seed of faith was first planted, we need to deepen and strengthen, to affirm and reaffirm in our hearts that faith which we received a thousand years ago during the reign of Saint Volodymyr the Great.<sup>428</sup>

Another example of reflection on the Millennium is the booklet *1000<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Christianity in Ukraine 988-1988* by Father V J Bozyk.<sup>429</sup> This self-published text, preserved in the material of the Ukrainian Marian Collection, was written for a popular audience. Bozyk places the history of Ukraine within the entire economy of salvation. Beginning with the biblical account of Creation, he traces the history of redemption from Adam, through the Old Testament, to the coming of Christ and the founding of the Church. In this trajectory, the coming of Christianity to Ukraine is a result of the evangelical efforts of the growing Church in the first millennium. Ukraine received Christianity when the Universal Church was still Catholic, and has preserved its Catholic faith despite centuries of difficulties and persecution.<sup>430</sup>

To summarize the meaning of the Millennium of Christianity within the historical context of the growth of the Church, Bozyk cites a message of John Paul II given during a visit to Ukrainian Catholics in Philadelphia in 1979: "I welcome the occasion to assure you, as universal pastor of the Church, that all who have inherited the Ukrainian tradition have an important and distinguished part to fulfill in the Catholic Church."<sup>431</sup> In this manner, the Holy Father encourages Ukrainians to remember that their long tradition of faithfulness to the Catholic Church

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<sup>428</sup> Hrynchyshyn, "The Purpose of the Millennium."

<sup>429</sup> Bozyk, V. J. *1000<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Christianity in Ukraine: 988-1988: Our Roots*. Winnipeg: V. J. Bozyk, 1988.

<sup>430</sup> Bozyk, 1-12.

<sup>431</sup> John Paul II, Address during his Visit to the Ukrainian Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Philadelphia; Thursday, 4 October 1979 Accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1979/october/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19791004\\_ukrainian-cathedral.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1979/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19791004_ukrainian-cathedral.html)

is a source of confidence that they will always be relevant within the Universal Church. Bozyk concludes his booklet by exhorting his Ukrainian readers to apply John Paul II's message in their lives: "We have so much to be grateful for: . . .to belong to the Kingdom God, which has its beginnings in His Church on earth; to be Ukrainians, coming from a wonderful, beautiful country . . . We can and still must play an important role in the history of our Church, which has produced many martyrs."<sup>432</sup>

Bozyk does not mention that there is a Marian dimension to John Paul II's message. In his concluding remarks, John Paul II references the continuing Marian presence among Ukrainian Catholics by reminding them of their devotion to Mary, who has been present with them as an intercessor and protector throughout their history:

As for the future, I entrust you to the protection of Mary Immaculate, the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church. I know that you honor her with great devotion. This magnificent Cathedral dedicated to the Immaculate Conception bears eloquent witness to your filial love. And for centuries, our Blessed Mother has been the strength of your people throughout their sufferings, and her loving intercession has been a cause of their joy. Continue to entrust yourselves to her protection.<sup>433</sup>

The article "On the eve of the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine - The Cult of the Mother of God in Ukraine," by Hryhor Luzhnitsky, provides a different perspective.<sup>434</sup> Describing the importance of Marian devotion during the millennial celebrations, Luzhnitsky observes that "one of the leading places will be given to the celebration of our special devotion, full of deep faith and respect, to the Blessed Virgin Mary."<sup>435</sup> Ukrainian Marian devotion should be recognized by other nations during the celebrations because "we have become one of the sources of the same cult of Mary for our near and far neighbors."<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Bozyk, 13.

<sup>433</sup> John Paul II, *Address during his visit to the Ukrainian Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Philadelphia*; Thursday, 4 October 1979.

<sup>434</sup> Hryhor Luzhnitsky, "On the eve of the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus-Ukraine - The cult of the Mother of God in Ukraine." (Напередодні 1000-річчя Хрещення Руси-України - Культ Божої Матері на Україні.)

<sup>435</sup> "одне з чільних місць займатиме відзначення нашої спеціальної, повної глибокої віри, пошани й від даности Пречистій Діві Марії."

