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GAGARIN AND THE PETRINE PRIMACY

The reception of Catholic ideas by Russian thinkers in the nineteenth century was not common. One reason why Chaadaev's first *Philosophical letter* became so scandalous was not only that he criticized the backwardness of Russia, but also because of the reason he gave for this situation and the proposed solution. According to Chaadaev, the source of Russian downfall was the isolation of the Russian Church, and the remedy he proposed was the return to the universal Church¹. For Chaadaev, this was just a philosophical solution since he himself did not become a Catholic. However, his ideas were taken very seriously by the first editor of his writings, prince Ivan Gagarin. Gagarin not only became a Catholic, but he also became a Jesuit priest and extremely active in the cause of bringing Catholicism to Russia.

The nineteenth century witnessed the reception of Catholicism among Russian intellectuals to the point of converting to Catholicism, to mention only Gagarin's aunt, Sofia Svechina, Mikhail S. Lunin, prince Petr B. Kozlovsky, E. A. Golitsyn, and Vladimir Pecherin. A decision could hardly ever be fickle since it had serious consequences, such as the possibility to be sent to Siberia and losing all property.

¹ Gagarin wrote about Chaadaev at some length in his *Tendances catholiques dans la société russe*. „Correspondant” 50:1860 p. 286-318, where he also reproduced Chaadaev's first *Letter*.

1. GAGARIN AND HIS BOOK *WILL RUSSIA BECOME CATHOLIC?*

The way to Gagarin's conversion was long and induced primarily by intellectual reasons, and his contacts with Western Europe were made while holding a post of a minor official in Russian foreign service. As a young man he lamented in his journal the fact that he did not find a firm idea to which he could devote his life, and he thought that he would devote his life to his fatherland: „to you, my fatherland, I will offer my life and my thoughts. My occupations, my work, my efforts, my life – I will give it all to you”; „may my life be active! Science, I will devote it to you; to you and to liberty, fatherland, and humanity”².

As he wrote in his *Notes about my life*³, before his conversion, Gagarin saw Christianity from the perspective of social progress as „the phase of the development of human thought higher in comparison with that which it reached up to the time of Antiquity” and Protestant philosophy stemming from it as a new progress leading to the freedom of thought. He was not attracted to Protestantism but to the dualism that presupposed two opinions on every subject. It seemed to him that truth arose as the result of such fruitful tension. The existence of only one principle was fruitless and deadly (263). Intellectual stagnation in Russia was the result of the lack of two opposite doctrines battling one with another. The history of Europe has known this dualism long before the emergence of Protestantism which, he considered the source of European civilization. Protestantism was only a result of a more general cause. Gagarin found in the history of Europe the following opposing opinions:

The Enlightenment philosophy of the 18th century and Christianity;
 Jansenists and Jesuits;
 Protestantism and Catholicism;
 Hussites, Wycliffians, Lollards, Albigensians [Cathars] and the
 Church (264);

² И. ГАГАРИН. *Дневник. Записки о моей жизни. Переписка*. Москва: Языки русской культуры 1996, entries for 26 Sept. 1834 p. 109, and 2/14 Nov. 1834 p. 130.

³ *Ibidem*.

Guelfs [supporters of the pope in the 13-14th century Italy] and
 Ghibellines [supporters of the German emperor];
 empire and priesthood [the conflict of the Hohenstauf dynasty
 with the papacy in 12-13th centuries];
 Muslims and Christians.

He discovered that in each of these conflicts, one side was always the same – namely the Catholic Church – always attacked and always victorious (265). He understood then that this Church was „the necessary foundation of European civilization” (266). He came to this conviction in 1836 or 1837, long before his 1842 conversion, i.e., „there is a wide gap between a solid opinion and the act of faith” (267). The act of faith came later, a fact not mentioned in his journal, which ends two months before his conversion. As Gagarin wrote late in his life: „Under German influence I got used to the idea of an impersonal God, which simply meant confessing atheism. The society in which I lived was far from battling such tendencies; it [even] encouraged them (...) I can say that never was I so far away from religion as in these two years I lived in Munich [1833-1835]”. The problem to which he was particularly sensitive was the place of Russia in Europe: „In what lies this common trait that exists between various European countries, which is lacking in Russia? This was a problem which stood before me in Munich, the problem with which I constantly wrestled and which finally led me to the Catholic Church”⁴. He wrote in 1845 to his aunt about de Maistre that „in the hands of Divine Providence his works were instrumental in my conversion and salvation”. To Samarin he wrote, „Jesuits did not convert me”. The foundation was set by Chaadaev in 1835 and 1836, and the work was finished by Murav’ev’s *Truth of the universal Church*⁵. Gagarin disliked the narrowness of theological ideas in Murav’ev’s book and his aggressive attacks on Catholicism. And so he converted to Catholicism in 1842, and in the next year, he became a member of the Society of Jesus.

