

Et certe nemo negabit in diecesi minscensi plebem simplicem catholicam loqui dialectum propriam, vulgarem, quae media est inter linguas polonicam et russicam, plebemque hanc numero longe superare nobiles, oppidanos et classem sic dictam, mediam, quae lingua utitur polonica. Plebs ista plane inulta in praebus quidem suis quotidianis, ut innumus supra, et in omnibus devotionibus ac piis exercitiis religiosis ulitur pariter lingua polonica, sed maiorem eorum partem non intelligit, quemadmodum non intelligit quoque polonicas catecheses et conciones. Ideo jam dudum sacerdotes curam animarum inter hos rusticos agentes curarunt edere in eorum dialecto parvum catechismum et quaedam serena oratione, pluraque alia edidissent nisi succederet prohibitio gubernii quidquam in dialecto vulgaris russicae, quae diffusionem impediunt linguae russicae dominantis, typis erigendi; nonnulli vero in ecclesiis suis introduxerunt catecheticae populares instructiones in eadem dialecto vulgari, et quidem cum magna eorundem rusticorum utilitate et aedificatione. Quia vero simul pergebant conciones etiam polonicas pronuntiare et retinebant omnes devotiones in eadem lingua, ideo nullibi pauci fuit turbata inter parochianos. Dolendum vellemus est paucos sacerdotes fuisse et pauciores nunc esse, qui sermonem hunc popularem celebrant, deficientibus enim quibusvis adjuventis litterariis, grammaticis et vocabulariis, usu tantum longiore et per commercium cum plebe rustica discunt. Haec, si ageretur saltem modo de instructione catechetica populi in lingua eius vulgari, res haec non solum non afferret rei catholicae praesudicium ullam, quin imo salde esset utilis optandumque saltem modo esset omnino, ut in seminario mohilevicensi, quod Petropol. exstat, alumni sermonem hunc vulgarem ab aliquo sacerdote, qui eum probe calleret, addicerent (sicut in eodem seminario desideratur neque modo praestitit linguae livonicae, propriae rusticis livonicis catholicis, quorum numerus ad 150, 000 ascendit), secus enim, supposito semel officio praedicandi in lingua vulgari, sacerdotes linguae huius ignari, vel praedicationem negligerent, vel praedicarent polonice, aut russice, utque questio tota de lingua russica rediret. Idcirco mea opinione, erecto cathedrae linguae, aliae russicae in seminario mohilevicensi condito debet esse, sine qua non, introductionis dialecti vulgaris in instructionem religiosam plebis. Idem exposuit quoque summa rei gravitas, explicitio verborum mysteriorum et vocalium fidei in sermone exente quidamvis verborum litterariis, scripturae, catechismo aliquo probata sit. Ad hoc linguarum gallicae et germanicae, quibus alumni diuti. seminari frustra vacantur, deberet potius dicere linguas albam-russicam et livonicam.

THE AUTOGRAPH COPY OF THE LETTER OF 2 SEPTEMBER 1896
OF BISHOP F. A. SYMON TO THE HOLY SEE CONCERNING
THE USE OF THE BYELORUSSIAN LANGUAGE.

(From the collection of the Francis Skaryna Byelorussian Library in London)

The Language Problem in the Catholic Church in Byelorussia from 1832 to the First World War

BY

Č. SIPOVIČ

This article deals with the Catholic Church of the Latin Rite in Byelorussia and its use of vernacular languages in para-liturgical religious services during the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. In the territory annexed by the Russian Empire after the divisions of the Polish-Lithuanian-Byelorussian Commonwealth¹ at the end of the eighteenth century, there were many Roman Catholics of the Latin Rite of various nationalities. As a result of historical events, Polish had become the language most commonly used in the Catholic churches for paraliturgical devotions.²

The Russian government was not mistaken in believing that through the Church the Poles would not only remain faithful to their religious and national attainments, but even spread them. Therefore and especially after the uprisings of 1863 it began to suppress everything having a Polish character, above all in the schools and churches.

Although Russian policy was uniform for all Catholics living in the territories of the Empire, it was nevertheless most acutely directed against the population of ethnographic Byelorussia, who at this time were considered, but without adequate justification, a part of the 'North-western Territory' of Russia. With a population composed of Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Poles, Latvians, Jews and others, this territory was divided into the following administrative provinces: Hrodna, Mahiloŭ, Minsk, Viciebsk, Vilna and Kaunas (Kovno). The Western Territory with mostly Ukrainian population comprised in addition the provinces of Volhynia, Podolia and Kiev.

The Byelorussians were living in compact groups in the provinces of Mahiloŭ, Viciebsk (then restrictively called Biełaruś), Vilna, Hrodna and Minsk. They were also established in the Smolensk, Suwałki and Kurland districts.³ Each province had its own governor, and in Vilna and Kiev there resided governors-general with larger than merely local jurisdiction.

In the second half of the 19th century in the Western Territory the following Catholic dioceses were to be found: 1) the archdiocese

of Mahiloŭ; the dioceses of 2) Vilna, 3) Minsk, later liquidated by tsarist ukase (decree) in 1868 and attached to Vilna; 4) Samogitian, 5) Luck-Žytomir and 6) Kamieniec, liquidated in the same way as the Minsk diocese one year earlier in 1867.

After the concordat between the Russian government and the Holy See in 1847 the borders of the single dioceses were identical with those of the provinces (gubernia), except that the Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ embraced all those parts of the Empire outside the other six. The newly created diocese of Cherson, with a mostly German Catholic population, was not part of 'Zapadnyj Kraj'.⁴

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Important as it may be to have accurate data regarding the various nationalities and their confessions at that time, this question remains difficult, and even confused. The difficulty consists in a lack of reliable statistical data, and that which is given is not free from bias and cannot be accepted without reservation.

In discussing some of the population data, this study will endeavour to provide a general orientation rather than accurate statistical information.

After the first partition of the Commonwealth in 1772, in that region of Byelorussia annexed to Russia, there were more than 50,000 Catholics of the Latin rite and 608,042 Uniates.⁵

The number of Eastern rite Catholics (Uniates) quickly diminished due to persecution by the Russian government, until the Uniate Church ceased to exist officially (on 25 March 1839). Catholics of the Latin rite, notwithstanding various difficulties, persisted strongly, and their number greatly increased after the second (1793) and the third (1795) partitions of the Commonwealth, when all Byelorussians and Lithuanians found themselves inside the boundaries of the Empire, and especially after many Uniate Catholics changed to the Latin rite.

In order to be better acquainted with the religious and national grouping in Byelorussia and Lithuania, the tsarist regime, through the Ministry of Home Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, organised investigations headed by a census officer in each province. The aim of these inquiries was to gather accurate information about the nationality and confession of the inhabitants. The information gathered was presented to General Rittich and the results were published in 1863: *Atlas Ethnographique des Provinces habitées en totalité ou en partie par des Polonais* par R. D'Erkert, capitain aux gardes, membre effectif de la Société Géographique Impériale de Russie. St. Petersburg, 1863.⁶

It is worth listing the dioceses noted in the Atlas as having a Byelorussian (whether Catholic or Orthodox) population, as well as the Polish and Lithuanian inhabitants who were almost entirely Catholics. By way of comparison a number of the parishes, of the churches and chapels and of the faithful for the same dioceses for the year 1834 are also given, as supplied by Theiner.⁷

Year	Diocese	Catholics		Orthodox	
1834	Vilna	Believers	863,536		
		Parishes	299		
		Filial parishes	59		
		Chapels	209		
1863		Byelorussians	386,608	Byelorussians	531,964
		Poles	237,075	Poles	61
		Lithuanians	185,088	Lithuanians	27,985
			808,771		560,010
1834	Minsk	Believers	231,869		
		Parishes	91		
		Filial parishes	48		
		Chapels	174		
1863		Byelorussians	7,354	Byelorussians	634,450
		Poles	116,043	Poles	-----
		Lithuanians	55,123	Lithuanians	9,026
			178,520		643,476
1834	Mahiloŭ	Believers	735,086		
		Parishes	254		
		Filial parishes	90		
		Chapels	409		
1863		Byelorussians	47,193	Byelorussians	1,173,511
		Poles	68,658	Poles	61
		Lithuanians	1,239	Lithuanians	13
			117,090		1,173,585

According to the same Atlas (2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1864) there were: In Vilna diocese 311 parishes, 49 filial parishes; in Minsk diocese 73 parishes, 36 filial p.; in Mahiloŭ archdiocese (Byelorussia and Latvia only) 113 parishes, 9 filial p.

The first general census of the Russian Empire was made thirty-four years later in 1897. The number of all Byelorussians in the Empire was given as 5,885,547, of whom about 1,500,000 were Catholics of the Latin rite.⁸ However on the basis of philological evidence provided by Karskij in 1903, Byelorussians numbered 8,317,900.⁹ Sapunov again in 1911 considered the number of Byelorussians to be at least 9 million.¹⁰

From these statistics it may be safely concluded that the conflict between the Russian Government and the Polish clergy and popula-

tion, which took place on essentially Byelorussian and Lithuanian territories ('Severo-Zapadnyj Kraj'), could not have avoided the autochthony of these lands and manifested itself, therefore, in the demand for the use of the Byelorussian and Lithuanian languages in the churches.

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Because the problem involved was one of language, it would be useful to analyse briefly the state of the Byelorussian language in the second half of the nineteenth century. There exists considerable literature today on this very question, so only the essential and more general points require to be studied.¹¹

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Byelorussian was the official language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and was used for the Statutes and for official communications between the Grand Duke and the various officers of the Commonwealth. Soon after the Union of Lublin (1569) however, a process of polonisation began, especially after the Byelorussian aristocracy and noblemen lost a sense of their own identity as Byelorussians. In this process the Polish Catholic clergy played a not inconsiderable role.

In the nineteenth century the Byelorussian language began to awaken, as it were, from a long sleep. Anonymous works began to appear such as the *Eneida navyvarat* (written about 1820, first printed edition 1845), and *Taras na Parnasie*, long circulated in manuscript, printed in 1889.

A number of authors began to write and either secretly or openly to print their works in Byelorussian: Barščeŭski (d. 1851), Vincent Dunin-Marcinkievič (d. 1884), Kastuś Kalinoŭski (d. 1864), Francišak Bahuševič (d. 1900) and others. Neither were the religious needs of Byelorussians forgotten. In 1835 in Vilna, under a Polish title, but with Byelorussian text, a catechism was published.¹² Again in Vilna in 1845 a catechism partly written in Byelorussian was published.¹³ In 1862 a catechism was published in Warsaw under the guise of a children's primer.¹⁴

The tsarist regime placed various obstacles in the way of, and eventually in 1859 forbade formally the printing of books in Latin characters.¹⁵ Byelorussian literature could not therefore develop normally and in an unrestricted form. Only after 1905 during the *Naša niva* period¹⁶ did the Byelorussian printed word again flourish, when such talented men as Janka Kupała (Łucevič), Jakub Kołas (Kastuś Mickievič), Maksim Bahdanovič, Žmitrok Biadula (Płaŭnik), Anton Navina (Łuckievič), and many others made their debuts.

But throughout the nineteenth century the Russian government and its advocates did not recognise the Byelorussian language, regarding it instead as a dialect (*narečije*), like Ukrainian, of the single Russian language. The famed Metropolitan Siemaško, describing to Murav'jev in 1857 the ethnographic state of the three provinces subject to the Governor-General of Vilna, found there a few Lithuanians, but the rest were 'Russian inhabitants of either Byelorussian or Little Russian dialects'.¹⁷

The Polish clergy *in Byelorussia*, on the other hand, with some exceptions such as Fr. Ważyński and Bishop Symon,¹⁸ regarded the Byelorussian language as rustic and uncouth, a sort of dialect, a Polish-Russian mixture.

The language question during the second half of the nineteenth century in Byelorussia can therefore be summarised as follows. In the civil government, education and the Orthodox Church the Russian language alone was used;¹⁹ in the Catholic curias and churches, supported by the aristocracy and polonised Byelorussian nobility, with very few exceptions, Polish was used. The Byelorussian language remained alive among the common people, in its rich fables, customs and songs.²⁰ These however were unlettered people and only when a revival occurred in upper class circles, did they of their own accord begin to evolve and become conscious once more of their language and nationhood.

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After the Russian government closed all institutes of higher education, and especially after the closure of the University of Vilna in 1832 and the liquidation of the Oriental Catholic Church in 1839, an attack was launched on the last stronghold: the Catholic Church of the Latin rite, where as has already been said, the Polish language and spirit prevailed.

The Russian government never declared officially that it intended to bring about a full liquidation of the Catholic Church in the 'North-western Territory'; instead it merely mounted a steady opposition toward the polonisation of the Byelorussians, whom it considered quite incorrectly as 'Russians'. It did this by appointing, either through the Roman Ecclesiastical College²¹ in St. Petersburg or simply through the local Governors, its own prelates to a high position for example, the appointment of Żyliński, Niemeksza and Tupalski in the diocese of Vilna²² and by introducing into the ritual and para-liturgical devotions the Russian instead of the Polish language.

The Catholic clergy interpreted these measures by the Russian government as a further attack on the Catholic Church and on the faith of its people, as the opening of a preparatory phase to its complete liquidation, similar to the fate of the Uniate Church. Thus Gaspar Borowski, Bishop of Luck-Żytomir, Administrator of Kamieniec diocese, in 1869 wrote to Pope Pius IX concerning the introduction of Russian:

'If the College at Petersburg is the net by which all Catholics in Russia and Poland are dragged into schism and the sword which cuts communion with the Apostolic See, the Russian language, which they strive to introduce into the Church is a poison which kills the fishes. It is evident that such innovations must be opposed which would lead to a kind of indifference, threatening moreover faith and rite...'²³

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In the context of this article the word 'russification' will often be

mentioned. A few words must be said on this term to explain what it actually meant in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Russia was neither one people, one nation, nor one faith. On the contrary, on the coloured ethnographical map by Rittich one can see 46 nations with an equal number of languages.²⁴ What then made Russia a single powerful state?