<sup>436</sup> "стали одним із джерел цього ж Марійського культу для наших ближчих і дальших сусідів." Luzhnitsky

Luzhnitsky continues by indicating ways that Marian devotion gives meaning to the celebration of the Millennium. For instance, Marian devotion has been a force in the formation of the Ukrainian national character, because, throughout the Millennium, devotion to the *Bohoroditsa* has developed into a unifying force among Ukrainians themselves. “[She] is an invisible spiritual force that, in a rarity for Ukrainians, unites us all, regardless of religion, gender, clan, origin or even political opinion.”<sup>437</sup>

Once Marian devotion was flourishing in Ukraine, it served to nourish the spiritual life of the people as a source of protection and intercession, particularly in the recurrent struggle against heresy. “One of the most important indicators of this true Ukrainian Christianity, in which we find ourselves, is the figure of the Blessed Virgin - the Mother of God.”<sup>438</sup> Luzhnitsky notes that this view of Mary as a mother who protects her children is a development in Ukrainian Marian devotion which differs from the devotion initially received from Constantinople, where Mary is viewed in more exalted and distant terms as an empress. Ukrainian Catholics view Mary in more intimate terms as a mother who is a helper, protector, and an active force in all aspects of daily life:

The Most-Pure *Bohoroditsa* in Ukraine is the most tender mother of unsurpassed kindness of heart, comforting all worries, assisting in all needs, who never refuses help to anyone who only turns to her. In Ukrainian folk art, the Mother of God participates in all the major events of human life.<sup>439</sup> . . . In this way, the figure of the Mother of God in Ukrainian folk art is not only a link between earthly life and heavenly life, but it also becomes the central force

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<sup>437</sup> “невидима духовна сила, яка, що є рідкістю серед українців, об’єднує нас усіх незалежно від віросповідання, статі, родового, походження чи навіть політичних оглядів.” Luzhnitsky

<sup>438</sup> “одним із найважливіших показників цього правдивого українського християнства, в якому ми находимося, це постать Пречистої Діви — Божої Матері.” Luzhnitsky.

<sup>439</sup> “Пречиста Богородиця на Україні це найніжніша Мати неперевершеної сердечної доброти, співучасниця всіх турбот і теритинь помічниця в усіх потребах, яка ніколи й нікому не відмовляє помочі, хто тільки до неї звертається. В українській народній творчості і Мати Божа є учасницею всіх важливіших подій життя людини.” Luzhnitsky.

of Christian life in Ukraine, the center of family relationships and activates the human relationship with God.<sup>440</sup>

Luzhnitsky's presentation of the centrality of Marian devotion in Ukrainian Catholic spirituality explains why Marian devotion was such an important part of the 1988 millennial celebration for them. Marian devotion cannot be separated from Ukrainian life and national identity. This link has been present from the founding of Kievan Rus and is thus an important example of the continuing Marian presence.

### **11.3 The Millennial Celebrations in the Magisterium of John Paul II**

John Paul II, who was Supreme Pontiff in 1988, explained the meaning of the Millennium in two magisterial documents, *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, addressed specifically to Ukrainian Catholic Churches, and the Apostolic Letter *Euntes in Mundum* addressed to the Universal Church. In *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, the Holy Father recounts the history of Ukraine as a source of Ukrainian national identity. The Millennium is an especially joyful occasion for the Ukrainian people because of their geographical and historical connection with Kiev and because they are members of the Universal Church.<sup>441</sup> "The whole Ukrainian Catholic community . . . sees the roots of its own existence in the baptism of the people of Kiev, and which today lives in full

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<sup>440</sup> "Таким чином, постать Божої Матері в українській народній творчості є не лише звязковою земного життя з небесним, але вона рівночасно стає середньою силою християнського життя на Україні, центром взає лн родин, а тим самим своєю силою активізує взаємини людини з Богом." Luzhnitsky.