In 1856, Gagarin published his most influential work, *Will Russia become Catholic?*⁶ The title was so provocative that for the 1858 Ru-

⁴ Letter to Bakhmeteva, Jan. 1875, quoted by P. Темнест. *Между Рейном и Сеной, an introduction in Гагарин*. p. 16-17.

⁵ *The letter to his aunt and a letter to Samarin are quoted by Темнест*. p. 40.

⁶ J. GAGARIN. *La Russie sera-t-elle catholique?* Paris: C. Douniol 1856.

ssian translation it was changed to *About the reconciliation of the Russian and Roman Church*. This slim volume was Gagarin's credo, and scores of later booklets and articles were, in a way, commentaries on the 1856 publication.

Gagarin began with quoting approvingly the words of Alexander II from a manifesto issued to the Russians after signing the treaty of Paris that concluded the Crimean war (1856) in which the tsar emphasized the fact that social order was based on religion and thus all reforms should begin in the religious sphere (vi). Gagarin's message was that Russia's economic and civilizational backwardness was caused by isolationism in religion, in separation of the Eastern Church from Rome. That is, the union of the Churches should be appealing even to the non-religious because only such a union can establish a sufficiently strong basis for economic and social progress in Russia. Importantly, such a union with Rome did not mean the renunciation of Russian identity of the Eastern Church. „When retaining its venerable rites, its antique discipline, its national liturgy and its proper physiognomy, the Russian Church can reenter into the harmony of the universal Church” (vii).

Gagarin emphasized the fact that the integrity of the Russian Church has always been important to Rome and the union of the two Churches did not mean Latinization of the Eastern Church. For the Catholic Church, Russian bishops and priests are genuine bishops and priests, and they truly perform the sacrifice at the altar (2). „Russian catechisms have gaps rather than errors and whatever defects they could include, they are complemented and corrected by the offices of the oriental liturgy” (2-3). A few regrettable recent alterations were due to irregular intervention of civil powers (3). The Catholic Church has always made reconciliation attempts, and Gagarin mentioned the bull of Benedict XIV of 1755 (4) and popes Leon X and Clement VII, who had reproached those criticizing the Greek Church for using fermented bread for communion, the marriage of priests, and the distribution of bread and wine to all (7-8). In this, they followed the Council of Florence (12). For almost all Russians, Catholicism was a synonym of Latinism which in turn was synonymous with Polonism (17; equating Catholicism with Polonism would become particularly important after the January Uprising in Poland in 1863). A confusion of Catholicism with Latin rites was to be the biggest obstacle in accepting Catholicism. The Russians must be convinced that by becoming Catholic they could retain communion in two forms, use fermented bread, their Slavic liturgy, and married clergy (18).

The need to unify the Churches stemmed from the philosophical principle that „truth is one and universal” (21). Therefore, the Church must be one and universal, but it must also be independent. „Jesus Christ, sovereign master of heavens and earth, charged it with showing to people the way of salvation; He established it as infallible interpreter of His word and His law” (23). The authority of the Church comes only from Christ. The unity of the Church is menaced by exaggeration of the national spirit, its independence – by claims and encroachments of temporal powers (24). This is what Gagarin called Byzantinism because in Byzantium emerged for the first time the tendency „to transmit into the Church the national spirit to oppose it to the catholic spirit, the tendency to concentrate the government of this national Church in the hand of the prelate or assembly of prelates submissive to the influences of political powers and at the same time to weaken as much as possible the ties that bind this Church with the universal Church” (29). Byzantinism had, as its consequence, the ruin of the Greek Church, which resulted in the ruin of the Greek empire (32-33), which certainly proves Gagarin’s point that religion is the true foundation of nation and state. Providence, however, saved this glorious Church from extinction by raising the Slavs, particularly the Russians, who should restore this Church to its former glory (33). And yet Byzantinism invaded also the Russian Church. Boris Godunov transformed the metropolitan of Moscow into a patriarch in 1588 to manipulate him more easily (37). Patriarch Nikon, possibly the greatest man Russia produced, in Gagarin’s opinion, was deposed and banished by tsar Alexis (1666-1667), and so the liberty of the Russian Church ended (38). Eventually, patriarchate was abolished by Peter I and the synod was put in its stead in 1721 (39). In his later book, *Russian clergy*⁷, Gagarin devoted much more space to the synod and quoted from the ecclesiastical statute, or regulation, that determined rights and duties of the synod and the Church (200): The members of the Synod swore to be „faithful, upright, and obedient servants and subjects of the autocrat of all the Russians” and that „the sovereign judge of this Synod is the monarch of all the Russians” (203-204). There were also rules specifying that in some cases the confessor must reveal the secrets of the confessional (212).

