

THE METROPOLITANATE OF HALICZ AND THE BISHOPRIC OF ASPROKASTRON. A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

Ștefan Andreescu

It is a well-known fact that a reliable piece of evidence as to the origin of the Metropolitanate of Moldavia is provided by the synodal resolution of the oecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople, dated 26 July 1401. The document informs us that Bishop Joseph, until then rated a "false bishop", had been acknowledged to be a "legitimate bishop" along the following motivation: "... being a local and related to the local ruling family, he was sent by all to the metropolitan of Halicz, who has authorization by the synode to ordain bishops for bishoprics in Little Russia, Asprokastron counting among these"¹. Furthermore, Patriarch Mathew's letter to the voivode of Moldavia, Alexander the Good, on the same issue of quenching the conflict opposing the ecumenical patriarchate to Moldavia, gives us the name of the metropolitan of Halicz having ordained Joseph as "bishop of Moldovlahia": "Lord Anthony"².

Anthony became metropolitan of Halicz in 1371, in the time of Patriarch Philoteos. His appointment occurred as a result of pressure exerted on the patriarchate of Constantinople by the king of Poland, Casimir III the Great. Indeed, during the previous year, shortly before his death, Casimir, who had recently gained possession of "Little Russia", addressed a letter to the ecumenical patriarch in which he demanded that the metropolitan See of Halicz be restored, indicating "Bishop Anthony" as the future occupant. The royal message ended with an open threat: should Casimir's request fail to be given a positive resolution, "We shall have no other resort than baptize the Russians in the Latin's faith", for "the country cannot remain without a law"³.

¹ *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae*, IV, București, p. 271 (translated by T. Teoteoi).

² *Ibidem*, p. 275.

³ Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani*, I, Wien, 1860, p. 578; an English translation of the letter by John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia. A study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, London, New York, 1981, p. 287. Comments in: C. Marinescu, *Înființarea Mitropoliilor în Țara Românească și în Moldova*, "Analele Academiei Române", *Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, III series, t. II, București, 1924, p. 257; Oscar Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome. Vingt ans de travail pour l'Union des églises et pour la défense de l'Empire d'Orient (1355-1375)*, Warszawa, 1930, p. 239-240.

The bishopric of Halicz was raised to the position of metropolitanate in the early 14th century, around 1303-1305, very likely with Niphon as first occupant. The eparchy in question encompassed the territory of "Little Russia" and counted the bishoprics of Halicz, Vladimir-in-Volhynia, Kholm, Peremyshl', Lutsk and Turov. But a resolution taken by John VI Cantacuzene in August 1347 dissolved the metropolitanate of Halicz and subordinated all the bishoprics in "Little Russia" to Metropolitan Theognostos of Kiev⁴. The unity of the metropolitanate "of Kiev and all Russia" was being reestablished thus. And this idea of unity of the Russian Church would be in the main focus of the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople in the second half of the 14th century, when it assumed a major political role in the whole eastern and southeastern Europe.

The ecumenical patriarchs of the time belonged to the hesychast movement, a most prominent figure among them being Philotheos Kokkinos himself (November 1353 - 22 November 1354; 8 October 1365-1376). Also, a consistent mission of their emissaries to the Orthodox world would be "to resist the growth of local forms of local ecclesiastical nationalism"⁵. Under the given circumstances, what could be the explanation for Patriarch Philotheos' compliance in May 1371 with the reactivation of the Metropolitanate of Halicz? It is Constantin Marinescu who thrown a light into the motivations of such an attitude when analysing a subsequent letter by the patriarch to Metropolitan Alexis of Moscow: had the master of "Little Russia" been an Orthodox, the answer to his could have been stalled; he being a catholic, any postponement - actually, tantamount to a refusal! - was utterly impossible, since it would have triggered the immediate appointment of a "Latin" metropolitan in Halicz, and King Casimir, switching from words to action, would have proceeded to forcibly convert to Catholicism Orthodox believers in the region, a thing to be avoided at any cost⁶.