<sup>441</sup> John Paul II. Apostolic Letter *Euntes in Mundum* on the Millennium of the Baptism of Kievan Rus. January 25, 1988. Latin original accessed at: [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost\\_letters/1988/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_19880125\\_euntes-in-mundum-universum.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost_letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19880125_euntes-in-mundum-universum.html). The Vatican website only offers the Latin original. An English translation can be accessed at: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3700>. John Paul II, *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, February 14, 1988, 3. Accessed at: [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/letters/1988/documents/hf\\_jp-ii LET\\_19880214\\_card-lubachivsky.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii LET_19880214_card-lubachivsky.html). English translation accessed at <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=3701>.

communion of faith and of sacramental life with the Bishop of Rome.”<sup>442</sup> John Paul II closes *Magnum Baptismi Donum* with a beautiful Marian prayer which summarizes her continuing presence among the sufferings of the Ukrainian people and her place during the millennial celebrations:

O Mother of Consolation, I place in your hands all the centuries of pain and suffering, the prayers and living witness of so many of your children; to you I entrust the hopes and expectations of the heirs of the Baptism of Rus, who through your intercession hope that the ancient Christian stock will know the splendor of a new flowering. Draw to your breast, O Mother, the people who suffer at the memory of what they have lost, but who do not cease to hope for the coming of better times. Help these faithful followers of yours so that, together with their pastors and in spiritual communion with the Successor of Peter, they may celebrate with joy the Millennium and sing with fervent soul the hymn of thanksgiving to God and to you, the Most Holy Mother of the Redeemer, to you, *Theotokos!*<sup>443</sup>

In *Euntes in Mundum*, John Paul II again provides an account of Ukrainian history, although in this case a major theme is the ecumenical significance of the union of the Ukrainian Catholic Churches with Rome. From that unity, he encourages Catholics to draw new inspiration to work towards full communion with the other Eastern Slavic Churches.<sup>444</sup> Ukrainian Catholics are especially able to assist in this ecumenical effort: “The heirs of the baptism of Vladimir. . . , will bring to all a new light able to pierce the darkness of the difficult centuries now past.”<sup>445</sup>

In the final stages of *Euntes in Mundum*, John Paul II quotes his encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* to express the Marian presence in the desire for ecumenical unity: “Even though we are still experiencing the painful effects of the separation which took place. . . . we can say that in the presence of the Mother of Christ we feel that we are true brothers and sisters . . . called to be the one family of God on earth.”<sup>446</sup> The Holy Father

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<sup>442</sup> John Paul II, *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, 7.

<sup>443</sup> John Paul II, *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, 9.

<sup>444</sup> *Euntes in mundum*, 9.

<sup>445</sup> *Euntes in mundum*, 15.

<sup>446</sup> *Euntes in mundum*, 16, quoting *Redemptoris Mater*, 24.

invokes Mary again by explaining how the *Znamenie* icon represents the power of Mary's prayers:

The Incarnate Word whom Mary brought into the world remains forever in her Heart, as is well shown by the famous icon *Znamenie*, which portrays the Virgin at prayer with the Word of God engraved upon her Heart. Mary's prayer in a unique way draws from the very power of God. It is a help and a power of a higher order for the salvation of Christians. Therefore, why should we not all together look to her as our common Mother, who prays for the unity of God's family.<sup>447</sup>

To summarize, for Ukrainian Catholics the Millennium was a time of reflection on the sources of national identity from their history. Marian devotion is inseparable from their national identity, and therefore the millennial celebrations were a reminder of her continuing presence among them. At the same time, Ukrainian Catholics were reminded of their important place in the Universal Church and drew inspiration to continue their quest for political liberation and freedom of worship.

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<sup>447</sup> *Euntes in mundum*, 16.

## Chapter 12: Summary and Conclusions

### 12.1 A Marian Thematic Trajectory

This final chapter will provide a summary of the author's research. This summary will first recapitulate primary expressions of Ukrainian Marian devotion in relation to the trajectory *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation*. After a few theological reflections, the author will propose a theology for understanding the Ukrainian Marian Collection. This dissertation will then conclude with some suggestions regarding the wide range of possibilities for further research in the Ukrainian Marian Collection and its Marian content.

The trajectory *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation* provides a fundamental and unifying principle. The individual themes of this trajectory appear repeatedly in the Ukrainian Marian Collection. The texts examined in this dissertation could be supplemented by dozens of others which express these themes in similar terms.