⁷ [IVAN] GAGARIN. *The Russian clergy*. London 1872 [reprint, New York: AMS Press 1970]. French original appeared in 1871.

The Russian Church must be liberated from its submission to the secular power, continued Gagarin in his *Will Russia become Catholic?* This could be accomplished by dissolving the synod and electing a patriarch, but the patriarch could become a subject of secular powers just as much as the synod (41-42). For Gagarin, there was only one way: the liberation of the Russian Church could only be accomplished by reconciliation with Rome (42). To accomplish the union, „an accord between three wills is sufficient”: the pope, the tsar, and the Russian Church represented by bishops of the synod (vii)⁸. The pope, the Russian Church, and the Russian emperor should debate and settle this reconciliation (42-43). The pope would stipulate the conditions of unity and guarantee the rights and liberties of the Russian Church and of the emperor. The Church would find an energetic defender of its rights in the pope, and in the emperor – a powerful advocate to plead in Rome for the causes of its old customs. The emperor, by agreeing to limit his power over the Church, would give the clergy a measure of independence to fulfill their mission and would find in the pope a vigilante authority ready to restrain a tendency for mutiny (43). The Russian clergy were lacking „supernatural life and, in particular, supernatural courage” (44). What Russia needed was the clergy „which exercises the same influence on all classes of society, that preaches to all the same doctrine, that civilizes and moralizes the peasant and, at the same time, dissipates the clouds that the frivolity of Voltaire or the false profundity of Hegel accumulated in the spirit of Russian lords”. And this could only be done by the independent clergy (82-83). The union with Rome was „the best and the only guarantee of independence” (46).

Gagarin realized very well that formal agreements between the three powers were not quite sufficient. The Church was about professing certain beliefs, and if dogmatic differences were not resolved, any union would be reduced to a formalism lacking coherence and true integration. Gagarin named two principal points on which the view of the Eastern Church differed from the view espoused by Roman Catholicism: the procession of the Spirit (the *Filioque* controversy) and the authority of the pope. According to Gagarin, for a Catholic, the pope has a divinely given jurisdiction over the Church; the Holy Spirit

⁸ In this, Gagarin followed the ideas of William Palmer. Cf. Gagarin’s article, M. Palmer et l’Église russe. „L’Universe” 10 May 1853.

proceeds from the Father and the Son – these are articles of faith. But in the Russian Church they are not dogmas and so they cannot be considered heresies; they are opinions to be admitted freely or rejected (51). Only an ecumenical council is infallible and so, in the Eastern Church, there is now no authority to settle these issues (55). Such an ecumenical council should take place to resolve the differences.

It could not be denied, said Gagarin, that the Russian government would lose something after the union of its Church with Rome (60). However, if nothing was done, internal tendencies toward independence of the Church could lead to revolution, hardly a desirable prospect for the political authorities. Therefore, there remained one alternative: Catholicism or revolution (61)⁹. With Peter I's reforms, always violent and often superficial, Russia left its isolation, opening itself to Western Europe along with its influences (62). The opposition between Catholicism and the revolutionary movement was particularly clear in Western Europe, but Russia tried to resist both: revolution – a resistance to which is commendable, and Catholicism – a resistance to which only weakens the country (64-65). In the nineteenth century, the Slavophiles („the old Muscovite party”) attempted to counter secular influences of the West under the banner of triple unity: religious, political, and national (70). But this revolutionary program turned the Church into a political tool for national unity (73). However, Western civilization was the world of the Catholic Church; the Protestantism was here from yesterday and will pass tomorrow. Everything that was fundamental in the work of European civilization resulted from the beneficial action of Catholicism (75-76). Peter I's work was violent and, as such, anti-national and anti-Christian. It was not a reform, but a violent and passionate revolution (78). Those, who wanted to restore the former grandeur of Russia, should combat all the anti-Catholic tendencies in Russia, „this unfortunate import we got from Western Europe” (79). As a political benefit: Russia would remain the first among the Slave nations, but it could also aspire to be the first among Catholic nations (81).

⁹ In this, Gagarin followed de Maistre and Russian Jesuits. JEFFREY B. BESHONER. *Ivan Sergeevich Gagarin: the search for Orthodox and Catholic union*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press 2002 p. 243 note 43.