Two other elements stand out in Anthoy's synodal document of appointment of May 1371. Firstly, he was invested with authority over the bishoprics of Kholm, Turov, Peremyshl' and Vladimir, it's a special clause, though: "until current struggles are brought to an end, peace is made and disorder is eliminated". Secondly, for the election and ordaining of bishops, Anthony had to

⁴ The chrysobull in English translation: John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 280-282. The "pro-Moscovite" attitude of John Cantacuzene, put in light by this decision, was underlined by the same author: *Alexis and Roman: A study in Byzantino-Russian Relations* (1352-1354), "Byzantino-slavica", XXVIII, 1967, 2, p. 282-285. See also Myron Stasiw, *Metropolia Haliciensis* (Eius historia et iuridica forma), Roma, 1960, p. 15-16 and 29.

⁵ Dmitri Obolensky, A "Philorhomaioi Anthropos": *Mitropolitan Cyprian of Kiev and All Russia* (1375-1406), "Dumbarton Oaks Papers", 32, 1978, p. 84.

⁶ C. Marinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

consult with "His Holiness, the Metropolitan of Ungrovlahia, "whom he was supposed to "visit" on his way home⁷. This last statement enabled C. Marinescu to conclude that at the time of Anthony's appointment no Orthodox bishopric was functioning on the territory of Moldavia⁸. Therefore, it would mean that Joseph - the future metropolitan of Moldavia - could only become bishop of Asprokastron after May 1371. But when, precisely?

*

It was said and often reasserted that the pastoral office of Anthony of Halicz ended in 1391, the year of his death. No document whatsoever supports this assertion, basically a conjecture: in 1391 King Ladislas Jagello, by his own will, appointed John of Lutsk metropolitan of Halicz, and therefore paved the way to a major conflict with oecumenical See of Constantinople put in the position to deny the sanctioning of the Polish sovereign's initiative.

In relation to the issue, John Meyendorff revealed a valuable detail from a letter of Cyprian, metropolitan of Kiev, in which information is provided concerning his activities in 1376-1378. Thus, Cyprian admits to having also ordained a bishop for the diocese of Vladimir-in-Volhynia which we know to have belonged to... the metropolitanate of Halicz. In Meyendorff's opinion, this detail seems to indicate that Anthony of Galicia was already dead and that "Little Russia, was placed by Philotheos under the jurisdiction of Cyprian"⁹.

Recently, the British historian John Fennel, based on the abovementioned note, wrote: "What happened to metropolitan Anthony when and after he arrived in Galich is not Known. The Russian sources are silent and the patriarchal records say no more about him. "But he wrongfully adds: "Even Casimir appears to have

⁷ Miklosich-Müller, *Acta*, p. 578-580; *FHDR*, IV, p. 211.

⁸ C. Marinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 257-258. At p. 257, note 5, C. M. also observed that the consecration of the bishop could be done "by three, but still by two colleagues of the same degree". A similar point of view belongs to J. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, p. 192, n. 57. On the other hand, N. Iorga observed on the ground of the patriarchal council for Anthony: "This signifies that the Patriarch knew about the defeat of the Catholicism in the new founded state of Moldavia and he thought to regain for the Orthodoxy this lost province soon after the Moldavian throne would be occupied by a ruler like Alexander" (the Prince Nicholas Alexander of Wallachia) (*Istoria bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor*, second edition, I, București, 1929, p. 46). See also N. Dobrescu, *Întemeierea mitropoliilor și celor dintâi mănăstiri din țară*, București, 1906, p. 73-75, who reached the same conclusion as C. Marinescu.

⁹ John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 192, n. 58 and p. 202, n. 11. But M. Stasiw (*op. cit.*, p. 56) believes that Volynia, reconquered by the Lithuanians after the death of king Casimir, was no more a part of the diocese of Halicz.

lost all interest in his protégé"¹⁰. For at the time of Antony's appointment and coming to Halicz, the king of Poland was no longer Casimir, but Louis of Anjou, King of Hungary. The personal union between Hungary and Poland lasted from 1370 to 1382, when Louis breathed his last. And the period coincided with a considerable increase in Catholic pressure exerted upon the western Russian territories¹¹.