### 12.2 The Expression of Ukrainian Marian Devotion

Chapter 3 indicated three primary characteristics of Ukrainian Marian devotion (and Eastern Slavic devotion as well) – laudatory, maternal pity, and the powerful *Bohoroditsa*. In light of the research developed in previous chapters, it is now possible to assemble a set of the primary ways in which these characteristics are expressed. The following outline summarizes the most significant and common aspects of Marian devotion *praxis* as they are documented in the materials of Ukrainian Marian Collection. As previously mentioned, these materials were produced by the Ukrainian *diaspora* in the decades prior to the realization of Ukrainian independence in 1991. The following points should therefore be understood as a summary of the Marian devotion of those Ukrainians who were separated from their ethnic homeland during a time when the Ukrainian Catholic Church was in practical terms illegal there and when Catholics in Ukraine suffered from severe persecutions by the Communist Soviet Government. These difficulties were compounded by opposition from the Russian Orthodox Church intended to prevent Ukrainian Catholics from practicing their faith.



In the present author's view, the essential expressions of Catholic Ukrainian Marian devotion are:

- a. Deep appreciation and enthusiastic praise for the holiness and purity of the *Bohoroditsa*, qualities which she possesses because of her Divine Maternity.
- b. The intercessory and protective power of the *Bohoroditsa*, a natural and self-evident consequence of her Divine Maternity and her maternal pity.
- c. The maintenance of a specific liturgical rite, centered on the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, which is the primary source for Mariology
- d. The Blachernae apparition of the *Bohoroditsa* spreading her protective *Pokrov* over her children as an essential element of devotion.
- e. The development of the Feast of the *Pokrov*, from the time of the Golden Age, into a feast secondary in importance only to Christmas and Easter.
- f. Deep veneration of Marian icons and appreciation for them as a channel of divine grace and power through which Mary exercises her maternal protection.
- g. The importance of churches and monasteries, above all the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kiev with the *Oranta* on its "Indestructible Wall," as expression of a continuing Marian presence and her faithfulness to the Ukrainian people.
- h. Nostalgia for 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century Kievan Rus, expressed in almost mythological terms, as a Golden Age of prosperity, national unity and the beginning of a continuing Marian presence.
- i. The consolation of the *Bohoroditsa*, which she offers Ukrainian Catholics to comfort their profound sense of loss and pain because of the tragic history of Ukraine and the ongoing suffering of Ukrainians still living in the home country.
- j. An unflagging aspiration for political liberation, under the guidance and protection of the *Bohoroditsa*, throughout centuries of persecution and destruction.
- k. A heroic view of important political figures from Ukrainian history, such as Prince Vladimir, Prince Yaroslav the Wise, Hetman Khmelnytsky, and General Chuprynka, who were leaders in the struggle for liberation.
- l. The central role of the Ukrainian military as an organization which fights for liberation under the protection of the *Pokrov*.

- m. The Cossacks as a popular symbol of resistance to oppressive foreign rule and as freedom-fighters in the struggle for liberation.

### **12.3 The Continuing Marian Presence**

The thematic trajectory *Bohoroditsa-Pokrov-Liberation* runs as a thread through these expressions of Marian devotion. Each of these elements is a manifestation of the continuing Marian presence. To these devotional elements, one can add a second and related list of historical events, elements of folklore, and other topics which demonstrate how the Marian presence has endured among Ukrainian Catholics. Although these points have all been discussed in previous sections of this study, it is useful to reiterate them together and thereby create a comprehensive enumeration of them. These points are presented in rough chronological order of their development:

- a. The coming of Christianity in 988 as the beginning of an uninterrupted stream of Marian devotion which has been maintained to the present day.
- b. The survival of the *Oranta* and the “Indestructible Wall,” despite repeated damage to the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev
- c. The Golden Gate of Kiev, even in its present-day restoration, crowned by the Church of the Annunciation, an enduring symbol of Ukraine’s placement by its early military leaders under the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*.
- d. The continued existence of other religious structures with Marian associations, such as the *Pirogoshcha* Church and the Monasteries of Pechersk Lavra and Pochayiv.
- e. The proclamation in perpetuity of the *Bohoroditsa* as the Queen of Ukraine by Prince Yaroslav the Wise.
- f. The *Pokrov* as both a symbol and a visible instrument of the *Bohoroditsa*’s constant maternal protection.
- g. The use of important icons, such as Our Lady of Vladimir and the Mother of God of Pochayiv (among many others), which have been a part of devotional *praxis* for centuries.
- h. The Unions of Brest and Uzhhorod, by which Ukrainian and Ruthenian Catholics have maintained continuity with the origins of Marian devotion during the Golden Age of Kievan Rus.