It was commonly said, and with some truth, that Russia stood on three principles: autocracy, orthodoxy and Russian nationality.²⁵ These three principles were despotically coordinated in order to achieve a strong glorious 'Russia', the name imposed on all regions and applied to all languages within the state.

After the partition of the Commonwealth, Catherine II and her successors, up to the last Russian tsar, pursued the following aims:

a) to make the Russian language universal, thus absorbing both Byelorussian and Ukrainian, and to maintain it as the state language of government and administration, of the schools, of the Russian civil and criminal court procedures, of the army and of the Catholic Church in Byelorussia and Lithuania;

b) to close all except the Russian schools and to forbid Byelorussian (with Latin letters) and Polish printing;

c) to expel all non-Russian personnel from administrative positions and to deport to Siberia any landowners more or less implicated in politics.

Often russification meant in practice little more than the attempt to impose the Orthodox Church. This is witnessed by such men as Metropolitan Siemaško, General Ratch and others. As Kornilov, curator of the Vilna school district, remarked in 1868: 'The Orthodox Church is here (in Byelorussia) the perpetual defender of the Russian spirit, a strong bastion against the pretences of the Latin clergy and Polish spirit and a strong link in the chain which binds the country to central Russia'.²⁶ Colonel Bek in a notice to the chief of police wrote 'Clergy — the moral police, are worse than the secular police'.²⁷

Thus an unusual conflict arose, a mortal struggle with a single cluster of national and religious problems at its centre. The struggle took place in the heart of Byelorussia where two strong nationalisms, Polish and Russian, confronted one another; two confessions: the Catholic, with the firm support of Rome, and the Orthodox, upheld by the despotic tsarist government.

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The conflict began when the tsarist government commanded, through the Minister of Home Affairs, Perovskij, in 1832, that the prayers for the Emperor and the Royal Family as well as the hymn *Te Deum* be said in the language of the faithful.²⁸ What was understood under 'vernacular', however, was not the Russian language, which was prohibited, but only such minority languages as Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and German.

That this was the case can be illustrated by the condemnation by

the authorities of Fr. Bogusław Onichimowski O. P., who while being parish priest of the Catholic parish in Tsarskoje Selo in 1848 held a sermon in the Russian language. The matter caused a great uproar and even came to the attention of Minister Perovskij. He spoke of the 'scandal' to Emperor Nicholas I who published an ukase on 15/27 July 1848 in which the use of the Russian language in Catholic churches was expressly forbidden. Fr. Boudou rightly remarks about this incident: 'Tsar Nicholas as well as Perovskij and many others were concerned in this case only with the preservation of Orthodoxy'.²⁹ The government apparently feared that confusion would come about if Orthodox faithful, present by chance at a Catholic liturgy, were to understand what was said and were in this way to fall under Catholic influence.

Opinion on this question among the Russian elite however was divided. Some like Katkov, Batjuškov, Vladimirov were in favour of introducing Russian into the Catholic churches; others like Professor Kojalovič, Kulin, Bessonov, Kornilov and Aksakov were hostile to the idea. In articles in *Moskovskaja Gazeta* during the year 1863-64, Katkov maintained that Catholicism must be separated from polonism. Catholicism, he argued, did not bear hatred to any nation; combined with polonism, however, it was the enemy of Russia. Kornilov, on the other hand, was of an entirely different opinion. He warned against the possibility of Russian Catholicism, something which might well come about by permitting the use of the Russian language in Catholic churches. Russian Catholicism, Kornilov insisted, could be more dangerous and odious than the late Union.³⁰

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In order to resolve all matters concerned with Russian religious policy in Byelorussia and Lithuania, Governor General Kaufman (1865-66) organised in 1865 an *ad hoc* Commission whose chairman was the poet Storozhenko and secretary Kozlowski, a former Catholic priest. Altogether there were more than twenty members.³¹

The more important decisions reached by this Commission were the following:

1) To compel all those Uniates to return to Orthodoxy who after the liquidation of the Union in 1839 had accepted the Latin rite in order to preserve their Catholic faith. 2) To suppress the diocese of Minsk. 3) To place commissars of the government in Catholic consistories, replacing the Academy at St. Petersburg with a state theological faculty. 5) To introduce the Russian language in Catholic paraliturgical devotions.³²

The project worked out by the Vilna Commission was presented by Governor General Baranov (1866-68) who succeeded Kaufmann, to the Minister of Home Affairs Timašev (1868-77), who commanded the Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical College to ask the Bishops or diocesan Administrators of the Western Territory their views on the Commission's findings and recommendations. It is worthwhile to dwell on the content of the letter written to the R.C.E. College by Minister Tima-

šev on 20 January 1868, though signed by Labanov due to the illness of the Minister.³³ The work of the Vilna Commission appears from the contents of this letter.

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It seems that the Commission turned to the Catholic diocesan authorities of Vilna, Minsk and Samogitia for information. It also examined ecclesiastical directories and thus discovered both that the practice of saying prayers for the Tsar and the Royal House was not uniform in all the churches, and also that these prayers were said in Polish, not in the inhabitants' own language. For the inhabitants of Byelorussia, the Commission stated, this language should be Russian. In the Latin translation of this letter we read: 'cujusmodi pro catholicis incolis, *natione alborussis*, agnoscenda est rossica (lingua).'³⁴

One should not overlook here an important change in the interpretation of the ukase of 1832. At that time 'vernacular' was taken to mean all other languages except Russian. Now, with reference to the Byelorussians whose language was considered a Russian dialect, the Vilna Commission recommended that the ukase of 1832 be ignored. Therefore in all Catholic places of worship, wherever Byelorussians were living, prayers in Latin and Polish for the Emperor and the Royal Family were to be forbidden and Russian used instead. As will appear presently, the Polish clergy in Byelorussia understood and interpreted the ukase of 1832 in a completely different manner.

The policy of the Russian government towards Byelorussians and the Byelorussian language was not only ineffective in practice but ultimately harmful, for it had the effect of causing them to forget their Byelorussian heritage and of driving them instead into the arms of the Poles.³⁵

The Russian government, from the time it began to give serious consideration to Byelorussia, may have been one-sided but it was well enough informed about its history and population. The works of Ratch, Batjuškov, Kojalovič are evidence of this. Before the final assault however on the last Polish stronghold in Byelorussia, the Polish language, the government sought information from the local hierarchs about the language which the people used in their daily affairs and which therefore had been current in para-liturgical church services.³⁶

The replies of individual Bishops and consistories in original Russian or Latin translation (Bishop Borowski wrote in Latin) are preserved in the Vatican Archives.³⁷ A perusal of their replies shows clearly that all the Bishops and consistories defended the *status quo ante*, that is the continued use of the Polish language.

For understandable reasons Bishop V. Lipski, the Administrator of the diocese of Tyraspol, felt that in parishes composed of predominantly German faithful the prayers for the Emperor ought to be recited as before in German, but in places where there was a mixed population they should be in Latin.

The Bishop of Telšy in Samogitia, M. Valančius, in whose diocese

prayers were said in Polish, Lithuanian, German and Latvian, thought that if Polish were forbidden Latin should be used; if that also were forbidden, then Lithuanian.

In the present context it is important to note both the reply of the Bishop of Minsk, Adam Wojtkiewicz, and those of the Vilna and Mahiloŭ consistories, for in these reports is found information concerning those territories where Byelorussian Catholics lived in compact masses.

Bishop A. Wojtkiewicz's reply, dated 15 March 1868, stated that the diocese of Minsk comprised 184,000 faithful in 1865. Four-fifths of these were landowners, i.e. of the nobility, and all spoke Polish. The remaining Catholics, about 20 per cent of the total, were villagers or peasants who conversed in their Byelorussian dialect. Because, however, of the more than three hundred years of living in close contact with the nobility, many of this latter group understood, or even spoke, Polish. All worshipped in Polish, having learned the Polish prayers by heart, either from their parents or from prayer books.³⁸

The number of Catholic villagers, Bishop Wojtkiewicz stated, was continuing to diminish on account of their passing over to Orthodoxy. The Bishop feared there would eventually remain only those who used Polish.

The Vilna consistory in its reply dated 28 April 1868, based its information on that given by the local deans concerning where and in which parishes the various languages were spoken by the people and used in prayer. According to the Vilna consistory's response, the people in the city of Vilna itself both conversed and prayed in Polish. In the Vilna district the faithful spoke and prayed in Polish in 19 parishes, in the other seven in Lithuanian. In the Troki district, where there are 28 parishes, the majority used Lithuanian, the rest Polish. In the Ašmiany district all faithful conversed and prayed in Polish. In the Śvianciany district 16 parishes used Polish and the 9 others Lithuanian. In the district of Vilejka the majority of the faithful spoke in Polish, the others in the peasant language mixed with Byelorussian dialect,³⁹ but all without exception prayed in Polish. In the districts of Hrodna, Słonim, Kobryń, Prużany, Bielsk, Biełastok and Sakołka the faithful spoke and prayed in Polish. In the district of Brest the majority of the faithful spoke Polish, the minority a corrupt Russian, but all prayed in Polish. In the city of Lida the faithful prayed in Polish, but spoke Byelorussian among themselves and understood the prayers for the Tsar and the ruling House in Russian. In the other 12 parishes many spoke and prayed in Polish. Finally in the Vilna and Vaŭkavysk districts all spoke and prayed in Polish.

This report was signed by two 'Murav'jevian prelates' Mamert Herbut and Tupalski, also by Fr. Szelejko.⁴⁰

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The Mahiloŭ consistory gave the most comprehensive reply, dated 15 May 1868, drawn from detailed information provided by the local

deans of the provinces of Viciebsk and Mahiloŭ. The consistory's reply forms the basis of the report of the R.C.E. College to Minister Timašev, given on the 7/19 June 1868.⁴¹

The consistory's reply reaffirmed in the first place the general law of the Catholic Church that without the consent of the Roman Congregation of Rites it was not possible to modify or to translate into a foreign language liturgical prayers found in the Roman Missal and Ritual. The Ritual adopted by the Synod of Piotrków for Poland and Lithuania, and in which some texts in Polish, Lithuanian and Latvian were introduced, had been approved by Pope Paul V in 1631.

The authors of the reply in order to strengthen their argument against meddling with liturgical languages drew attention to the permanence of the Eastern Liturgies, the Chaldean, Coptic, Armenian and Old Slavonic, as a result of the stability of their linguistic practices.

The Mahiloŭ reply continued by observing that when the decree of the Minister of Home Affairs had been published in 1832 ordering that during feasts and imperial holidays the prayers be said in the language of the faithful, in all the churches in Byelorussia the language adopted had been Polish. And why Polish? Because this language had long been approved and accepted in the Catholic Ritual and, still more, because the greater part of the parishioners — magnates, officials, and nobility — used Polish. The others, the peasants, although they spoke a Byelorussian dialect which consisted of a mixture of the Polish and Russian languages, nonetheless had long become accustomed to praying in Polish, and only in Polish, as their ancestry before them. If, therefore, it was necessary to abandon the Polish language, Latin would be the best alternative. The history of past ages taught that the people shun innovations. Moreover, the introduction of Russian without the approval of the Head of the Catholic Church would cause still more unrest and resentment among the people.

The Mahiloŭ report concluded by supplying more details of the languages used by the faithful. In the districts of Lucyn,⁴² Režyca and Dźvinsk (Dynaburg) the Latvian language was used, in all other districts Polish with the negligible exception of the peasants who used a Byelorussian dialect originating from a mixture of the Polish and Russian languages. The reply of the Mahiloŭ consistory was signed by Prelates Wasilkowski, Wróblewski and Canon Godlewski.

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The preceding paragraphs, based on the available sources, attempt to present an accurate summary of the replies of the Bishops and consistories to the government questionnaire. All, and without exception, were opposed to the introduction of the Russian language and this is surely the chief reason for their reticence in giving information about Byelorussian, or, if some information had to be supplied, to distort it and to render the Byelorussian language contemptible (hence the references to the peasants' language, a Polish-Russian mixture).

That in the Catholic churches in Byelorussian districts use was made of Polish no one would deny. One must, however, recognise in this melancholy fact a key example of the devastating polonisation of the Byelorussian nation. One is also forced to the conclusion that the replies of Bishop Wojtkiewicz, and of the Vilna and Mahiloŭ consistories present a distorted picture in failing to give information in their reports concerning the Byelorussian Catholic population and the Byelorussian language, — the more so, when they go so far as to suggest that the peasant backbone of the Catholic Church in Byelorussia was outnumbered by the land-owners and nobility. Subsequent events have proved the hasty prognosis of Bishop Wojtkiewicz to be false, for when the rich landowners disappeared from Byelorussia and no trace remained of the nobility, the people adhered to the faith in the Minsk province. The same may also be said of the districts of Mahiloŭ and Viciebsk where even today there are thousands of Byelorussian Catholics. As concerns this period, it will be seen that Bishop Symon's report differs in very essential matters from the views of the Polish clergy quoted here.⁴³

It is not necessary to take to task the Very Reverend Prelates of Mahiloŭ for describing the Byelorussian language as a mixture of Polish and Russian. Serious study in the field of philology (one need only mention the name of Academician Karskij) provided the necessary refutation long ago.⁴⁴

Despite the information supplied by the Polish clergy, the tsarist government continued to make use of the Byelorussian population and its language as a trump in their conflict with the Poles and for their own russifying aims. In the end the government purely and simply ignored the official report submitted by R.C.E. College to Minister Timašev on 7/19 June 1868. Although this report had insisted that for various reasons it was impossible to introduce the Russian language in churches, especially because 'the majority of the parishioners use Polish, and the simple people, although they speak in Byelorussian, Lithuanian and Latvian, still have assimilated Polish',⁴⁵ — the government continued to pursue its own aims.