2. ORTHODOX RESPONSES TO *WILL RUSSIA BECOME CATHOLIC?*

Gagarin's book met with positive reactions among his coreligionists. Even pope Pius IX read it and „has been very content with” it.¹⁰ However, its overly optimistic tone and hope for reconciliation of the Churches was very quickly stifled by the immediate and vitriolic response of Orthodox authors.

In his brochure, *A response of a layman to the book „Will Russia become Catholic”*¹¹, Baranovskii began with blaming the Catholic Church for its persecution of those who read the Bible (7). The Good News accused the Catholic Church so that the Church prohibited an access to it. That was why papists are obscurants and Jesuits are enemies of universities (9). Even population grew with the decrease of influence of papism, and yet Malthus, a Jesuit¹², tried to show that the increase of population was detrimental to a country (10). The fall of papism was inevitable since Christianity would triumph (13). The union of the East and the West could occur only when the Roman Church renounced all that was added to its doctrine since the time of its separation (18-19). For the Orthodox, the Church was the entire nation of one faith; the clergy was one with the people; the gifts of the Holy Spirit could be given to the clergy and nonclergy in equal measure (28). Also, a revolution in Russia was impossible; Gagarin only scared people (30). As to the pope's protection, Baranovskii said that already for 10 years the French and Austrian army was in Rome because of the danger of revolution. Why did the pope need them? Catholicism could cause revolution as a reaction to itself, cf. Poland. As Michelet proved in *Pologne et Russie: légende de Kosciusko* (1852), the reason for Poland's partition was the predominance of Roman clergy and the influence of papism in general (32). The Orthodox Church

¹⁰ BESHONER. *Ivan Sergeevich Gagarin*. p. 81.

¹¹ С. БАРАНОВСКИЙ. *Ответ мирянина на книгу: „Станет ли Россия католическою?”*. Berlin: Rudolf Wagner 1859.

¹² Malthus was, of course, an ordained minister of the Anglican church. Interestingly, French Catholics criticized him for his theories and his book was banned by the Spanish inquisition. W. PETERSEN. *Malthus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1979 p. 10-12.

was also right about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. All seven ecumenical councils stated that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, no Council stated that He also proceeded from the Son, thereby pronouncing heretical any other opinion, although these opinions were not mentioned explicitly. Also, no council mentioned the pope's primacy and so the Orthodox did not accept this primacy (42). In all councils the popes were equals of other patriarchs (42-43). A council could condemn a pope, not vice versa, a council could take place without a pope (43). Finally, there was nothing wrong with the independence of clergy in Russia. „Does not Gagarin know that the Russian clergy has more freedom than the Roman Catholic clergy? (...) Does synodal rule not give more guarantee to the ruled than papal [rule]?” (44). Gagarin, Martynov, Dzhunkovskii – Catholic converts – befriended a Jesus, but not the Christ, stated Baranovskii, and urged them to cease being Jesuits and become Christians (46).

Baranovskii's brochure was written, as most Orthodox responses at that time, in a scurrilous tone, full of attacks against Rome or papism, as usually referred to, with a firm conviction in the orthodoxy of the Orthodox Church and thus in worthlessness of any attempt to even bring views of this Church to discussion. For these writers, it was Catholic Church that was schismatic and heretical, and thus any claims to the contrary could not be treated seriously and the idea of the Russian Church accepting Catholicism was unthinkable. This is particularly clear in a book published anonymously, *Orthodoxy and papism: an analysis of the work of father Gagarin concerning the reunion of the Greek Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church*¹³. The book is more generous than usual with the amount of invectives. Gagarin is „an apostate, a man who betrayed the faith of his ancestors” (38), a deserter obligated to flatter his new masters for the asylum he received (54), afflicted with blindness characterizing the adorers of papism (26). The author marveled on how „a man who just left Orthodoxy, just took the frock of the Society of Jesus, could transform himself to the point to of adopting their secrets, this art of hiding the void of thoughts under the seductive form of captivating language full of cleverness” (28).

¹³ *Orthodoxie et papisme: examen de l'ouvrage du Père Gagarin sur la réunion des Églises catholique grecque et catholique romaine*. Paris: A. Franck 1859, which is attributed to Stephanos Karatheodores. BESHONER. *Ivan Sergeevich Gagarin*. p. 123, 262 note 67.