- i. Marian legends, either as romanticized versions of historical events or as *kazki* (folk tales) which incorporate elements of popular devotion and have been transmitted for generations.
- j. Marian poetry, which uniquely expresses Ukrainian devotion and memorializes historical personages and events with Marian associations.
- k. Marian apparitions, which often occur with the accompaniment of miraculous events.
- l. The enduring devotion of the Cossacks to the *Pokrov* and its feast.
- m. Magisterial documents, which have repeatedly praised Ukrainian Catholics for their steadfast Marian devotion and have entrusted Ukraine to Mary's protection.
- n. The presence of the *Pokrov* on military banners, from Cossack times and to the period of the Ukrainian Armies of Liberation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- o. References to the *Bohoroditsa*, and Marian icons, sometimes in the presence of historical figures or the Ukrainian military, on Christmas cards.
- p. The Millennial celebrations of 1988, which were a time of reflection on national origins and the important role that the *Bohoroditsa* has occupied through Ukrainian history.

#### **12.4 Theological Reflections**

The fundamental theological picture which emerges from the Marian collection is a completely orthodox expression of the tenants of Catholicism. Mary is venerated as the Most-Holy, Most-Pure and powerful *Bohoroditsa* who participated in the Incarnation and brought forth the Savior of humanity. She is ever-Virgin and was taken into heaven at the end of her life during her Dormition. Elements of all four Marian dogmas are present in such an understanding of the *Bohoroditsa's* personal qualities.

Because of her maternal pity, she continues to care for and protect her spiritual children. This Mariological understanding has a strong Eastern flavor, because it draws on the Eastern liturgy, especially the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, for its theological and Mariological source. That liturgy which expounds the Divine Maternity in a more dogmatic and detailed manner than that found in the Latin Rite of the West.

The result is a strong appreciation of the power that the *Bohoroditsa* possesses because of her Divine Maternity. In practical terms, it is natural that she continues to exercise that power as an active force of intercession, mediation and protection. That same power gives icons their efficacy and makes the *Pokrov* such a reliable instrument of Marian protection.

In contrast to Western usage, the term “Spiritual Maternity” does not frequently appear in the material of the Ukrainian Marian Collection. While the term is absent, its basic meaning is expressed in the uniquely Ukrainian/Slavic understanding of the natural extension of the power of the Divine Maternity. For Ukrainian Catholics, the Divine Maternity is one and the same as the Spiritual Maternity. Yet there is a subtle difference in theological emphasis from Western theological understanding. For Ukrainian Catholics, it is self-evident that the active characteristics of Divine Maternity are the reason the *Bohoroditsa* is a such powerful protector. This emphasis on protection is much stronger and organic in Ukrainian Marian devotion than in any devotional *praxis* which the present author has encountered in a Western counterpart.

For Ukrainian/Slavic sensibilities, it is only natural that Marian protection extend to the military realm. This conclusion is perhaps surprising, or even troubling, for Latin Catholics. Yet associations of Mary with conflict and struggle are present in the Scriptures, such as the Woman, who crushes the serpent (Gen. 3:15), and the Woman of Revelation 12, who is in eternal conflict with the dragon. It is a thoroughly biblical notion that Mary has an important role in the conflict with evil and the ultimate triumph of the Christ and the Church.

Ukrainians view their constant struggle against foreign oppressors as a struggle against evil. There is therefore no discontinuity when Ukrainian authors write with pride about Cossacks and Ukrainian armies advancing into battle under banners of the *Bohoroditsa* and her *Pokrov*. Cossacks have entered the popular imagination in terms comparable to the Minutemen of the American Revolution. Similarly, for Ukrainians Catholics, it is appropriate and essential that the banners of the Ukrainian armies of liberation, both in World War I and World War II, should depict Ukrainian soldiers beneath the *Bohoroditsa* and her *Pokrov*. Those armies fought for liberation. The *Bohoroditsa* is the greatest and most powerful protector who guides to the Ukrainian people on their path towards liberation and empowers them to carry out the struggle necessary to achieve it.