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Indeed an answer such as this from the R.C.E. College satisfied neither Russians like Katkov nor the government, for it merely demonstrated with greater clarity the need to fight polonism in a 'Russian' land. The Tsar therefore appointed an *ad hoc* Commission headed by Grand Prince Constantine, with Sievers, Head of the Department of Foreign Confessions at the Ministry of Home Affairs as the Commission's secretary. The members of the Commission included such high officials as Dmitrij Tolstoj, the Procurator of the Holy Synod and others.⁴⁶

On 16/28 December 1869 the Commission adopted unanimously the following resolutions:

1) The 1848 prohibition against the use of the Russian language in non-Orthodox confessions was to be revoked. 2) The use of Russian was not to be obligatory. 3) Latin was to remain the liturgical langu-

age, but Russian would be permitted in the same way as other languages had previously been permitted. 4) Should Catholic books be printed in the Russian language, they need no longer be submitted to the censorship of the Orthodox Synod, but to another competent authority. 5) The Minister of Home Affairs was to implement these decisions in accordance with the needs of the people and local conditions.⁴⁷

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By an ukase of Tsar Alexander II the resolutions of the *ad hoc* Commission were confirmed and promulgated on 25 December 1869 (o. s.), 6 January 1870 (n. s.): 'In his paternal solicitude for his faithful subjects, without distinction of religious belief, the Emperor desires that those whose mother tongue is Russian, in one or another of its dialects should not be deprived of the right to its use in religious matters and he graciously grants them permission to use the Russian language in religious worship of the different confessions. In applying this measure to the divine service of the Roman Catholic Church, Latin will naturally remain always her liturgical language in accordance with the laws of that Church; the present measures affect additional services or functions in which, in place of Latin, other languages or dialects, such as French, German, Polish, Latvian,⁴⁸ etc. have been used up till now'.

The tsarist ukase therefore permitted the faithful to use the Russian language 'in one or another of its dialects' in religious services, although the liturgical language was to remain Latin. There is no doubt that in the mind of the editor of the ukase, the dialects of the Russian language referred to were Byelorussian and Ukrainian, then called Little Russian.⁴⁹

One may summarize this discussion by stating that the purpose of the ukase had been to depolonise, and hence to russify both Byelorussians and those Baltic people who had also fallen under the influence of the Polish Catholic Church. All Catholics of the Western Territory were opposed to the ukase, with the exception of such pro-Russian prelates as Żyliński, Niemeksza, Staniewski, Senčykoŭski and some others. Those who were in opposition suspected a real threat to their faith and to their nationality also.

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Shortly after the imperial ukase had been decreed the Minister of Home Affairs, Timašev, informed the R.C.E. College (on 31 January 1870 o. s.) and explained its implementation. At the same time instructions were sent to the Governors-General of Vilna and Kiev and to the local Governor of Viciebsk.⁵⁰ The Minister emphasised that 'ecclesiastical authorities were obliged to co-operate in implementing the ukase where there is evidence of a need, and where the faithful wish it'.⁵¹ As a contemporary observer, Fr. Ważyński, wrote: '... parishioners who wished to have devotions and sermons in the Russian language were to ask their parish priest; the parish priest was to refer the matter to the diocesan authority; this autho-

rity, if convinced of the need for such a petition, was to refer it to the Minister of Home Affairs who was to accept or reject it. There was no element of compulsion or pressure in the ukase itself. Neither the ukase nor the Emperor, but rather the russifiers, have turned it into a sword with which to destroy religious freedom'.⁵² On the other hand, however, this same observer held the view that the Emperor, at least indirectly, approved of the religious persecution that followed upon the promulgation of this ukase.⁵³

On 18 February (2 March n. s.) 1870 the R.C.E. College sent to the diocesan Bishops, or where there were no Bishops to the Administrators, the ukase and the instructions of Minister Timašev.⁵⁴ Bishop Staniewski, Administrator of the archdiocese of Mahiloŭ and a firm supporter of tsarist policy, published a pastoral letter on 22 May 1870 in which he explained to the faithful that the introduction of Russian was not a danger to the Catholic faith. The faithful, he wrote, should feel free to sign the petition to their parish priests asking them to permit the celebration of some liturgical functions and the preaching of sermons in Russian.⁵⁵

Rome was informed of the ukase both by the Catholic authorities and by the Russian government through its representative P. Kapnist.⁵⁶ The latter tried to convince the Holy See that it was in the interest of the Church to separate polonism from Catholicism, and that it would be unjust to impose the Polish language upon all Catholics in the Russian Empire, for the larger number of Catholics in question were not Poles. 'For Russia', he wrote, 'this is a matter of prime importance: to eradicate the Polish element and the polonisation in the Western Provinces of the Empire. Nothing can stop her in this path. She will go ahead despite any obstacle. The imperial government desires to separate completely religious matters from polonism in her Western Provinces, lest harm come to the Catholic faith, which is professed by a great part of the population of those provinces.'⁵⁷

Could the Vatican or anyone else, knowing what had happened to the Catholic Byelorussian Church of the Eastern Rite in 1839 and to the Latin Church in the time of Murav'jev, have believed such a declaration? Even at the time when the tsarist decree was proclaimed, the Catholic Latin Church in the Western Provinces was in a pitiable state.

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The first article of the 1847 concordat between the Holy See and Russia provided that 'the number of Roman-Catholic dioceses in the Russian Empire is fixed at seven, one Archbishopric and six Bishoprics...' These are then enumerated as being: 1) the Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ and the dioceses of 2) Vilna, 3) Telše or Samogitia, 4) Minsk, 5) Luck-Żytomir, 6) Kamieniec and 7) Cherson.⁵⁸ The Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ (the provinces of Mahiloŭ and Viciebsk), the diocese of Vilna (the provinces of Vilna and Hrodna) and the diocese of Minsk (the province of Minsk), were mostly populated by Orthodox

and Catholic Byelorussians, even if reliance is placed on the statistics previously mentioned.

At the time of Metropolitan Wenceslaus Żyliński (1856-1863) a geographical map with exact boundaries of the dioceses was produced, providing also figures for Catholic churches and monasteries.⁵⁹ The Catholic Church in those regions had acquired after the concordat the stability indispensable for prosperity; but *numquam est fidelis cum potente societas*, and from the year 1863, after the famous insurrection, the Russian government acted as if the concordat with the Holy See had not existed at all. For this reason, and as a result of the machinations and interventions of the government, the normal administration of each diocese was virtually paralysed. In Vilna, for example, after the deportation of Bishop Krasziński in 1863 and the death of his Vicar, prelate Bowkiewicz, in 1866, the consistory and episcopal curia were occupied by people dedicated to a government hostile to the Catholic Church. The priests Żyliński, Niemeksza and Tupalski became prelates by grace of the notorious Murav'jev. It was Żyliński who by government decree became Administrator of the very extensive Vilna diocese, and also in 1869, of Minsk after it was liquidated by one sentence in the ukase of the Tsar. Its lawful Bishop A. Wojtkiewicz, summoned to Vilna, was not permitted to return to Minsk and died soon after.⁶⁰

The Mahilovian Metropolitan See was after 1863 directed by the suffragan Bishop Joseph Maximilian Staniewski (1863-1871), a man of weak character and much influenced by his colleague Stacewicz, rector of the Catholic Academy in St. Petersburg. Both were obedient instruments of tsarist injunctions, paying little attention to directives received from Rome. It was in Mahiloŭ that all priests were to proclaim four times from the pulpit, as a favour to the Monarch, the Tsar's decree on the use of the Russian language. At the same time many Catholic churches were forcibly closed or given over to the Orthodox. In 1866 all public processions and religious services outside the church were prohibited. Writing of these events Father J. Wasilewski remarked that 'Bishop Staniewski did not make a single protest'.⁶¹

Even as the diocese of Minsk, so before was the diocese of Kamieniec liquidated and its Bishop Fijałkowski exiled to Simferopol in the Crimea. In 1864 his diocese was united with that of Luck-Żytomir, whose Bishop was the courageous Borowski: he paid for his courage by being exiled in 1870 to Perm'.⁶²

Only the Samogitian diocese fared better, for its Bishop, Valančius (died 17 May 1875), succeeded in defending the interests of his Church and nation, although his suffragan Bishop Bereśniewicz (died 4 June 1902) did suffer exile.

This, then, was a time of dire struggle both to preserve the Catholic hierarchy and to keep the churches from being closed. It was a conflict inflamed by the attempts of the Russian government to substitute Russian for Polish and Latin in the churches. At the height of the conflict there were but five dioceses, instead of seven, and four Bishops and many priests were in exile.

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It is always necessary to have suitable religious books in the vernacular for the common faithful. This was naturally the case during the period of russification of the Catholic Church in the North-western Territory. Books were needed both by the priests and the faithful. At this time most of such books were in Polish with a few in Byelorussian and Lithuanian. None, however, were available in Russian. The Russian Orthodox Church used exclusively the russified Old Slavonic language, and no one had translated the Old Slavonic liturgical books into the living language of Puškin or Dostojevskij. Thus it was that, with the permission of the government, some individuals translated Latin and Polish texts into Russian. That such texts were translated *only* into Russian and not into Byelorussian, Lithuanian or Latvian shows that the tsarist policy had other than merely liturgical aims.

As a result of this work, undertaken even though there were few if any Russian Catholics to use such publications, eight books were translated and printed between the years 1866-1870. A list of them was provided by a representative of the Russian government in one of the memorials presented to the Papal Secretary of State in June 1870. This list can be regarded as the most authoritative, although in the works of other contemporary authors remarks about one or another of the books are to be found.⁶³

The following books were printed:

1. *Katechizm skrócony dla użytku młodzieży, uczącej się religii rzymsko-katolickiej, ułożony z najwyższego rozkazu, ze zbiorkiem modlitw, potwierdzonych przez ks. Staniewskiego, biskupa-sufragana. Wilna, 1869.*⁶⁴
2. *Rimsko-katoličeskij Oltarik, Vilna, 1869.*⁶⁵
3. *Dla rimskich katolikov voskresennoje i prazdničeskoje čtenije iz jevangelistov. Vilna, 1869.*⁶⁶
4. *Trebnik (Ritual), Vilna, 1869. 2nd ed., 1870.*
5. *Narodnyja duchovnyja pesni v prazdnik Roždestva Christova, Vilna, 1870.*⁶⁷
6. *Korotkaja tserkovnaja istorija. Vilna, 1879.*⁶⁸
7. Old Testament History.
8. New Testament History.⁶⁹

Of all these books the most important were the *Catechism* and the *Ritual*. The latter caused great controversy and was, for example, publicly burned in St. Raphael's church in Vilna by Fr. Piotrowicz on 25 March 1870.⁷⁰ The full title of the *Ritual* in its second edition was: *Rituale Sacramentorum ac aliarum Ecclesiae Romano-Catholicae caeremoniarum ex Rituali Synodi Petricoviensis depromptum. Editio nova aucta et emendata, Vilnae typis A. Syrkin, 1870.*

Fr. Boudou remarks about this *Ritual*: 'Polish was completely excluded from this book. There was not the least trace of Byelorussian. Only with difficulty could one find some phrases in Lithuanian and Latvian rendered in cyrillic characters. Some space was devoted

to German and French, but most of it to Latin and Russian. Approved by Staniewski, it bears the permission of the censor of Vilna'.⁷¹

The translator of the Ritual into Russian, as well as of the Gospel, was the ex-priest Kozłowski. The busiest censor of his edition was prelate Niemeksza.⁷²

The question of the Russian Ritual was also considered in Rome, and this most probably caused the change: the whole question of the Russian language passed from the Secretary of State to the Congregation of the Holy Office.⁷³

In Rome the question of the use by Catholics of the Bible in the Old Slavonic translation of the Septuagint was discussed. The Dominican priest Fr. Żóitek asked advice in this matter through his Superior General in Rome. This very matter disturbed Bishop Borowski also, who in a letter dated 12 November 1865 tried to convince Bishop Staniewski to forbid the Septuagint Bible in schools, since the Latins had the Vulgate.⁷⁴

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Indeed it was a far more difficult matter to propagate the Russian religious books, particularly the *Ritual* (*trebnik*), than to publish them. There were two ways: one was for the parish priest to accept the *Ritual* and to inform prelate Żyliński about it, another was to invite and to convince parishioners to sign a petition for the introduction of the Russian language into additional prayers, in sermons and so on. Both methods were used. Żyliński in complicity with Niemeksza and Tupalski campaigned zealously to win the day. He 'had recourse to signatures: whoever by his signature certified that he had received a copy of the *Ritual*, was considered to have accepted it'.⁷⁵

Of course the priests who signed were rewarded by the government; the recalcitrants were punished and persecuted.⁷⁶

Bishop P. Kubicki who before the last world war had access to many archives in Vilna, Kaunas, Riga and other places left by Russians, gives us more detailed news about the acceptance of the Russian Ritual by the priests in various dioceses.⁷⁷

In Vilna in consistorial acts it is noted on 23 January 1871 that 56 priests accepted the Russian *Ritual* and 256 rejected it.

In the Hrodna province in 1874 the receipt of the same *Ritual* was confirmed by ten priests only.

In the Minsk province there were many priests who accepted the new *Ritual* and preached in both Russian and Byelorussian, although the exact statistics are not available. There were mentioned such well-known names as Senčykoŭski, Jurkievič, Zauściński, Makarevič, Jacevič, etc.

Bishop Kubicki wonders why 'the Minsk region, where the Polish element, both civil and religious, fought so strongly for the Catholic religion and Polish language against the Russian government'⁷⁸ was influenced by Russian assault rather more easily than other regions.

There were of course many reasons, but the most important seems to be the artificial transplantation of Polish Catholicism and of the

Polish language on the Byelorussian soil. The varnish did not hold for long.