The author criticized Gagarin's idea of agreement between the pope, the Russian government, and the Russian Church, but what he found unacceptable was leaving out the faithful: How – he asked rhetorically – could anyone think about such an aberration of the Russian government to propose the reunion of the Churches without taking the opinion of the people into account? (38). But how should such an opinion have been taken into account? Through a popular ballot? Would that have been a proper way of settling the truth of religious dogmas? As the author himself observed when praising the Greek Church, „the number is no proof of truth” (51). Also, the alternative: Catholicism or revolution was, according to the author, false; the proper alternative was: Orthodoxy or revolution (40). Moreover, in the author's view, Gagarin's assessment of history was faulty: Peter I was always pre-occupied with the interest of the Church, showing more than once his pious obedience concerning the regulation of the universal Church (52). He was just a great man (53). The author also criticized Gagarin for imagining that the Russians attributed more weight to rites than to dogmas (63). Gagarin certainly opened himself to such criticism by downplaying theological issues in his book. A case can be made that he did it because he knew full well that the Russians attributed more weight to dogmas than to rites. In a letter he wrote: „I have avoided all which could injure and only insisted on that which caters to our poor Easterners”¹⁴. Also, according to Gagarin, there was more in common in the theologies of the two Churches than there were differences, and the latter were a matter of opinion, at least for the Eastern Church, and thus secondary. Needless to say, the Orthodox writers hardly agreed with Gagarin on that point, and the bellicose tone of *Orthodoxy and papism* certainly speaks to that disagreement very clearly. In sum, for the author, „by the grace of God, the Eastern Orthodox Church to this day remained sane and pure, protected from pernicious influences of corrupted atmosphere and justifiably takes pride in her inborn beauty” (16). And because it was obvious for the author that „the goal of the papists is not knowledge of the truth, since if truth were their goal, the reunion of Churches would be operating for a long time” (95), any attempt to persuade the Russian Church to become Catholic was impossible from the outset. Who could take heed to the voice of one of

¹⁴ Quoted in BESHONER. *Ivan Sergeevich Gagarin*. p. 79.

the Jesuits „who have eyes not to see and ears not to hear” (99). Curiously, the book ends on an optimistic note concerning the reunion of Churches with the statement that „we find the guarantee of success in the character of Pius IX, wise and pious man, who is above the whole idea of the glory and human grandeur” (100).

A response to Gagarin’s ideas was also given by Ioann Iakhontov in his book, *Letters to an apostate from the Orthodoxy*. It is a collection of essays published between 1858 and 1860 in a journal *Dukhovnaia Beseda* and focuses on two papers published by Gagarin¹⁵. You changed your faith without reflection, said Iakhontov to Gagarin; you are not sufficiently educated in the principles of Orthodoxy (1). Your book is filled with childish dreams (2). „How pitiful are people who without any need abandon their fatherland and abroad are easily caught in the net set for them” (14-15). The major, almost the only, reason for the separation of the Churches was the primacy of the Roman bishop (24-25). Jesus gave the same rights and duties to all the apostles (26). Would he not have stated it clearly that Peter was the head? (28). Would a question, who is the greatest among them, be raised at all? (29). Many, including Augustine, stated that the Church was founded on faith pronounced by Peter, i.e., on Christ (31). Could the Church be founded on a man weak by nature? Did the Church not become headless and thus dead with the death of each pope? The apostle was the stone on which the Church was founded and the apostle was founded on Christ, stated Gagarin¹⁶. Does it make any sense to have a foundation upon foundation? (32). The statement about getting the key found in the Gospels (Mt. 16:19, 18:18) was heard by Peter first since he first clearly confessed Christ, however, the key was given to all (33). Peter was first because of his firm faith (47) and his fervent commitment to Christ. Primacy was his personal merit, not his office (48). In the Jerusalem council, Peter was equal with others (55). Peter was an apostle, but not a bishop, although he could establish bishops (95). In conclusion, although in Gagarin’s words there are decency

¹⁵ И. ЯХОНТОВ. *Письма к отступнику православия*. Санкт-Петербург: Духовная Беседа 1864. The papers are: *De l’enseignement de la théologie dans l’Église russe*. „Études de théologie, de philosophie et d’histoire” 1:1857 p. 1-61, and *Les Starovères, l’Église russe et pape*, in vol. 2:1857 p. 54-91.

¹⁶ GAGARIN. *De l’enseignement*. p. 39-40.

and moderation, and in his thoughts – order and warmth, and so it is agreeable to talk to him (121), yet writers like Gagarin are pitiful in their blindness (181).