On the other hand, John Fennel is probably right when attributing Anthony's eviction from the metropolitan See of Halicz to the very effort of converting "Little Russia" to Catholicism, clearly resulting from Pope Gregory XI's correspondence. Therefore, on 19 July 1372, the pope was commanding the bishop of Cracow to evict the "schismatic bishops" from Russian territories and replace them with Catholic bishops¹². Also, on 13 February 1375, the same Gregory XI, yielding to the request formulated by Ladislav of Opatowitz, who from the autumn of 1372 was governing Halicz in the name of King Louis, would found the Catholic bishopric of Halicz. Additionally, the Pope would validate his decision concerning the eviction of Orthodox hierarchs from the diocese¹³. It is hard to believe that under the given circumstances two metropolitans, one Orthodox and the other Catholic, could have coexisted in Halicz. Nicolae Iorga's insight into the developments in question was undoubtedly the correct one: Louis of Anjou, a fanatical promoter of Catholicism in Eastern Europe, "bluntly evicted in 1375 the Orthodox metropolitan of Halicz, and replaced him with a Catholic, with the blessing of the Pope"¹⁴. John Fennel would actually reach the same conclusion: "... in 1375 ... Anthony was forced to leave his residence. His eventual fate is not known"¹⁵.

Based on the aforementioned, we can note with good reason that the reactivation of the Orthodox bishopric of Asprokastron, through the appointment and ordaining of Joseph, could only have taken place between 1371-1375. The supporting evidence may be found in the letter sent by Patriarch Anthony IV to the "false bishops" of Moldavia, Joseph and Meletios, in May 1395. At a certain point,

¹⁰ John Fennell, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*, Longman, London-New York, 1995, p. 145.

¹¹ For this pressure and the reaction provoked, see Bálint Hóman, *Gli Angioini di Napoli in Ungheria (1290-1403)*, Roma, 1938, p. 396-398 and 410-411, but especially Șerban Papacostea, *Geneza statului în evul mediu românesc. Studii critice*, Cluj-Napoca, 1988, p. 81-82.

¹² *Acta Gregorii PP. XI (1370-1378)*, ed. by A. L. Tăutu, Roma, 1966, n° 38, p. 81-82.

¹³ *Ibidem*, n° 140 a, p. 265. Comments in: Șerban Papacostea, *Geneza*, p. 115-116.

¹⁴ N. Iorga, *Condițiile de politică generală în care s-au întemeiat bisericile românești în veacurile XIV-XV*, in: *idem, Studii asupra evului mediu românesc*, edited by Șerban Papacostea, București, 1984, p. 108-109.

¹⁵ John Fennell, *op. cit.*, p. 145-146.

the Patriarch would note: "... I also hear that you are *old* and little fear death"¹⁶ (our italics - Șt. A.).

Undoubtedly, the aforementioned dating of the beginning of Joseph's pastoral office as a bishop of Asprokastron is prone to questioning. First of all, his appointment as head of the bishopric cannot have occurred without the consent of the ruling prince of that time, namely of Lațcu¹⁷. This is more than logical deduction, since we have the testimony of subsequent patriarchal documents in which Joseph is depicted as "*related*" to the ruling family of Moldavia. Nevertheless, Lațcu is known to have required and obtained from Rome - by Polish connection, and with the purpose of safeguarding his country from pressure by the Hungarian Kingdom - the right to establish a Catholic bishopric at Siret, he himself turning a Catholic (1370-1371)¹⁸. It becomes obvious that as a result of the extension of Louis of Anjou's authority over Poland only this denominational option became inoperative. Indeed, recent research indicate that in the autumn of 1374, an army headed by Ladislas of Oppeln was getting ready to cross into Moldavia from Halicz¹⁹. On the other hand, as already noted, Prince Lațcu's tomb lies nevertheless in St. Nicholas' Church of Rădăuți, which indicates that at a certain point he must renounced the union with Rome and rejoined Orthodoxy²⁰. The appointment of Joseph, akin to him, to the head of the bishopric of Asprokastron - according to the aforementioned dating - bears further testimony to the denominational (and, implicitly, political!) reorientation of Lațcu toward the end of his reign.