Fr. Ważyński, who was a contemporary of the events, informs us that in the Vilna diocese in 1872, of 616 Catholic priests, 115 accepted the Russian *Ritual*.⁷⁹ Among these were 30 deans; no doubt some of them were Byelorussians and used Byelorussian in sermons.⁸⁰

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One of the fiercest and most boisterous propagators of the Russian language in the churches of Byelorussia was the already mentioned priest Francis Ferdinand Senčykoŭski.⁸¹

All the Catholic authors who have studied the problems of the introduction of the Russian language into the Catholic Church regard Senčykoŭski as a national and ecclesiastical renegade, as an avid russifier and career seeker, as a monster in the priesthood, who would go to any lengths for money and tsarist recognition.²⁸

Senčykoŭski had, however, one defender in the person of A. V. Žirkevič, who in 1911 in Vilna published a large work in two volumes under the title *Iz-za russkago jazyka* in the series 'Minskaja Starina. Trudy Minskago Tserkovnago Istoriko-Archeologičeskago Komiteta'.

The author tried not only to defend Senčykoŭski in face of Polish-Jesuit propaganda — as he says — but to make a hero out of him, a struggler for a great idea. It is worthwhile acquainting oneself with Senčykoŭski in the light of the information provided by Žirkevič in his treatise. Both personalities lived and worked in Byelorussia, and considered themselves Byelorussians. Fr. Senčykoŭski used Byelorussian sometimes in sermons and his biographer and apologist was bold enough to write about his work.

Senčykoŭski was born on 4 October 1837 in the Navahrudak district of Western Byelorussia on the estate of Snoŭ belonging to Marshal Rudułtowski. His father Eŭstafi was the administrator of the estate. His mother Maryla, née Kanachovič, was the daughter of a uniate priest. His great-grandfather Suk received an inheritance in the seventeenth century. On this occasion the Byelorussian name 'Suk' became the Polish 'Sęk', and afterwards Senczykowski.

As a boy Francis Ferdinand studied in the court school in Słonim. In 1857 he came to Minsk to the seminary where the Bishop then was Adam Wojtkiewicz. In 1861 he finished the seminary and was ordained priest. The Bishop of Minsk appointed him chaplain to the wife of Marshal Bułhak of the Babrujsk district. After a short time he left the Bułhak house and went to the Dobośnia estate, then at his own request to his Bishop became curate at Błoń. Here he began his activities, sermons and prayers in the Russian and Byelorussian languages, which brought against him the opposition of Polish priests, lords and noblemen.

'More and more — Senčykoŭski himself wrote — the attention of the villagers and the sermons I preached for them in Byelorussian, my rusticity and russophilism (as they said) were the reasons why the lords, the Poles, asked the Bishop of Minsk to transfer me somewhere

else — into the wilderness and place me under the care of a good Polish priest.⁶³

With the help of powerful protectors Senčykoŭski continued not only to receive numerous decorations and substantial sums of money, but also in 1872 he was a triple dean — of the city of Minsk, of Ihumen, and of Nadnioman; in addition, he was the visitor of the churches of the Minsk diocese and administrator of the parish church in Minsk on Załataja Horka.⁶⁴

As a result of Fr. Senčykoŭski's efforts, according to his own testimony, in the years 1869-1879 in the Minsk diocese alone 46 priests in 32 parishes used Byelorussian and Russian (mostly the latter, one can safely surmise) instead of Polish.⁶⁵

In the end not only the Poles, but also some influential Russians felt they had had enough, if not too much trouble from Canon Senčykoŭski, who despite a Roman admonition remained faithful to Russia and closer to the Orthodox than to the Catholic Church.⁶⁶

In 1882 he set out on a journey to the Hrodna Franciscan monastery, then asked to be transferred to a military chaplaincy in Taškent in Asia. He died unreconciled with the Catholic Church in 1907 and was buried by the Orthodox clergy.

As has already been observed, Senčykoŭski called himself a Byelorussian and used Byelorussian in the pulpit; this indubitably has a certain significance in the struggle for the legitimate use of the Byelorussian language in churches. However, for Senčykoŭski as well as for Russian bureaucracy and the Polish canons of Mahiloŭ and of other consistories, Byelorussian was only a poor dialect. It may be that he was trying unconsciously to satisfy a local need of the Byelorussian people in Błoń and elsewhere, but he fought to achieve another object. In a letter to Žirkevič he explained: 'I wanted above all to destroy polonism, and russify the polonised Ruthenian people in Byelorussia and whilst preserving the Western Rite as concerns dogma, I wanted to unite it with Orthodoxy in order to tear this ignorant nation once and for all away from Polish political propaganda...'⁶⁷

In seeking to introduce russianism as an antidote to polonism Senčykoŭski was bringing about a further complication rather than an effective cure.

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To what extent then, did the struggle between Poles and Russians for the use of their languages in the Catholic churches bring to light the obvious problem of the use of Byelorussian among Byelorussians, apart from the activity of Fr. Senčykoŭski?

There were people who dealt expressly with the problem, and realised their desires in such a way that Rome — the Holy See — formally gave its consent. There comes to mind in this connection three persons: the author of an anonymous work, Professor Kna-piński, and Bishop Francis Albin Symon.

One hundred years ago, in 1872 in Poznań, a small booklet was printed, whose full title gives an indication of its content: *The*

*persecution of the Roman Catholic Church in Lithuania, particularly in the Vilna diocese during the years 1863-1872.*⁸⁸

Here 'Lithuania' must be taken to mean the historical Grand Duchy, and the questions considered by the author relate to all Catholic dioceses and the Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ. These all formed a single ecclesiastical province in the Russian Empire.

The book is distinguished by its completeness, conciseness, and an authentic command of the facts no doubt by a contemporary author. In it one finds the names and characteristics of Governors-General of Vilna, of the Bishops of all the dioceses, the lists bespoken by Murav'jev and his successors of all the Catholic priests, closed churches, chapels and monasteries. Small wonder then that it was published anonymously and outside Russia. So far as we know Fr. Ł.I. first mentioned its author as being A. Ważyński.⁸⁹

Alexander Ważyński was born in 1811 in Samogitia. He studied first in Kroży, then at Vilna University (Faculty of Law) and later at the Catholic Academy in St. Petersburg (opened in 1833). Ordained priest in 1839 by Bishop Kłagiewicz, he discharged various offices as archdeacon in the cathedral of Vilna, inspector and professor of homiletics in the Catholic Academy in Petersburg. He died in Cracow in 1872.⁹⁰

Fr. Ważyński was a priest, a professor and an enemy of the Russian regime, as he himself declares.⁹¹ We find his name on the list of priests who opposed the writing of a letter of homage to the Tsar at the instigation of Zyliński.⁹² The book of Fr. Ważyński was soon translated into French by Fr. Lescoeur and besides being used in the translator's own works, was separately printed in Paris in 1873.⁹³

He was also a prominent opponent of the introduction of Russian into para-liturgical devotions. He did not confuse Byelorussian with Russian. He also refuted that fundamental argument of Russian politics concerning Byelorussians and Ukrainians, according to which these two nations are 'Russian'. He considered it an 'ethnographic-historical invention to equate the Russian state with Ruthenia (Rus)'.⁹⁴ In his work Fr. Ważyński wrote of the Byelorussian language: 'The Russian language was until recently the modest dialect of Great Russia, not much cultivated ("très peu cultivé") in comparison with the Little Russian dialect and especially with Byelorussian. Regardless of literary controversy it is possible to establish that the Byelorussian language has among its treasures the monumental epic poem *Słowa ab pałku Ihara* (Word on Igor's Regiment); the Lithuanian Statutes were edited and printed in this language; the translation of the Bible by Skaryna in Prague and Vilna. This language was used in the writing of privileges, diplomas and other documents published by the Polish kings up to Bathory and after him. It was thus the official language, legal and in general use in Lithuanian Ruthenia from Gedymin until the Union of Lublin when it was replaced in diplomacy by Polish and Latin. But at that time the language today called Russian did not exist, it began to be formed in the eighteenth century . . .'⁹⁵

One must be grateful to Fr. Lescoeur for what he has done in translating a valuable documentary work from Polish into French, and for giving in his own work many excerpts from this book. It should however also be admitted that Fr. Lescoeur's inclinations were none the less directed exclusively to the defence of the Polish language in the churches and although he provided testimony of first hand evidence, he gives no place at all to the necessity of the use of Byelorussian.

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In 1893 in Cracow a small pamphlet was printed in the Polish language entitled *A letter to a certain Catholic priest on the use and introduction of the Russian language into Catholic devotion in Lithuania*. Signed by Rev. Dr. Knapiński.⁹⁶

Fr. Knapiński was born in 1838 and died in 1910. He was professor and rector of the Jagellonian University. Besides his own special field of biblical studies, he was also interested in the Catholic Church in Russia and wrote on this subject in the *Dziennik Poznański* and *Kurjer Poznański*. There are 66 of his articles pertaining to religious matters in Russia, and these were published during the years 1889-1896.⁹⁷

Fr. Knapiński was in correspondence with Senčykoŭski and the *Letter to a certain Catholic priest* was addressed to him. Žirkevič published the same letter-pamphlet in Russian translation in his book *Iz-za russkago jazyka*. There are significant discrepancies between the original Polish text and the Russian translation.⁹⁸

In it one finds also some commentaries made by Senčykoŭski in the margin of the *Letter*, with which Žirkevič naturally agrees. Since nobody until then had shown Fr. Senčykoŭski where he was wrong, Knapiński took on himself this delicate and not easy task. The remarks which Knapiński addressed not only to Senčykoŭski but also to the world at large are of no small interest:

"The use of the vernacular language for the teaching of religious truth both from the pulpit as well as in the confessional is without doubt inevitable. It would be unreasonable to maintain the opposite. Healthy judgement tells us that in seeking to teach a person anything at all, it is necessary to use that language which he understands the best, that is to say, the vernacular language (*lingua vulgaris*). Therefore for Byelorussians it is necessary to speak in Byelorussian, to Great Russians in Russian, to Poles in Polish, to Germans in German, and so on. This is required not only of a sound understanding, but also of our priestly state. Therefore, in teaching your parishioners in Błoń in their own language, that of the people — in Byelorussian, you are acting completely justly, for the parish of Błoń consists nearly exclusively of Byelorussians. The handful of Polish nobility who live there without doubt know Byelorussian, that is they speak in this language with the villagers and if they should wish you to speak from the pulpit in Polish, such a requirement would be unjust and unreasonable . . ."⁹⁹

Continuing his comments Fr. Knapiński says that where there is a

different situation and where Poles are in the majority, the priest should use Polish. As concerns Russian there is no need for this language in the churches for 'nowhere, not even in the centre of the Empire are there parishes of Russians, that is those for whom the Russian language would be the mother tongue'.¹⁰⁰

Another reason for using Polish or Byelorussian rather than Russian is 'that the Russian language especially in church is unpleasant for Poles, and at least indifferent for Byelorussians. In any case one must consider that priority should be given not to the state language, but to one's own'.¹⁰¹

Speaking again about Byelorussians, Fr. Knapiński writes: 'Good Byelorussians will always go to church because they are pious. They will always listen attentively to a clergyman regardless of whether he speaks in Russian or in Polish, albeit they understand neither Russian nor Polish. Even if the preacher should speak to them in Chinese, they would listen attentively. They would be even more enthusiastic about a Chinese sermon than about one in Byelorussian... for they are a simple people, and out of respect for the priest they would not presume to oppose'.¹⁰²

Characterising the Byelorussian faithful, Fr. Knapiński remarks that Poles react differently, and therefore one must take this into account and act accordingly.

To the reproach of Fr. Knapiński that Senčykoŭski caused mischief to the Church, the latter made the following point: 'It was not to the Church, but to polonism and Polish propaganda that I did malice'.¹⁰³ When the author of the *Letter* again calls Senčykoŭski a 'renegade from his nation', he wrote: 'I am a Byelorussian and not a Pole, and such I never called myself'.¹⁰⁴

Summing up the views of Fr. Knapiński, one must concede that he supported the granting of full rights to the Byelorussian language in churches and rightly defended the use of Polish among Poles, repudiating the use or introduction of the Russian state language into churches when there were almost no Russian Catholics.

Did Fr. Knapiński convince Canon Senčykoŭski, who at that time was far away in Taškent meditating on the bitter truth which had been served to him albeit on a delicate dish? So far as we know, he took very little to heart from that eloquent *Letter*.

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During the whole of this period, the relations between the Russian government and the Holy See had been far from normal. The liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in Byelorussia in 1839, together with limitations of all kinds on the Latin Church were fresh wounds; similarly the encyclical letter of Pope Pius IX of 17 October, in which he condemned the R.C.E. College, created for the purpose of controlling the Catholic Church within the Russian Empire, was a cause of strife rather than of concord.

From the very beginning of the struggle for the Russian language in the Church, Rome watched and gathered information. She had a relatively good number of observers; there were Bishop G. Borowski,

Father Żółtek, O. P.; Fathers Martinov and Gagarin, both Russian Jesuits; but above all Father Francis Albin Symon, professor of the Catholic Academy in Petersburg.

Father Symon (from 1892 Bishop) had written a letter to Pope Pius IX on 17 July 1870 and sent a bundle of different documents, to which he gave the title *Ex originalibus authenticis russicis in latinum versa atque introductionem linguae russicae in Ecclesiis Catholicis Poloniae et Russiae spectantia*.¹⁰⁵

In his letter Fr. Symon calls the Russian language 'muscovite'. He claims that up till then the people had prayed in the accustomed manner and that when suddenly all was changed for the sake of the Russian language, the same people would suffer spiritually. 'Under the false pretext — he writes — of abolishing the Polish sermons severe persecution now rages against the Catholic Church.' In this letter Fr. Symon makes no mention of the Byelorussian language, though this is hardly surprising since it is purely an informative letter which usually served to introduce added documents. It seems at this stage Fr. Symon was concerned rather by the fact that people were deserting the churches than by the language which should be used. It is however obvious that he was opposed to the introduction of Russian.