The discussion really concentrated on the authority of the pope, and in his later publications Gagarin, developed arguments in favor of papal primacy in the universal Church. The idea was that the Church accepted this primacy from its very inception. The Petrine primacy was established by Christ himself and was recognized by the early Church. According to Gagarin, it was just a matter of reestablishing in the Eastern Church what this Church originally recognized as testified by the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church. Already in *La Russie sera-t-elle catholique?* he remarked generally that the Greek Church „put on the lips of the people the hymns which clearly specified the dogma and directly refuted heresy” (27)¹⁷. More particularly, Gagarin argued that the primacy of Peter among apostles was clearly asserted in liturgical hymns. However, as quoted by Gagarin in his *Response of a Russian to a Russian*¹⁸, his critics rejected the reasoning, lamenting „the candor and truly touching innocence of the good father. There is no doubt that one should not search for dogmatic teaching of the Church in hymns and canticles, i.e., in poetic compositions where expressions are always somewhat exaggerated” (12-13)¹⁹. Gagarin responded that the poetic character of the hymns did not imply that they were false or exaggerated. The Bible is full of poetry and, by such reasoning, in the extreme case, following rationalists, all Biblical miracles, prophecies, etc. should be rejected (23-24). Gagarin acknowledged the use of liturgical texts in proving the authority of Peter by de Maistre and others before him. It was clear to Gagarin that liturgical texts clearly teach the Catholic doctrine on the divine origin of papacy and that „there is clearly a contradiction between these texts and practice of the Russian Church” (37)²⁰.

¹⁷ An Orthodox author agrees: „our fathers left us liturgical hymns that include the whole of economy of salvation”, *Orthodoxie et papisme*. p. 50.

¹⁸ [JEAN] GAGARIN. *Réponse d'un Russe à un Russe*. Paris: Belin 1860.

¹⁹ S. P. SUSHKOV. *Encore quelques mots sur le sermon du P. Gagarin, Jésuite, sur l'union des Églises orientale et occidentale*. „L'Union Chrétienne” 1859-1860 p. 134-135. In this weekly published in Paris primarily by Russians Sushkov criticized Gagarin's speech given at the beginning of 1860.

²⁰ The method of using liturgical texts to prove the primacy of Peter was used by M. JUGIE in his monumental *Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissidentium*. Paris: Letouzey et Ané 1926-1935 v. 4 p. 334-338, where

Gagarin returned to the discussion of liturgical texts in his response to the polemical articles of Sushkov. To the argument that primacy was assigned to other apostles as well, Gagarin responded that „if apostle Andrew was first in following the call, apostle Paul was first in converting pagans, apostle James was first in converting the Jews, then apostle Peter received higher primacy, which put him higher than all the apostles and entrusted him the government of the universal Church with no distinction between the Jews and pagans”²¹. The texts also indicate that both Paul and Peter are „the foundation, pillars, and walls of the Church, but when Paul is called the chosen vessel, Peter is praised as the rock and foundation”²². It is, therefore, obvious to Gagarin that „liturgical books of the Russian Church include many clear and precise texts in favor of primacy of apostle Peter just as it has always been understood in the Catholic Church” and thus „the belief in primacy of the pope is the old belief in the Eastern Church and, in particular, in the Russian Church and that so the rejection of this belief is a novelty”²³.

Vehement attacks on Gagarin and his proposal of unifying the Churches under papal authority indicate how unrealistic the proposal was. That was well summarized by Murav’ev when he wrote that if any one from the Russian clergy „were to propose seriously the union with Rome, the congregation would stone him on the spot: this was the degree of aversion the West inspired in the Russian people”²⁴. And certainly far less understanding could be expected if such proposal came from a Russian considered to be apostate and a Jesuit. Even Samarin, a friend who was the only one to whom Gagarin confided the fact of his conversion, published a vicious attack on Jesuits, *Jesuits and their relation to Russia*²⁵, those who want freedom as an avenue to „oppress the adversaries and to control their views” (288), those who are

Gagarin’s inspiration is also mentioned, p. 335 note 7. Cf. CAESARIUS TONDINI. *The primacy of S. Peter: demonstrated from the liturgy of the Greco-Russian Church*. London: T. Richardson and Son 1879 [1867].

²¹ И. ГАГАРИН. *Примат апостола Петра и богослужebные книги Русской Церкви [1863]*. *Символ* 1994 no. 32 p. 112.

²² *Ibidem*. p. 117.

²³ *Ibidem*. p. 121.

²⁴ А. Н. МУРАВ’ЕВ. *Letter to a Roman neophyte* [1856]. In: *Voices from the East*. Ed. J. M. Neale. London: Joseph Masters 1859 [reprint, New York: AMS Press 1974] p. 166-167.

²⁵ ЮРИЙ Ф. САМАРИН. *Езуиты и их отношение к России*. Москва 1866.

a distorted mirror in which the Catholic Church can view its corrupted soul (229). Gagarin was an enemy of the Slavophiles, he was of little interest to progressive forces which were disinterested in rescuing the Russian Church viewed by them as a regressive, reactionary factor. Therefore, Gagarin's ideas were dismissed and the labeling him as an apostate was tantamount to „refusing Gagarin the right to a place in the intellectual history of Russia and wiping him out from national memory”²⁶.