## **12.5 Possibilities for Future Research**

The Ukrainian Marian Collection of the Marian Library contains thousands of items. A first step in aiding future research is the proper cataloguing of these materials. This process would involve the creation of a library record for each item and the assignment of tags or keywords to aid researchers in the search for catalogued materials. One of the banker's boxes contains hundreds of unsorted newspaper and magazine clippings which require proper classification. A knowledge of both the Ukrainian language and Mariology is necessary to properly identify and classify the wide variety of materials which are extant. Completing the cataloguing of so many items would be a long-term project that would likely require months or years of work and encompass not only pamphlets and articles, but also artwork and photography.

Several topics examined in the present study would be appropriate for more specialized investigation. The many legendary stories could be translated and assembled into their own volume. Similar work could be done for the large collection of poetry. In each case, the translation work might be supplemented by literary analysis.

Other materials, which were beyond the scope of the present study, are also of interest. A researcher with competency in artwork and visuals arts would find a rich field for study among the many available drawings and images of icons and greeting cards. Hundreds of photographs of churches, shrines and Marian statues might appeal to a researcher in architecture or sculpture.

## **12.6 Conclusion**

The preparation of this dissertation has left its author with a strong impression of deep devotion to the Mother of God and an unshakeable trust in her intercession and protection. Ukrainian Catholics venerate the *Bohoroditsa* for her superlative personal qualities with an enthusiasm which is worthy of imitation. Their trust in her protection, expressed above all through the image of the *Pokrov*, is demonstration that the Spiritual Maternity is a real and active force which can benefit anyone who turns to her for help.

The example of Ukrainian Catholics is a reminder to the Universal Church that Marian devotion is not outdated and overly sentimental piety which is no longer relevant to modern Catholicism. On the contrary,

Marian devotion is eminently practical. It sustained a suffering people for centuries. The *Bohoroditsa* is more than a mother who comforts who children – she can be relied on to deliver for those who place their hope in her. Ukraine did, after all, achieve its political independence in 1991, just a few years after the Ukrainian Marian Collection was assembled. That is the best evidence that the *Bohoroditsa* has remained faithful to Ukraine. She will remain so forever.

## Glossary of Important Terms

The following glossary is offered as a quick reference for personal names as well as Slavic language, geographic, historical, and other terminology used in the text.

*Bohoroditsa* - The Slavic equivalent for the Greek term *Theotokos*. It is a compound of *Bog* meaning “God,” and *roditsa*, a feminine form of a noun indicating one who bears or gives birth. Equivalent in meaning to “Theotokos,” *Bohoroditsa* is the most common expression for the Blessed Virgin Mary in Slavic devotional practice.

*Chuprynka, Roman*. A general officer and first commander of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. He is revered as a national hero by some Ukrainians.

*Dormition* – The term used in Eastern Churches for the taking of the Mother of God into heaven at the end of her earthly life. It is equivalent to the Western term Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Eastern Christians prefer the term since the reference to sleep expresses their belief that the Mary, because of her great sanctity and fulness of grace, did not experience the physical effects of death.

*Golden Age* –The initial period of Christian Ukrainian history, beginning with the conversion to Christianity in 988 and continuing until the breakup of Kievan Rus in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The period is viewed with nostalgia and reverence by modern-day Ukrainians.

*Golden Gate* –A major defensive fortification within the wall constructed around Kiev by Prince Yaroslav the Wise. He built a Church of the Annunciation above the gate to demonstrate that he had placed Kievan-Rus under the protection of the Mother of God.

*Hetman*-The political and military leader of the Cossack Host.

*Hetmanate* – A political organization within the Cossack host, ruled by a hetman. The best known hetmanate was established by Hetman Khmelnitsky in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

*Indestructible Wall* – The portion of the Saint Sophia Cathedral dome on which the *Oranta* mosaic is located. The wall, and with it the *Oranta*, has survived intact on numerous occasions during which other portions of the Cathedral were heavily damaged or destroyed.