The Russian government could not rely upon its power alone: it was important for it to have a good name in the West. Moreover they did not want to sever every link with Rome. Therefore, through their young diplomat Peter Kapnist, the successor of the unfortunate Meyendorff, the government kept the Holy See informed and defended the decree of 1870. They refuted objections made by the Polish Catholic party.

Some statistics on the denominations and populations in the Western Provinces presented by Kapnist, together with other documents, are not without interest.¹⁰⁶ According to Kapnist in 1870 on the list of recruits from the Russian Empire excluding the Kingdom of Poland there were 4,992 Catholics, among them only 360 were Poles, others Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians etc. He also gives the numbers of Catholics and Orthodox for all the ten provinces. Compared with 7 and a half million Orthodox there are 2 million and seven hundred thousand Catholics. The percentage of the Catholics to the Orthodox in Byelorussian provinces was: Mahiloŭ — 5 percent; Viciebsk — 26 percent; Vilna — 61 percent; Hrodna — 29 percent and Minsk — 18 percent.¹⁰⁷

Kapnist was therefore correct in concluding that the Polish population in the Russian Empire did not form compact units; on the other hand the villagers who did make up such communities were not Poles. In the whole Empire there were about 800,000 Poles, i.e. one third of the total number of Catholics. It followed that to impose the Polish language in the army and in the churches according to Kapnist was unjust. He drew the attention of the Holy See to the fact that this was the proper occasion to distinguish once for all 'Catholic' from 'Polish'.¹⁰⁸

It should be said that in his memoranda to the Holy See Kapnist

never mentioned the need to replace Polish by any language other than Russian, thereby revealing his and his government's essentially nationalistic attitude.

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Rome, as usual, was in no hurry. When enough information had been accumulated, meetings were called of the members of the Secretariat of State. The reports of Fr. Guardi, Vice-General of the Congregation of St. Camillus, were of considerable interest and much to the point. He was familiar with the documents sent secretly to Rome, came to prudent conclusions and made suggestions as to what should be done. He was more than cautious. After having received the documents from the above mentioned persons, he still had to say: '... and even now we have not enough information to come to a decision on so important a matter which needs such careful handling'.¹⁰⁹

Regarding the Tsar's decision he expressed the view: 'It was certainly not so severe nor so dictatorial as had been feared'.¹¹⁰ Also as far as prayers in Russian were concerned he was unable to see 'that any infringement of the laws or liturgical rules of the Church had been proved'. Here he puts the question: 'Was it possible now for the Holy See to condemn what had not become apparent and to reprove what was not in itself to be reproved and was even a custom and actually practised in many churches and kingdoms?'

Fr. Guardi considered the Tsar's decree not as imperative (*pre-cettivo*), but only as facultative (*facultativo*), although he foresaw that 'in its implementation there will certainly not be lacking provocation and threat or other expedients and flattery; and everything possible would be done to make Catholics themselves ask for such a privilege'. He also agrees with those who like Bishop Borowski, Fr. Symon, and two Russian Jesuits Martynov and Gagarin, advised the Holy See regarding the purpose of the Russian government's action. Thus Fr. Guardi says: 'It is a fact that the real though covert aim of the Russian government is slowly but surely to russify the Catholic population — that is to make them schismatics'.¹¹¹

In 1874 Fr. Symon again describes in his letter to some of the officials in the Roman curia the state of the diocese of Minsk: '... inde conditio eius miserrima ac luctuosissima est. Pars magna ecclesiarum suppressa, pars, deficientibus sacerdotibus, vacat, pars demum concredita hominibus quibusvis defoedatis. Nil proinde mirum quod lingua rossiacae ab eiusmodi sacerdotibus recepta fuerit.' Further he provides information on Fr. Joseph Rajuniec, a prevaricating cleric, whom the Russian government intended to make a Catholic Bishop of the reorganised diocese of Minsk.¹¹²

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On 11 July 1877, the problem of the use of the Russian language was to some extent in Rome resolved, and this time by the Congregation of the Holy Office. The Supreme Congregation gave a negative answer to the two following questions:

1. Whether it is permitted in divine worship, during non-liturgical services to replace the Polish language, which has been used from time immemorial, by Russian, and that without the authority of the Holy See?

2. Whether the Holy See has allowed or ought to allow a change to the Russian language in this way?¹¹³

This decision of the Holy See concerned Poland (then called the Kingdom of Poland), the western provinces (present-day Byelorussia and Lithuania), and all Catholics within the Russian Empire.

The first question and the answer to it were certainly not intended to defend the Polish language directly, but simply to stress the fact that without the consent of the Holy See the civil government had no right to change long-standing liturgical customs in a given part of the Catholic Church.

The second question, it seems quite clear, was not properly thought out and still worse composed. It would surely have been better to relate the question to freedom of religion in territories under Russia or to persecution. There were sufficient facts. Such matters as these fall easier within the jurisdiction of the Holy Office, whereas the use of Russian or of some other language, which in itself was by no means reprehensible, as Fr. Guardi observed, did not. The second question and the negative answer to it which complements and supports the first because of its brief pedantic juridical wording, was not acceptable to any Russian, Byelorussian, German or others.

Rome had spoken, the Poles were pleased, but the case was very far from being finally determined.

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Mention has been made of the name of Fr. Francis Albin Symon, who was one of the most prominent among the Holy See's sources of information on religious events in Russia of the nineteenth century.

Francis A. Symon was born in Duboviec in the Żytomir diocese on 3 January 1841.¹¹⁴ He first attended school in the Żytomir seminary, then in the Catholic Academy in Petersburg, and after 1862, in Munich in Bavaria. In 1865 he was ordained in Rome, and in the same year he was appointed professor and prefect of the Academy, of which he had formerly been a student.

For twelve years he lectured on various subjects, including biblical archaeology, theology, Church history, and canon law. At the same time he wrote and published scientific and popular articles. In 1877 the Minister of Home Affairs, Timašev, demanded of Metropolitan Fijałkowski (1872-1883) that he relieve Professor Symon of his duties in the Academy. But, with a change of times and circumstances, he was in 1884 appointed Rector of the Academy, and in 1892 he became titular Bishop of Zenopol and suffragan of Mahiloŭ.¹¹⁵ Because of the failing health of Metropolitan Kozłowski (1892-1899), it was Bishop Symon who in practice governed the vast Archdiocese. In 1894 Bishop Symon made a pastoral visitation of the Minsk province and confirmed 22,000 persons. In 1895-97 he visited the parishes of the Viciebsk, Riga and Smolensk districts. Despite the government

prohibition he also assisted secret Uniates. Both by his antecedents and by his activity Bishop Symon came to know the needs of the Catholic Church in Byelorussia as no one else could.

At the very time of Bishop Symon's greatest activity disorder verging on chaos in the Catholic churches in Byelorussia reigned as a consequence of the Tsar's decree (1870) and of the conflicting Holy Office decision (1877). In the diocese of Minsk some parishes had no priests at all, and some others were staffed by priests nominated by the usurper Żyliński. Consequently the churches were nearly empty, the people refusing to recognise uncanonical priests (the so-called 'trebnikaŭcy' or those who accepted the Russian Ritual).

In spite of all that had happened the Russian government many times stirred up the vexed problem of language in the Catholic churches. Indeed it appears that it was at the instigation of the government itself that the use of the Byelorussian language emerged, cautiously but authoritatively supported by Bishop Symon.¹¹⁶

In a memorandum written in Rome on 2 September 1896 after setting out the stages of the struggle to introduce the Russian language into non-liturgical devotions, he says: 'In recent times, in order to achieve its own ends, that is to say, the de-polonisation of the Catholic Church, the government has raised the question of the introduction in those churches of the vernacular Byelorussian instead of Russian or Polish, in use at present. This same question was raised by the government with the legate of the Holy See, Mgr. Agliardi, when he lately attended the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in Moscow.'¹¹⁷

It is worthwhile summarizing the more important points contained in Bishop Symon's memorandum:

1) It was beyond dispute that the people of the Minsk diocese speak their own language: 'plebemque hanc numero longe superare nobiles, oppidanos et classem sic dictam mediam'.

2) In all devotions until that time the Polish language was used, but the people 'maiores eorum partem non intelligit, quoadmodum non intelligit quoque polonicas catecheses et conciones'.

3) There had been attempts to help the people; thus a small catechism, and a book of hymns were published in Byelorussian. A greater number would have been available had the government's prohibition not stood in the way. Also catechetical instructions were being given in the same language 'et quidem cum magna eorundem rusticorum utilitate et aedificatione'.

4) It was to be regretted that there were few priests who knew the Byelorussian language and that there no books from which to learn it.

5) It was a necessary measure to erect in the Mahiloŭ seminary a faculty of Byelorussian language, and he gives very strong reason for this: 'Idem exposcit quoque summa rei gravitas, explicatio scilicet mysteriorum et veritatum fidei in sermone carente quibusvis litterariis, Scriptura Sacra, catechismo aliquo probato etc.'.

Bishop Symon's remarks on the Byelorussian language, on the

people who used it, and on the need to learn it — were of the utmost significance and diametrically opposed to what Bishop Wojtkiewicz and the prelates of the Mahiloŭ and Vilna consistories had stated in their information to the R.C.E. College, namely that there was in the Byelorussian provinces of Minsk, of Vilna and of Mahiloŭ an insignificant number of faithful using Byelorussian.

However, since people in Byelorussia had used the Polish language in churches for a long time, Bishop Symon was fearful that a sudden change would not be conducive to the advancement of the spiritual life of the faithful. For this reason he certainly was not against the use of Polish where and when it was necessary.

A further reason for apprehension was the fear that the concession of the Russian government — the use of the Byelorussian language — was another stratagem: Byelorussian might one day disappear and in its place the Muscovite language would be introduced. Thus he says: 'Idcirco donum, quod gubernium nunc catholicis offert, magna cum cautela recipi debet, ne quod ex se utile est, in maius deinde vergat damnum Ecclesiae'.

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The question of the language in the para-liturgical devotions was certainly important, but it was only one among many others which were no less urgent: such as nomination of Bishops, the communication of Bishops with the Holy See, and the recognition of decisions made by the recent Oecumenical Council of Vatican I. All this could not be accomplished without some means of agreement between the Holy See and the Russian government. When in 1880 it came to negotiations between the Russian representative Uvvil and the Apostolic Nuncio in Vienna Jacobini, the question of the Russian language was raised once again. The same thing occurred in 1883 on the occasion of the coronation of Tsar Alexander III at which Mgr. Vanutelli assisted as the Pope's representative. There was however no change in the rigid attitude of Rome until 1897. In that year, thanks to the intervention of Bishop Symon, Cardinal Rampolla, the Secretary of State, sent two letters to Metropolitan Koźłowski, one dated 3 April, the other 8 May.

The first was intended by Rome to instruct not only the Metropolitan and clergy, but also the government and the greater public.¹¹⁸ The Apostolic See agreed that where there were no priests in parishes, they should be assigned but they should use only Latin in administering the sacraments and in other devotions.

The second letter, dated 8 May 1897, was addressed exclusively to the Archbishop of Mahiloŭ.¹¹⁹ It confirmed what had been said in the previous letter and added a new and most important decision concerning the use of the Byelorussian language:

'Nevertheless in your judgement it is proposed that whatever the Byelorussian dialect is used by the people, the parish priest can of his own will provide that this dialect be used in catechising. The Holy Father requests that you provide the best possible spiritual assistance

for your faithful and imparts to you most heartily his Apostolic Blessing.'

The Apostolic See agreed therefore that the Archbishop of Mahiloŭ could give permission for the parish priests to use the Byelorussian language (then called also in Rome 'dialect') in teaching the truths of the faith. This was possible in the catechisation of children and in preaching from the pulpit.

In this letter Cardinal Rampolla says nothing about the Russian or Polish language. It seems that the definite solution, through some agreement between the Holy See and the Russian government, was yet to be achieved. A further point requiring attention is the extent to which the Byelorussian language was used in accordance with the wish of the Archbishop of Mahiloŭ as expressed in the above cited letter.

By long, but in retrospect inadmissible tradition, the Archbishops of Mahiloŭ were chosen from amongst the Polish nobility. For most of these, it was of no consequence how urgent the need might have been for the use to be made of the Byelorussian language for the greater benefit of the faithful; they took little or no interest in it. Bishop Symon and later Bishop Danisevič, a Byelorussian himself, were exceptions.

Bishop Symon at this time, after the reply from Rome, intended to put his ideas into effect. He did this on 16 June 1897 when Metropolitan Kozłowski was absent. He gave in two letters instructions to all the parish priests of the Mahiloŭ Archdiocese to use that language which was spoken by the people and in which they prayed. This instruction was understood by the Russian government exactly in the same way as Bishop Symon had proposed it to Rome: that Latin, Byelorussian, or Polish should be used, but certainly not Russian.¹²⁰

Bishop Symon was sentenced to exile in Odessa because this instruction had been published without the prior knowledge of the government. From exile he wrote a letter to Pope Leo XIII in which he justified his action.

He remained in exile until 1901 when he was transferred to the titular See of Archbishop of Atalia, and was free to go and settle in Rome. From thence he went on to Cracow where he died as the parish priest of the famous church of Our Lady in the year 1918.¹²¹

The letter of Cardinal Rampolla, a reference to which incidently one seeks for in vain among Polish authors, was evidence of the solicitude of the Holy See for the spiritual welfare of the Byelorussian population and of a new approach towards the language problem notwithstanding the restrictive decision of the Holy Office made twenty years previously.