In his writing and his active life Gagarin was true to the idea he pronounced in his young age to offer his life and thought to his fatherland. But after his conversion, the idea received a religious coloring. „My greatest dream, my most ardent desire is the perceptible reconciliation of the Russian Church with the Holy See”²⁷. It was in the interest of Russia, Russian soul, that he lived. „The reunion of the Eastern Church with the Roman Church is the constant object of my preoccupations and of my prayers”²⁸. However, his actions brought in Russia little fruit.

The idea of recognizing the Petrine primacy by the Orthodox Church never became mainstream in Russia even when it was raised by Solovyov. In his opinion, „mankind cannot enter into relation with God by the way of popular opinion; the Church of Christ cannot be found on democracy”²⁹. It is founded on revelation and it was clear for Solovyov that the revelation of the New Testament pointed to Peter as the earthly center of the Church, and to Catholic Church as the Church established by Christ Himself. „The Roman Catholic Church is the only Church that is neither a national Church, nor a State Church, nor a sect founded by a man (...) It is the only Church against which the gates of hell have not prevailed”. Also, „the Papacy is the sole international and independent ecclesiastical authority, the only real and permanent basis for the Church's universal activity”³⁰. In Solovyov's theocratic vision, this ecclesiastical power should be joined with the state power of the Russian tsar to form the universal Christian monar-

²⁶ A. WALICKI. *Rosja, katolicyzm i sprawa polska*. Warszawa: Prószyński 2003 p. 330.

²⁷ GAGARIN. *De l'enseignement*. p. 2-3.

²⁸ GAGARIN. *Réponse*. p. 61.

²⁹ V. SOLOVYOV. *Russia and the Universal Church*. London: Bles 1948 [1889] p. 87.

³⁰ *Ibidem*. p. 120, 121.

chy. It almost goes without saying that there was no prospect in realizing this vision, in spite of the actions undertaken by Solovyov himself; even the pope Leo XIII proclaimed the realization of this vision to be possible only by a miracle³¹.

3. ORTHODOX POSITION TODAY ON THE PETRINE PRIMACY

The situation had not changed significantly today. Orthodox theologians sometimes address the issue of papal authority with predictably different perspectives than do the Catholics. It is stated that Eastern Churches have always recognized the authority of Rome and that at Chalcedon pope Leo was recognized as the successor of Peter, but this authority was not equated with absolute power³². The primacy was a necessary development of measures taken by the councils to assure ecclesiastical order with the introduction of provinces, patriarchates, etc., but the West carried it too far by a too powerful universal primate and a too weak local bishop. The West should restore the balance³³. The greatest problem with primacy is identifying it with power and transforming it „from the ministry in the Church into power over the Church”³⁴. The universal primacy does exist, but it is not the supreme power. It is power, however, but no different than the power of a local bishop; it is „only expressed, manifested, realized by one” bishop. Therefore, as this unhelpful explanation continues, „the idea of primacy excludes the idea of jurisdictional power but implies that of an «order» of Churches which does not subordinate one Church

³¹ КОНСТАНТИН МОЧУЛЬСКИЙ. *Владимир Соловьев: жизнь и учение*. Paris: YMCA-Press 1951 p. 185, 190.

³² J. MEYENDORFF. *St. Peter in Byzantine theology*. In: *The primacy of Peter in the Orthodox church*. (Eds.) J. MEYENDORFF et al. Leighton Buzzard: The Faith Press 1973 [1960] p. 8.

³³ *Ibidem*. p. 29. However, the author states that for an Orthodox, considering the inclusion of papal primacy to be a part of the content of the Christian Gospel is an authentic aberration responsible for the schism between the churches for irresponsibility in approaching the problem of Truth. J. MEYENDORFF. *Rome and Orthodoxy: authority or Truth?* In: *A pope for all Christians?* (Ed.) P. J. McCORD. New York: Paulist Press 1976 p. 145-146.

³⁴ A. SCHMEMANN. *The idea of primacy in Orthodox ecclesiology*. In: *The primacy of Peter in the Orthodox church*. p. 39.

to another”³⁵. One Orthodox author considers it conceivable to see „universal primacy ultimately pertaining to the bishop of Rome”, and because the Vatican I states that not the pope himself is infallible but his definitions due to a particular assistance of the Holy Spirit, these definitions „have an intrinsic validity and would not require confirmation by the Church”. Papal authority should be used to deal with „hesitation and disagreements among the bishops”³⁶. However, although it is admitted that in respect to the *Filioque* controversy there are simply two noncontradictory traditions, it must be remembered that it took fourteen centuries for Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians to realize that „they are fundamentally in agreement”³⁷. If the pronouncements of Vatican I (papal infallibility *ex sese, non ex consensu Ecclesiae*) somewhat softened by Vatican II should be considered a starting point, it would be a long wait. However, as an author speaks to his coreligionists, „if Orthodox were to think and speak more in constructive and less negative and polemical terms, then the divergence between the two sides might no longer appear so absolute”³⁸. Gagarin’s advice is as actual as ever: „First of all, it is necessary to arouse in reason and heart the desire for reconciliation” since „an accord will be successful on the day when there is a desire for an accord”³⁹.