*Kiev* - The capital of Ukraine, both politically and spiritually, and one of its oldest cities.

*Kievan-Rus*- The name for the various territories surrounding Kiev which became the geographic nucleus for the formation of the

Kievan Rus, the 10th century precursor of modern day Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

*Khmelnitsky, Bohdan.* A 17<sup>th</sup> century Cossack hetman who led a revolt against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that briefly achieved Ukrainian Independence in 1649. He is revered as a national hero in Ukraine.

*Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom* – The form of the Liturgy most used in Eastern Churches. In its present form, it derives from a liturgical revision authored by Saint John Chrysostom in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century.

*Millennium Celebration* – The 1988 celebration of the 1000-year anniversary of the coming of Christianity to Ukraine. The Millennium was a major event in Ukraine and Russia, which were still part of the Soviet Union at the time.

*Omophorion* – A garment worn around the shoulders by Orthodox bishops as a symbol of their ecclesiastical office and authority. Equivalent to *pallium* in the West. Stories of Mary's apparitions sometimes describe her protecting *Pokrov* as an *omophorion*.

*Oranta* – the name of the six-foot-high mosaic of Blessed Virgin in the dome of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kiev. The *Oranta* originated with the construction of the Cathedral in the 11<sup>th</sup> century is an enduring national symbol of Mary's protection and continuing presence among the Ukrainian people.

*Pechersk-Lavra Monastery*- The largest and most important monastery in Ukraine, located near Kiev.

*Pochayiv Monastery* -An important monastery in Western Ukraine which in tradition has been the site of Marian apparitions and other miraculous events.

*Pokrov* – The Slavic term for Mary's mantle or protecting veil. The term came into eastern Marian devotion as a result of the 10<sup>th</sup> century apparition of Mary at the in Constantinople . The feast of the Intercession of the *Pokrov* is celebrated in Ukraine on October 14<sup>th</sup> and is both a major Marian liturgical celebration and a national holiday.

*Prince Vladimir* – The 10th century ruler of Kiev who accepted baptism in 988 and brought Christianity to Ukraine. He built the first Marian Church. He is revered as political and military who was a founder of Ukraine and was instrumental in development of Marian devotion there.

*Prince Yaroslav the Wise* -The son of Prince Vladimir who in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century placed Kievan Rus under the protection of the *Bohoroditsa*, proclaimed her Queen of Ukraine, and built some of first important churches to her, such as Saint Sophia Cathedral and the Church of the Annunciation on top of the Golden Gate.



*Princess Olga* – A 10th century Ukrainian Princess who was one of the first Christians baptized in Ukraine.

*Russian Primary Chronicle* – The medieval manuscript which is a major source of the early history of Russia/Ukraine from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. It exists in several versions and the authenticity of some of its content is disputed by scholars.

*Ruthenia* – A Latin-based designation for Rus. In medieval times, the term was used in various way to refer to areas in Ukraine. After World War I, use of Ruthenia was restricted to specific geographic area in western Ukraine near Hungary and the Carpathian Mountains.

*Sich* -A fortified settlement built by the Cossacks to serve as base for military operations and as a living place for their people. The best-known *Sich* was at Zaporozhe, located southeast of Ukraine on the Dnieper River.

*Saint Sophia Cathedral* - A major Marian Church, still extant, in Kiev. It was built by Prince Yaroslav the Wise to honor the Mother of God and completed in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The *Oranta* is located there.

*Ukraine* – The name for the geographic region surrounding Kiev and the Dnieper River. For almost all its history, Ukraine has been subject to foreign rule. It has only been an independent country since 1991. In common Slavic, Ukraine means “borderlands,” reflecting its geographic location as a crossroads in the southern Slavic lands.

*Union of Brest* – The ecclesial act of reunion in 1596 by which the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was admitted full communion with Rome

*Union of Uzhorod* - The ecclesial act of reunion in 1646 by which the Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church was admitted to full communion with Rome.

*Ukrainian Insurgent Army* – A military force which fought for Ukrainian liberation against the Red Army during the final years of World War II and until about 1955. It was sworn into service on the feast of the *Pokrov* in 1943 and displayed the *Pokrov* on its banners.

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