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In 1902 the Archbishop of Mahiloŭ, Kłopotowski (1901-1903) in answering the letter of Cardinal Rampolla provided him with information about the diocese of Minsk. He spoke of the distribution of the parish priests in those parishes where until then there had been

no priests at all; the Russian language, being prohibited, was not used. He also sought to inform the Pope's Secretary that priests 'apart from the Liturgy and divine offices, explained the catechism to the people gathered in the church, in a manner acceptable to them, and in the language used by the parish'.¹²²

This sentence re-echoes, no doubt, the wishes of the Holy See as expressed in the letter of the same Cardinal Rampolla in 1897 to Metropolitan Kozłowski.

The problem of language in para-liturgical devotions, in catechisation of children and in sermons in churches in Byelorussia arose yet again, at a time when prelate Danisevič (later in 1908 appointed Bishop) was the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ. He even held this office three times: 1) 17. II. 1903 — 9. V. 1904; 2) 30. VII. 1905 — 23. XI. 1908; 3) 29. V. 1909 — 10. V. 1910.¹²³

Danisevič was a Byelorussian. His family were simple village-folk. He was born in the parish of Čereja in the province of Mahiloŭ in 1836. During his pastoral visitations he preached in both the Byelorussian and Polish languages.

'He was a man who knew the diocese very well and its condition, and he did what good he could during his short periods of administration. This kind of activity exposed him to the displeasure of the government and he was suspended, deprived of support, and then voluntarily went to Smolensk.'¹²⁴ He died on 3 December 1913.

After the revolution in 1905 many things changed for the better within the Russian Empire and there was more freedom. In the same year the first authorised Byelorussian periodical of the twentieth century *Naša dola* appeared. Although all six issues were confiscated by the tsarist regime, its successor *Naša niva* was allowed to continue its historical mission among the Byelorussian population.

In order to eliminate the problems of the use of languages in the churches, prelate Danisevič requested the Holy See for a fresh decision. On 13 October 1906 an answer was given by Cardinal Merry Del Val; he was now the Secretary of State to Pope Pius X. In it the Cardinal explained the previous decree of the Holy Office: the use of Russian was prohibited where there were no Russian Catholics. Regarding other Catholics it was necessary to follow the generally accepted rules of the Catholic Church: 'that language is to be used which is proper to the majority of the faithful'.¹²⁵

There followed a further letter from Cardinal Merry Del Val dated 29 June 1907, addressed to all Catholic Bishops of the Russian Empire. In it he provided further explanations concerning the Russian language: all that had been said about it in previous documents issuing from the Holy See concerned the provinces known under the name of Great Russia, but not Byelorussia and Ukraine.

On the use of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian languages he wrote: 'Whosoever wishes to use the Byelorussian or Ukrainian dialects in their parishes can make a decision in accordance with the wish of the people, but in the event of a difference of opinion between the clergy and the faithful, they must submit to the decision of the Holy See'.¹²⁶

* * *

Thus after a prolonged struggle between Polish Catholics and the Russian government for the use of their respective languages in the churches in Byelorussia, the proper solution was ultimately provided by the Holy See, which was in harmony with the venerable tradition of the Catholic Church expressed already by the Lateran Council in 1215: everybody has the right to hear the divine truth in his own language and to receive the sacraments in a more intelligible way.¹²⁷ Thus the Byelorussian language should be used among Byelorussians in accordance with the wish of the Byelorussian people.

Many difficulties still faced the small band of active Byelorussian priests, mostly raised by the Russian government and the Polish clergy; there was moreover an urgent need for modern Byelorussian religious literature.

At the outbreak of the First World War the renaissance of Byelorussian cultural and political life was in full flood. A number of vigorous Byelorussian priests began to work. The struggle for the Byelorussian language continued, but there was no longer any question about its existence or its necessity. These were now matters of the past.

NOTES

1. Polish authors and others influenced by them often use the 'term 'Poland' when they mean the Polish-Lithuanian-Byelorussian Commonwealth instead of 'Rzeczpospolita' or 'Rzeczpospolita obojga narodów'. In this sense the term 'Poland' is *pars pro toto*, involving an element of political tendentiousness and of geographical, ethnographical and historical overstatement. Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania even after the Union of Lublin (1569) became neither a single nation nor a single state although they shared one king and one parliament. Until the partitions of the Commonwealth (1772, 1793, 1795) the internal administration, army, treasury, law code and language were different for the Crown (Poland proper) and for the Grand Duchy. See Kutrzeba and Semkowicz, *Akta Unii Polski z Litwą 1385-1791*, Cracow, 1932, pp. 180, 223; S. Koscialkowski, 'Rzeczpospolita obojga narodów (1569-1795)', *Dzieje ziem Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, London, 1953, pp. 68-99.
2. Paraliturgical devotions (*cultus suppletorius*): this term is used to mean such devotions as the twelve invocations of *Sviaty Boža* (Holy God), Psalm 45, *Te Deum*, the introductory prayer (*Oremus*), the eight prayers for the different classes of society, the Rosary, the Litanies, hymns, but not the Holy Liturgy (Mass) or the Divine Office. In the churches of Byelorussia and Lithuania these devotions as well as sermons and the catechism were the object of polonisation and then together with the Prayers for the Emperor and his family, of russification. See Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 364, note 2; Knapieński, *List*, pp. 16-17; Boudou, II, p. 356.
3. 'The Byelorussians inhabit 72 districts (ujezdy) of 14 provinces (gubernii): Viciebsk, Minsk, Mahiloŭ, Vilna, Kovno, Smolensk, Černigov, Pskov, Orlov, Kaluga, Suwałki and Kurland', Sapunov, 'Istor, očerk', p. 3. See J. Zaprudnik, 'The struggle for Byelorussia's autonomy in the First State Duma', *JBS*, II, 3, 1971, pp. 289-90 (a note on terminology). Zaprudnik uses 'North-Western Region' for 'Severo-Zapadni Kraj' and 'Western Region' for 'Zapadni Kraj'.

4. In the present study the expressions 'North-western Territory', 'Western Territory' are preferred. 'Gubernija' is here translated as 'province' and 'ujezd' as 'district'.
5. For that part of Byelorussia which was annexed by Russia in 1772 the number of Uniates was given by Metropolitan Smogorzewski in his letter of 17 Oct. 1772 to the Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw, Garampi. There were 20 deans, 468 parishes, 7,538 villages, 91,336 families, all together about 608,042 souls. For that part still in the Commonwealth there were 7 deans, 131 parishes, 2,005 villages, 21,673 families, all together about 159,758 souls. So for the whole of Byelorussia there were approximately 767,800 souls. See Welykyj and Sipovič, *Epistolae Jasonis Junosza Smogorzewski*, Rome, 1965, pp. 69-75. M. Loret, *Kościół Katolicki a Katarzyna II*, Warsaw, 1910, pp. 1-2, 199, and S. Askenazy in the introduction to the same book, p. v, give the figure of 800,000 Uniates. Catholics of the Latin Rite there under Russian rule after the first partition (1772) numbered approximately 50,281, Loret, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-1. For the whole of Byelorussia see the statistics given in this article.
6. Batjuškov, *Belorussija*, p. xvi. The same author, *op. cit.*, p. 373, without making any distinctions between Russians, Byelorussians and Ukrainians, repeats the statistics from *Vilenskij vestnik*, nr. 158, 1888: 'At the present time the numerical ration of the various nationalities and tribes (*plemjon*, sic!) in the North-western Territory is approximately as follows: Russian Slavs — 3,474,883; Poles — 744,410; Lithuanians — 2,295,300; Jews — 1,200,522; Germans — 149,80; Tatars — 14,839; various other nationalities — 74,598, making a total of 7,953,572'.
7. A. Theiner, *Die neusten Zustände der Katholischen Kirche beider Ritus in Polen und Russland*, Augsburg, 1841, Documente, p. 374. Other statistics as well as a critique of them are given by Martinov, 'Langue russe'.
8. N. A. Trojnickij, *Obščij svod po Imperii rezultatov razrabotki dannyh vseobščej perepisi naselenija, proizvedennoj 28 janvarja 1897 g.*, SPB., 1905, I-II. On the language of the Byelorussian lands see I, p. 5; II, p. 2 (table xiii). In the statistics the number of Byelorussians of Catholic faith is not given explicitly, but it can be deduced. In *ibid.*, I, p. 5 is given the number of Russians (55,667,469), Ukrainians (22,380,551) and Byelorussians (5,885,547). In *ibid.*, II, p. xxxii, it is said that the Roman Catholics of the Russian language — here 'Russian' is a generalization for 'Byelorussian', because there were no Russian Catholics at all — comprised 1.78%. This percentage of the total number of Eastern Slavs (83,833,567) gives us about 1,500,000 Byelorussian Catholics of the Latin rite.
9. Je. F. Karskij, *Belorusy*, Warsaw, 1903, I, p. 190; see also pp. 185-91.
10. Sapunov, 'Istor. očerk', pp. 6-7.
11. M. Harecki, *Chrystamatyja bielaruskaje litaratury, XI wiek — 1905 hod*, Vilna, 1923; by the same author: *Historyja bielaruskaje litaratury*, Vilna 1924, 3rd ed.; Piotuchovič, *Narysy*; S. Majchrovič, *Narysy bielaruskaj litaratury XIX stahodździa*, Minsk, 1957; A. Maldzis, *Padarožža ũ XIX stahodździe*, Minsk, 1969; A. B. McMillin, 'A conspectus and bibliography of Byelorussian literature in the nineteenth century', *JBS*, II, 3, 1971, pp. 271-88.
12. *Krótkie zebranie nauki chrześcijańskiej dla wieśniaków mówiących językiem polsko-ruskim wyznania rzymsko-katolickiego*. See A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, Vilna, 1929, p. 60. By the same author: '100-lećcie bielaruskaj katechizmuōki', *Chryścijanskaja Dumka*, 9 (111) Vilna, 1935.
13. *Katechizm o czci Cesarza Wszeh Rosyi, czyli objaśnienie czwartego przykazania Boskiego w stosunku do zwierżności krajowej*. Za Najwyższym rozkazem, dla użycia po szkołach i kościołach Rzymsko-katolickich wiejskich wydrukowany. Nakład i druk T. Glusberga księgarza i typografa szkół białorus. nauk. okr., A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, p. 61.
14. *Elementarz dla dobrych dzieciok katolikoū*. See A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, p. 61. Later the following editions of the Catechism in the Byelorussian language were published: 1906 in St. Petersburg, and 1907-1917-1927 in Vilna. A photostat copy of the Vilna, 1927 edition was produced by Fr. Francis Černiaŭski in the USA in 1957. For a more complete and

Addendum

4. The text of concordat in: *Akty i Gramoty*, pp. 193-207. Imennyj Vysočajšij Ukaz o razgraničienii Jeparčij, l. c., pp. 211-212; Bull of Pius IX of July 11, 1848, concerning the borders of the dioceses, l. c., pp. 213-240. — Angelo Mercati, *Raccolta di Concordati . . .*, Vol. I, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1954, pp. 751-765. — A. Boudou, t. I, pp. 559-565. — See: Olszamowska-Skowrońska, 'Le concordat de 1847 avec la Russie d'après documents authentiques', in: *Sacrum Poloniae Millenium*, t. VIII-IX, Rome, 1962, pp. 447-875. The dioceses and their borders, l. c., pp. 740-41.

- up-to-date bibliography of religious editions in Byelorussian, see F. Žurnia, 'Bielaruskija vydaŋni XIX-XX st.', *Božym slacham*, 4 (132), London, 1972, pp. 4-9.
15. Šlubski, 'Adnosiny', pp. 327-9.
 16. See A. Nadson, 'Naša niva', *JBS*, I, 3, London, 1967, pp. 184-214.
 17. 'Spisok s otnošenija k Ministru gosudarstvennyh imuščestv Murav'jevu, of 10 ijunja 1857 goda za nr. 1658', *Zapiski Iosifa Mitropolita Litovskago*, SPB., 1883, II, p. 621; see also I, p. 572.
 18. The Polish clergy whose opinion will be given later. Fr. Ładisław Knapieński was the professor at the Jagello Cracow University. The opinion in favour of the Byelorussian language held by Prelate A. Ważyński and Bishop F. A. Symon will be shown later, but it ought to be mentioned that neither of them was born in Poland: Ważyński was born in Samogitia, Symon in the Ukraine.
 19. An interesting illustration is provided in 1863 by one Orthodox priest from the region of Hrodna. According to him the Orthodox priests and their wives spoke with the simple people in Byelorussian, but priests always spoke Polish with their wives 'although the Byelorussian dialect of the common people was readily understood by them, but because this dialect not only was not used in more civilized society, even — and this probably because of intrigues of Jesuits — was held in deep contempt. Therefore in our parish houses, in our families, the common Byelorussian language was considered — what error and what blindness! — absolutely unfit for use in higher society exclusively the language of peasants. Against this language, we must confess, we have sinned far too much...' Šlubski, 'Adnosiny', p. 321.
 20. 'But the backward and degraded Byelorussian people carried through centuries of oppression and mockery its main national characteristics as if they were a sacrosanct treasure. It preserved its own way of life and psyche, its customs and folklore, and most especially its language', Piotuchovič, *Narysy*, p. 15. There is certain evidence that the Catholic Clergy especially the Uniates used the Byelorussian language in places of worship at the beginning of the 19th century. See Maldzis, *Padarožžy ū XIX stahodždzie*, Minsk, 1969, p. 187. Much more evidence is to be had from the second half of the 19th cent. and the beginning of the 20th. A. Stankievič gathered this in *Rodnaja mova*, chaps. VI-VII. Earlier information about the use of the Byelorussian language in Catholic parishes in Byelorussia is to be found in Zyskar, *Nasze Kościoły*, I, pp. 32, 52-4, 102, etc. Interested readers are referred to the above-mentioned authors, but to give some concrete example the following places — all in the Archdiocese of Mahiloŭ — can be mentioned where the Byelorussian language was used in the second half of the 19th cent.: Posin, Lanckorona, Savejki, Faščouka, Uŭa, Čečersk, Rudnia, Pahost near Orša and others. — The rich Byelorussian folklore became a subject of investigation for Russian ethnographers in the years 1860-70, then in 1880-90 for such Byelorussian scholars as Nikifaroŭski, Ramanau, Dabravolski, Jančuk, Doŭnar-Zapolski, A. Bahdanovič and others. See V. K. Bandarčyk, *Historyja bielaruskaj etnagrafii XIX st.*, Minsk, 1964. By the same author: *Historyja bielaruskaj etnagrafii. Pačatak XX st.*, Minsk, 1970.
 21. Its full name was the *Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical College*. Founded by the Emperor Paul I in 1800, confirmed by his son Alexander I in 1801, it gave rise to many difficulties for the Catholic Church. See Theiner, *Die Neusten Zustände der Katholischen Kirche beider Ritus in Polen und Russland*, Augsburg, 1841, Documente, pp. 301-10; Boudou, I, pp. 13-28; II, pp. 305 ff.
 22. On A. Niemeksza see Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 8, 11, 32, 38-9. On P. Żyliński and E. Tupalski, *ibid.*, pp. 33-9. On all three of Murav'jev's prelates: Przybyszewski, *Jezyk ros. Z. Olszamowska-Skowrońska*, 'U źródeł rusyfikacyi Kościoła na Litwie po r. 1863', *Przegląd Powszechny*, 189, Cracow, 1931, pp. 211-24; 190, pp. 87-94. By the same author: 'Pie XI et l'Eglise Catholique en Pologne. La suppression des diocèses catholiques par le