³⁵ *Ibidem.* p. 48, 50.

³⁶ O. CLÉMENT. *You are Peter: an Orthodox theologian’s reflection on the exercise of papal primacy*. New York: New City Press 2003 [1997] p. 92-93.

³⁷ *Ibidem.* p. 81, 94.

³⁸ T. WARE. *The Orthodox church*. Baltimore: Penguin Books 1964 p. 323.

³⁹ J. GAGARIN. *Les partisans et les adversaires de l’union*. „Études de théologie, de philosophie et d’histoire” 3:1857 p. 66-67.

GAGARIN I PRYMAT PIOTROWY

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Akceptacja idei katolickich przez myślicieli rosyjskich była w dziewiętnastym wieku rzadkim wydarzeniem. Powodem, dla którego pierwszy *List filozoficzny* Czaadajewa wywołał ogromny skandal była propozycja powrotu Kościoła prawosławnego do Kościoła katolickiego. Idea ta przesiąkła pierwszego wydawcę pism Czaadajewa, księcia Iwana Gagarina. Gagarin nawrócił się na katolicyzm w 1842 r., został jezuitą w następnym roku i życie poświęcił sprawie połączenia Kościoła prawosławnego i katolickiego.

W 1856 r. Gagarin opublikował swe najgłośniejsze dzieło *Czy Rosja zostanie krajem katolickim?* W pracy tej Gagarin pisał, że zacofanie Rosji powodowane jest oddzieleniem się Kościoła prawosławnego od Rzymu. Tak więc połączenie obu Kościołów ma nie tylko aspekt religijny – istnieje tylko jedna prawda, więc Kościół również powinien być tylko jeden – lecz również pozwoliłoby na postęp ekonomiczny i społeczny Rosji. Gagarin podkreślał, że owo połączenie Kościołów nie oznaczałoby latynizacji prawosławia, które zachowałoby swą liturgię i obrządek.

Przeszkodą w unifikacji Kościołów jest nacjonalizm i zależność Kościoła prawosławnego od władzy świeckiej, co Gagarin nazwał bizantyzmem. Pojednanie z Rzymem jest jedynym rozwiązaniem i powinno się dokonać drogą porozumienia między papieżem, carem i synodem Kościoła rosyjskiego. Gagarin dyskutował dwa zasadnicze punkty dzielące oba Kościoły: kwestię pochodzenia Ducha Świętego (kontrowersja wokół *Filioque*) i kwestię autorytetu papieża.

Odpowiedź autorów prawosławnych była natychmiastowa i bardzo gwałtowna. Niniejszy artykuł pokrótce przedstawia trzy takie odpowiedzi zawarte w broszurze *Odpowiedź autora świeckiego na książkę „Czy Rosja zostanie krajem katolickim?”* S. Baranowskiego (1859), *Ortodoksja i papizm: analiza dzieła ojca Gagarina w sprawie ponownego zjednoczenia greckiego Kościoła katolickiego i Kościoła rzymskiego* Stephanosa Karatheodoresa (1859), oraz *Listy do odszczepieńca od prawosławia* Joanna Jachontowa (1864). Dla tych autorów było jasne, że to Kościół katolicki jest winien schizmy, a więc jest Kościołem heretyckim, tak więc połączenie się z nim jest nie do pomyślenia. Działalność Gagarina w sprawie unifikacji Kościołów nie przyniosła żadnych rezultatów. Na niewiele zdały się później wysiłki Sołowjowa by przybliżyć oba Kościoły. Sytuacja niewiele zmieniła się i dziś. Sprawa jest czasami dys-

kutowana mniej emocjonalnie niż za czasów Gagarina i napotkać można opinię myślicieli prawosławnych że „jeśli prawosławie myślałoby i mówiło w bardziej konstruktywnych a mniej negatywnych i polemicznych terminach, to rozbieżność między obiema stronami nie jawiłaby się już tak absolutna”.

Słowa kluczowe: prawosławie, katolicyzm, unifikacja

Key words: Orthodoxy, Catholicism, unification