- gouvernement russe après l'insurrection de 1863-1864 (1866-69)', *Antemurale*, IX, Rome, 1965, pp. 41-130.
23. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 87-8.
 24. *Etnografičeskaja Karta Evropejskoj Rossii*, sostavil A. F. Rittich, S. Petersburg, 1875.
 25. Ihnatoŭski, *Historyja*, pp. 71-7, 148-9, 160; A. Cvikievič, *Zapadno-russizm*, Minsk, 1929; A. Puškarevič, 'Preobrazovanije ducha narodnosti, epizod iz istorii russifikacii Belorussii', *Izvestija Akademii Nauk SSSR*, 1, 1932. Both these are quoted from the brochure by J. Stankievič, *Z historyi rusyfikacii Vialikalitvy*, New York, 1967. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 61-2; Martinov, 'Langue russe', pp. 25-7, etc.
 26. Quoted by Ihnatoŭski, *Historyja*, p. 148. See Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 64-8.
 27. J. Stankievič, *Z historyi rusyfikacii Vialikalitvy*, New York, 1967, p. 4.
 28. '... caesarea aliaque palatii festa...', letter of the Minister of Home Affairs dated 20 July 1868, to the R.C.E. College. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 78.
 29. Boudou, II, p. 358.
 30. Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 67-8. In 1867 the pamphlet *De l'introduction de la langue russe dans le culte catholique* was published in S. Petersburg. In it the differing opinions of the following authors on the problem of the introduction of the Russian language appeared: M. Samarin, M. Derevitskij, M. Kulin, and M. Bezonov. See Martinov, 'Langue russe', pp. 556, 558-68.
 31. Among the members of the Commission were: Antropov, Derevitskij, Gen. Ratch, Bezonov, Kulin, Samarin, Raczynski, Govorskij, Zabielin. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 47-8. There was another Commission in Vilna in 1869 to prepare the liturgical books, translating them from Polish into Russian. Members of this Commission were: the Orthodox priest Petkevič, Niemeksza and ex-priest Kozłowski. Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 343.
 32. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 17-18; Boudou, II, p. 361.
 33. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 77-8.
 34. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 78.
 35. On the equivocal Russian policy towards the Byelorussian language see Jakštas, 'Baltgudžių kalba', pp. 168-72.
 36. As mentioned in the letter of the R.C.E. College, dated 31 Jan. 1868, to the diocesan Bishops: 'notitiae vero de propria parochiae lingua accuratiores sint Locorum Ordinariis...', Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 80-9.
 37. Boudou, *op. cit.*, first made use of them, and recently Olsz-Skowrońska printed them as a documentary supplement to her concise small work 'Tentatives', pp. 80-9.
 38. The common Byelorussian people perhaps could understand a little Polish, although we have for example from Bishop Symon a testimony to the contrary, but it is difficult to believe that they ever learned prayers from Polish books, taking into account the illiteracy and conditions of the poor people.
 39. '... colloquia facere plebeja lingua, albo-rossica idiomate permixta.' Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 83.
 40. Fr. Szelejko was not a 'Murav'jevian prelate'. Probably he is the same person mentioned by Ważyński, although the name is altered somewhat into Jakób Szylejko. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 81-3.
 41. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 84-6, gives the Latin translation of the Mahiloŭ consistory reply, which she has found in Arch. S. Vat., Carte di Russia e Polonia, XIX, 1, f. 245G. In the same Archives, XXI, 2, there are: the copy in Russian marked 'Nr. 1 originale'. The same document in French and in Latin. No doubt that it is the same document one finds in Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 116-21, but comparing the text given by this author with that of the Vat. Archives, one can observe a notable difference. In the letter to the Minister of Home Affairs, Timašev, the author, on behalf of the R.C.E. College, calls Lithuanian and Latvian *languages*, while in the Vatican documents Byelorussian is repeatedly called a *dialect*. The impression is given that some member of the Polish clergy gave Minister Timašev information that differed from that given to the Vatican.
 42. By Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 86: Gucinensis instead of Lucinensis.

- In the Russian original: 'Prichożan kostelov Lucynskago...', Arch. S. Vat., A.
43. '... maiorem eorum (devotionum, Ć. S.) partem non intelligit, quaemadmodum non intelligit quoque polonicas catecheses et conciones.' Memorandum to the Holy See, dated 2 Sept. 1896, Archives of BLM. It would be proper here to mention also the letter of governor Potapov to the Minister of Home Affairs (6 June 1869) in which he rebutted the statement of the R.C.E. College, according to which the Polish language was mostly used in the provinces of Viciebsk and Mahiloŭ, only a small part of the ordinary people speaking Byelorussian. The untruth of that statement — says Potapov — is clear, because it is known with certainty that the notable majority of the native population of the Mahiloŭ and Viciebsk provinces, with exception of the districts in Livland, does speak Byelorussian and the higher class of the same region, although they do not speak Byelorussian, understand that language.' Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 344.
 44. Karskij 'using the dialectal material for comparison with Russian and Ukrainian... proved in the face of contemporary opinion that the Byelorussian language was an original linguistic entity formed many centuries earlier, and not just a dialect or corruption', A. B. McMillin, 'Academician Ja. F. Karski (1861-1931)', *JBS* I, 3, London, 1967, p. 212.
 45. Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, p. 118.
 46. At the meeting there took part: the Governor-General of Vilna Potapov, Governor-General of Kiev prince Korsakov-Dundakov, Minister Šuvalov, Adlerberg, Rejtern, Pahlen, Milutin, Zelonyj, Tolstoj, prince Gagarin, General Čevkin. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 63. Fr. Stacewicz and Pilchler were not however members of the Commission as Ważyński wrongly asserts. See Martinov, 'Langue Russe', p. 557, note 1.
 47. Boudou, II, pp. 363-4; Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 96-7.
 48. Boudou, II, p. 364, after the quotation of the ukase from Žirkevič *Iz-za RJ.*, p. 126, corrects 'latin' to 'latyšski' as 'une faute grossière' supposedly made by Žirkevič, who subsequently repeats it in *Iz-za RJ.* on p. 139. The tsarist circular or ukase was never officially published (it is not to be found in *Poln. Sobr. Z.*), so it is difficult to say which word was used in the original document. Bishop Symon (Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 138; see also pp. 106, 113) puts 'lethona' (lingua, Ć. S.) in the Latin translation of it. Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 357, does the same later in Polish. But in the contemporary copy in the Russian language in Arch. S. Vat., A, p. 350v, the word is 'latynskij', exactly as given by Žirkevič. If it was in the ukase published by Žirkevič, the 'faute grossière' should be attributed to somebody else.
 49. 'In this decree which included the possibility of printing the necessary Catholic religious literature in the Russian language and its dialects, it appears that there was a freedom to print in different languages', Ślubski, 'Adnosiny', p. 320.
 50. Timašev's letter of 31 January (o.s.), 12 February (n.s.) 1870. Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 138-40; Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 105 (in French); see also *ibid.*, pp. 107-8; in Polish: Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, pp. 365-6.
 51. Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, p. 106.
 52. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 64.
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 102. See Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 19.
 54. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 106.
 55. The letter of Bishop Staniewski to the faithful in Russian and in French translation is in Arch. S. Vat., A, and in Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 115-16, with 'temps' instead of 'temples', 'églises'. The same letter appears in abridged form in Boudou, II, p. 366.
 56. Rome was kept informed by Bishop Borowski, Professor Symon, Fr. Żółtek OP, by the Jesuits Martinov and Gagarin, by Fr. Semenenko and others.
 57. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 119-20. Letters and memorials of Kapnist, *ibid.*, pp. 117-34, 157-63.
 58. See note 4.

59. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 74.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9; Boudou, II, p. 371. The ukase of the liquidation of the diocese of Minsk in *Poln. Sobr. Z.*, 2nd ed., XLIV, nr. 47, 307.
61. Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi*, p. 84; see also pp. 78-86; Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 3; Boudou, II, p. 565 (index).
62. Boudou, II, pp. 373-4. According to Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 76, and to Martinov, 'Langue russe', p. 575, Bishop Borowski was exiled to Penza. He was born on the Talmoušcyňa estate in the Vilna province on 13 January 1802, died 15 January 1885. *Podręczna enc. kościelna*, V-VI, Warsaw, 1905, p. 75.
63. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 126. Unfortunately neither the original titles nor the year of publication are given. Nor are the names of the authors mentioned. Because of the extreme rarity of these books one is obliged to rely on information cited in other works.
64. This *Catechism*, compiled by Fr. Stacewicz ('obrusiały dominikanin', a russified Dominican, Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 69) and approved by Metropolitan Hołowinski was in use in lithographed copies among Catholic pupils in military schools 1853-1865. In 1865 it was printed; three years later it became a compulsory text book in all schools where there were Catholic pupils. In 1869 it was reprinted in Vilna, it seems under a Polish title, as a direct translation from the text of 1865. This according to Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, pp. 74-5; Żirkievič, *Iz-za R.J.*, pp. 113-14; Martinov, 'Langue russe', pp. 568-71. From Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 127-30 it would appear that further editions were published in 1868 and in 1870. The former date, however, is no doubt a mistake for 1869. There is some clarification by Kapnist of these not very conclusive data: 'L'autorisation de faire une édition du petit catéchisme catholique-romain en langue russe fut revêtue de la sanction Impériale le 16 Décembre 1866. Il fut fait, a cet effet, une traduction textuelle du petit catéchisme qui était en usage depuis les années 1825-1830 dans les diocèses catholiques de l'Empire avec la sanction des Autorités ecclésiastiques compétentes', Arch. S. Vat., A, fol. 421.
65. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 78-9; Martinov, 'Langue russe', pp. 570-1; Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 76; Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 377 (where it is called *Zolotoj Altarik*). This prayer book is a translation made by Niemeksza from the Polish original which was prepared by a certain Cierpiński, secretary to the Bishop of Vilna Venceslaus Żyliński, in 1854. This same *Oltarik* was used later by Fr. Łomsargis with the approval of Bishop Symon in his apostolate among the Russians. See Ks. Arcybiskup Karewicz, 'Z dziejów pracy unijnej w Rosji', *Kościół Katolicki w Rosji*, Warszawa, 1932, pp. 45-6.
66. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 79-80; Martinov, "Langue russe", pp. 571-2; Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 77. The translator of the Lectionary into Russian was apparently the ex-priest Kozłowski. The ecclesiastical censor was prelate Mamert de Fulsztyn Herburt, the editor was Syrkin, Vilna.
67. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 80; Martinov, 'Langue russe', p. 574; Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 78. There were nine Christmas carols translated from Polish by a Russian nun in Vilna. The ecclesiastical censor was Fr. Tupalski, and formal approval was given by prelate P. Żyliński. Martinov, *op cit.*, mentions another edition, published in St. Petersburg in 1871. There were only seven carols.
68. Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 78. The author is unknown. Editor — Syrkin.
69. 'The final fruit of Russian Catholic literature is the History of the Old and New Testaments, published by Syrkin in Vilna', Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, p. 78.
70. On Fr. Piotrowicz, his letters, his 'conversion', and the somewhat dramatic ceremony at S. Raphael's church in Vilna there is abundant material in Arch. S. Vat., A. See also Przybyszewski, *Język ros.*, pp. 28-44; Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, pp. 717-20; Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 92-6. On the *Ritual* see Boudou, II, p. 369, note 2; Martinov, 'Langue russe', pp. 517, 574-6.
71. Boudou, II, p. 369.
72. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 79-80, 89.

73. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 70.
74. Wasilewski, *Arceybiskupi*, p. 82.
75. Martinov, 'Langue russe', p. 572.
76. Strictly speaking they were rewarded for using the Russian language in their prayers or sermons (these were also in Byelorussian). No doubt those accepted also the Russian Ritual. Details concerning both categories of priests are provided by Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 131-3 (rewarded); Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, IV, pp. 397-8 (punished). See also A. Jelski, *Dzieje Dyecezyi Mińskiej w zarysie*, Minsk, 1907, pp. 14-18.
77. Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, chap. xix: 'The Russian language and Rituals in the Catholic churches', pp. 364ff. Kubicki also published an article on the same subject in *Wiadomości Archidjecezyi Wileńskiej*, 4 March 1935.
78. Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, p. 376, note 1.
79. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 98.
80. For a list of the priests who used Russian and Byelorussian in their sermons see Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 131-3; Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, pp. 355-7.
81. According to A. N. Mosolov who was in charge of the Orthodox Church, Senčykoŭski translated some liturgical books into Russian. It is uncertain which ones they were and whether they were published. Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, p. 528. About the activity of Senčykoŭski according to the Russian official sources see Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani*, 2, I, pp. 360-3.
82. Ważyński, Przybyszewski, A. Stankievič, Boudou in their books often quoted here.
83. Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 49-50.
84. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 100-1. 85; Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 59-60.
86. Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, pp. 403-6; Boudou, II, p. 470.
87. Żirkevič, *Iz-za RJ.*, p. 11.
88. *Litwa pod względem prześladowania w niej Rzymsko-Katolickiego Kościoła szczególnie w dyecezyi wileńskiej od roku 1863 do 1872*. Published in Poznań by the Polish Library in Paris by Jan Zupański, 1872.
89. *Encyklopedia kościelna*, publ. by M. Nowodworski, XXX, Płock, 1910, pp. 375-6. See also E. Maliszewski, *Białoruś w cyfrach i factach*, Piotrków, 1918, bibliography. A short biographical note about Ważyński is also to be found in *Podręczna enc. kościelna*, XLI-XLII, Warsaw, 1915, pp. 151-2.
90. See the Directory of the Mahiloŭ Archdiocese: *Hierarchia Romano-Catholica*, Annus 1863, pp. 83, 189.
91. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 36-37.
92. Arch. S. Vat., A.
93. *La persécution de l'Église en Lithuanie et particulièrement dans le diocèse de Vilna*. Traduction du Polonais revue et précédé d'une préface par R. P. Lescoeur, de l'Oratoire, Paris, 1873. Fr. Lescoeur makes assiduous use of Fr. Ważyński's book in his work *L'Église Catholique en Pologne sous le Gouvernement Russe (1772-1872)*, Paris, 1876, II. So did the Jesuits Martinov, 'Langue russe' and Boudou, II.
94. Ważyński, *Litwa*, p. 67. Fr. Gagarin S. J., asserts practically 'the same': 'Et puis il y a un autre sophisme. On parle toujours de deux langues, le russe et le polonais; mais il y en a trois et même quatre en présence. Il est parfaitement certain (voyez: Miklosich: *Grammaire comparée*) que le petit russe, et il faut en dire autant du russe Blanc, n'est pas un dialecte de la langue parlée en Grande Russie mais une langue à part, une langue distincte, au même titre que le polonais et le russe, que le serbe et le tchèque. II ne s'agit donc pas de remplacer une langue étrangère par la langue maternelle; il s'agit de substituer une langue étrangère à la langue maternelle...'; extract from a letter in three parts dated resp. 17, 24 and 25 December 1872, addressed by Fr. Gagarin S. J. in Paris to Prince Volkonskij in Rome. This correspondence was published in Brussels in the journal *Le Monde* on 9 May 1883, pp. 1-2.
95. Ważyński, *Litwa*, pp. 64-5. In the Arch. S. Vat., A, there are two manuscript documents in French, both of the same year as the book by

Ważnyński (1872); both are anonymous, although one of them is attributed by Olsz-Skowrońska ('Tentatives', p. 146) to Fr. Semenenko (1814-1886), a known Resurrectionist of Byelorussian origin. The second document, more interesting than the first, might have been written by Ważyński himself. Its full title is *Note sur l'introduction de la langue russe comme auxiliaire en liturgie dans les provinces occidentales de l'Empire Russe*, written in Rome, 26 February 1872. In the first part of the text the author answers the Russians that they have no right to introduce the Russian language into the western provinces of their Empire, because 'la majorité du peuple de ces provinces, la population rurale, est Ruthène d'origine et de langue...'. According to the author of the document those who speak Polish in the western provinces make up only one sixth of the total population. Moscow is usurping the names 'Rus', 'russkij' and abusing them in the face of Europe; by forging history Russian scholars aim at fusing all Byelorussians with their Empire: 'ils marchent à la fusion de tous les Ruthènes avec leur empire'. Concerning the problem of the language which a Byelorussian understands better — Russian or Polish — the author gives a just answer: he prefers his own. 'Les Russes disent que le peuple ne comprend pas le polonais. Nous répondons d'abord, qu'il vaudrait mieux certes qu'on lui parlât sa langue, mais les Russes ne le veulent pas...'

96. *List do pewnego kapłana katolickiego o używaniu i wprowadzeniu języka rosyjskiego do nabożeństwa katolickiego na Litwie*. Drukowano jako rękopis, Cracow, 1893.

97. *Polski słownik biograficzny*, XIII-1, pp. 105-6.

98. For example see:

Knapiński, *List*, p. 1: 'I received your last letter on *Easter day*'. Żirkevič, *Iz-za R.J.*, p. 467: 'I received your letter on *Christmas day*'. Knapiński, *List*, p. 4: 'Metropolitan *Gintōwt* of holy memory'. Żirkevič, *Iz-za R.J.*, p. 467: the name of the Metropolitan is omitted entirely. Knapiński, *List*, p. 8: 'preaching in Błōn in Russian *instead of Byelorussian*'. Żirkevič, *Iz-za R.J.*, p. 470: 'instead of Byelorussian' is omitted entirely.

These few examples show how carefully Żirkevič's voluminous book should be used. The Russian translation of Knapiński's valuable *List* verges on a travesty.

99. Knapiński, *List*, pp. 4-5.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

103. Żirkevič, *Iz-za R.J.*, p. 489.

104. *Ibid.*, pp. 494-5.

105. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 137. On the letter of professor Symon, see *ibid.*, pp. 134-6.

106. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-34.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 121, 125.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 138. Here the imperial decree of 1870 is given in the Latin translation of F.A. Symon.

111. Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', p. 139.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

113. *Le Monde*, Brussels, 24 October 1877. The Latin and Polish text: Przybyśzewski, *Język ros.*, pp. 55-7; Boudou, II, p. 467; Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives', pp. 73-5. See also *La Correspondance des Papes et des Empereurs de Russie (1814-1878)*, Rome, 1970, p. 350.

114. *La Gerarchia Cattolica*, Rome, 1895, p. 398, and *ibid.*, Rome, 1905, p. 253. Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi*, p. 124, gives the year 1842. It seems to be incorrect. *Rimsko-Katoličeskaja Ierarchija*, g. 1869, p. 187, agrees with *Gerarchia Cattolica*. See Ks. A. Petrani, *Nauka prawa kanonicznego w Polsce w XVIII i XIX wieku*, Lublin, 1961, pp. 292-3, 298.

115. Preconized on 17 December 1891. *La Gerarchia Cattolica*, loc. cit.

116. '... then the Bishop Suffragan of Mahilou Symon officially requested the Governor of Minsk Trubetskoy, and proposed, as the only solution in such a delicate situation, for the Catholics of the province to use the Byelorussian

- language from the pulpit in vacant parishes. The Governor agreed fully with the opinion of Fr. Symon, remarking however that that lay outside the scope of his authority and this matter should be referred to the central Office. Then deliberations started between the Russian Government and the Roman Curia, Leon Wasilewski, *Litwa i Białoruś*, p. 289. The same is repeated by V. Ł. (Vaclaŭ Łastoŭski) in the article 'Ž historyi Katalickaha Kaściołu na Bielarusi', *Homan*, 12, Vilna, 12 May 1916, and then by A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, p. 66. Unfortunately this interesting information seems to be incorrect. No doubt Bishop Symon spoke with the representatives of the Government before it was referred to the central Offices in St. Petersburg and in Rome. Bishop Symon expressly confirms that the initiative for the introduction of the Byelorussian language came from the Government. Przybyszewski — his real name was Victor Wojdak, once the dean of Minsk — calls this project of the Russian Government 'a satanic stratagem': 'co to za szatański podstęp!', he exclaims in *Język ros.* p. 94. See also A. Jelski, *Dzieje Dyecezyi Mińskiej w zarysie*, Minsk, 1907, p. 19.
117. An authentic copy of the Memorandum is in the Archives of BLM. It has also been published with a few minor differences by A. Jakštas, 'Baltgudžių kalba', pp. 169-72. See *Božym Štacham*, 1 (124), London, 1971, pp. 16-17. The coronation of Tsar Nicholas II took place on 14 May 1896 in Moscow.
118. Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi*, pp. 120ff.
119. The Polish authors (Przybyszewski, Żyskar, Wasilewski, Olsz-Skowrońska) are silent on the subject. Instead it was published by the Lithuanian Apysenis (Canon Casimir Prapuolenis), 'Lenkiškoji katalikstė Lietuvoje', *Draugija*, XV, 59, Kaunas, 1911, pp. 307-8. A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, p. 66.
120. This is known from the copies of the letters of Bishop Symon to Metropolitan Kozłowski dated 25 August 1897 and to the Pope in the same year from Odessa, which are preserved in the Archives of BLM. The same letter of Bishop Symon to the Metropolitan is to be found in Italian in Arch. S. Vat., B.
121. Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi*, p. 128.
122. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 191.
124. Żyskar, *Nasze kościoły*, p. 27. About Bishop Danisevič see Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi*, pp. 117, 152-7; A. Stankievič *Rodnaja mova*, pp. 72-5.
125. A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, p. 71. The copy of the letter of Cardinal Merry del Val authenticated by Fr. Andrej Cikota, Superior of the Marian Fathers in Druja (Byelorussia), is to be found in the Archives of BLM.
126. Apysenis, *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 307; A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova*, pp. 71-2. The copy of the Vilna Curia authenticated by Fr. Andrej Cikota is in the Archives of BLM.
127. 'Quoniam in plerisque partibus intra eandem civitatem atque dioecesim permixti sunt populi diversarum linguarum, habentes sub una fide diversos ritus et mores: districte praecipimus, ut pontifices hujusmodi civitatum sive dioecesum provideant viros idoneos, qui secundum diversitates rituum et linguarum Divina officia illis celebrent, et ecclesiastica sacramenta ministrent, instruendo eos verbo pariter et exemplo', J. D Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Venetiis, 1778, XXII, p. 998.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Akty i gramoty — *Akty i gramoty ob ustrojstve i upravlenii Rimo-Katoličeskoj Cerkvi v Imperii Rossijskoj i Carstve Pol'skom*, 1849.
- Archives of BLM — Archives of the Francis Skaryna Byelorussian Library and Museum, London.

- Arch. S. Vat. A; B — Archivio segreto vaticano della Congregazione per gli affari ecclesiastici straordinari.
 A — Carte di Russia e Polonia, XXI, parte 2, 1868-1872.
 B — Russia-Polonia, periodo 1872-1921.
- Batjuškov, *Belorussija* — P. N. Batjuškov, *Belorussija i Litva. Istoričeskija sud'by Severo-Zapadnago Kraja*, SPB, 1890.
- Boudou, I; II — A. Boudou, *Le Saint-Siège et la Russie. Leurs relations diplomatiques au XIXe siècle, 1848-1883*, I-II, Paris, 1925.
- Ihnatoŭski, *Historyja* — U. Ihnatoŭski, *Historyja Bielarusi ŭ XIX i ŭ pačatku XX stале́cchia*, 3rd ed., Minsk, 1928.
- Jakštas, 'Baltgudzių kalba' — A. Jakštas (prelate A. Dambrauskas), 'Baltgudzių kalba Katalikų Bažnicioje', *Draugija*, XVII, 66-67, Kaunas, 1912.
- JBS — *Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, London.
- Knapiński, *List* — X. dr. Knapiński, *List do pewnego kapłana katolickiego o używaniu i wprowadzeniu języka rosyjskiego do nabożeństwa katolickiego na Litwie*. Drukowano jako rękopis, Cracow, 1893.
- Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani* — P. Kubicki, *Bojownicy kapłani za sprawę Kościoła i Ojczyzny w latach 1861-1915. Część druga: Dawna Litwa i Białoruś*, I, Sandomierz, 1936; IV, Sandomierz, 1938.
- Martinov, 'Langue russe' — J. Martinov, 'De la langue russe dans le culte catholique', *Etudes religieuses, philosophiques, historiques et littéraires*, 5, Lyon-Paris, 1874.
- Olsz-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives' — Z. Olszamowska-Skowrońska, 'Tentatives d'introduire la langue russe dans les Eglises Latines de la Pologne orientale', *Antemurale*, XI, Rome-London 1967.
- Piotuchovič, *Narysy* — M. M. Piotuchovič, *Narysy historyi bielaruskaj literatury*, I, Minsk, 1928.
- Przybyszewski, *Język ros.* — Ks. J. Przybyszewski (Ks. Wiktor Wojdak), *Język rosyjski w katolickim rytuale i w dodatkowym nabożeństwie*, Lwów, 1897.
- R.C.E. College — Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical College.
- Sapunov, 'Istor. očer' — A. P. Sapunov, 'Istoričeskij očer'k Vitebskoj Belorussii', *Polocko-Vitebskaja starina*, I, 1911.
- A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova* — Ks. A. Stankievič, *Rodnaja mova ŭ šviatyniach*, Vilna, 1929.
- Ślubski, 'Adnosiny' — A. Ślubski, 'Adnosiny rasijskaha uradu da bielaruskaje movy u XIX st.', *Zapisy Addziełu humanitarnych navuk*, 2, Minsk, 1926.
- Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi* — Ks. J. Wasilewski, *Arcybiskupi i administratorowie archidiecezji mohilowskiej*, Pinsk, 1930.
- Ważyński, *Litwa* — A. Ważyński, *Litwa pod względem prześladowania w niej Rzymsko-Katolickiego Kościoła w dyecezyi wileńskiej od roku 1863-1872*, Poznań, 1872.
- Žirkevič, *Iz-za RJ* — A. V. Žirkevič, *Iz-za russkago jazyka* (biografija kanonika Senčykovskago), Vilna, 1911.
- Żyskar, *Nasze kościoły* — Ks. J. Żyskar, *Nasze kościoły. Opis ilustrowany wszystkich kościołów i parafii znajdujących się na obszarze dawnej Polski i ziemiach przyległych*. I, Archidiecezja mohilowska, Warsaw-SPB, 1913.