The other arising question is related to the very title borne by Joseph: "bishop of Asprokastron". Does this indicate that in the time of Lațcu Cetatea Albă (Asprokastron, Moncastro, Akkerman) had already come under the authority of Moldavia? Of course not. An entry in the ledger of the town of Caffa put into light by Șerban Papacostea shows that in the summer of 1386 a Genoese embassy was

¹⁶ FHDR, IV, p. 249.

¹⁷ For the chronological limits of prince Lațcu's reign (1367-1375), see the discussion of Ștefan S. Gorovei, *L'État roumain de l'est des Carpates: la succession et la chronologie des princes de Moldavie au XIV^e siècle*, "Revue Roumaine d'Histoire", 1979, 3, p. 479-481.

¹⁸ See N. Dobrescu, *op. cit.*, p. 71-75; Vasile Grecu, *Bizanțul și catolicismul în trecutul nostru îndepărtat (Bizanțul și înființarea Mitropoliei Țării Românești)*, "Studii Teologice", second series, II, 1950, 9-10, p. 560-561 (the conversion of Lațcu has to be understood as a consequence of the formal conversion of the Emperor John V. Palaeologus to Roman Catholicism in 1369); Jan Sykora, *Poziția internațională a Moldovei în timpul lui Lațcu: luptă pentru independență și afirmare pe plan extern*, "Revista de Istorie", t. 29, 1976, p. 1142-1143; Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Poziția internațională a Moldovei în a doua jumătate a veacului al XIV-lea*, "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A. D. Xenopol", t. XVI, 1979, p. 195-210.

¹⁹ Șerban Papacostea, *Geneza*, p. 118-120.

²⁰ N. Iorga, *Condițiile de politică generală...*, p. 107-108; Vasile Grecu, *op. cit.*, p. 562; Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Dragoș și Bogdan*, București, 1973, p. 139; Șerban Papacostea, *Geneza*, p. 119.

sent via “Maocastro” (Cetatea Albă) to “Constantin and Peter Voivode”. Which means that in the southern parts of Moldavia - “Țara de Jos” (The Lower Lands) - a political form of organization distinct from that of Peter I (Mușat) was still operating. The process of territorial unification was complete, though, with incorporation of Cetatea Albă into Moldavia, at the beginning of Roman I’s reign - the latter having succeeded Peter -, a voivode self-entitled “the only ruler” of Moldavia “from the mountains to the sea” (30 March 1392)²¹.

Nicolae Iorga’s interpretation of the title borne by Joseph seems the most plausible by far: “he may have been merely the office holder of Cetatea Albă, just like Hyacinthus who was office holder of Vicina, and may have resided in the country, at the court of the Prince, his kin”²². Indeed, Hyacinthus, metropolitan of Vicina, had been living “for some time” at the court of the Wallachian voivode in May 1359. At that point the oecumenical patriarchate allowed his “relocation” as a “lawful shepherd of all Ouggrovlachia” (Ungrovlahia)²³. The event had actually been a *transfer*, and not in the least the founding of a new diocese²⁴. Things must have been similar in the case of Moldavia: the bishopric of Asprokastron was a more ancient Byzantine ecclesiastical territorial unit whose history is impossible to reconstruct; in the period 1371-1375 this eparchy was reactivated by the ordaining of an office holder, in the person of Joseph, living nevertheless at the court of the Moldavian prince²⁵.

*

“Cyprian, the Humble Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia” was still in Constantinople, on 24 April 1387, at the Studios Monastery, where he was finishing

²¹ Șerban Papacostea, *Geneza*, p. 97-104. But the author believes that the note in the ledger from Caffa is also evidence that in 1386 Cetatea Albă “was no more under Tartars’ control” (*Ibidem*, p. 109-110), otherwise the Genoese embassy could not penetrate in Moldavia this way. It is true, the Genoese from Crimea were now at war with the Tartars. But there were also some Tartar commanders allied with the Genoese (“*Revista Istorică*”, new series, t. III, 1992, 3-4, p. 430). The document of 30 March 1392 in *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, A, Moldova, Vol. I, n° 2, p. 3.

²² N. Iorga, *Istoria bisericii românești*, I, ed. cit., p. 60.

²³ FHDR. IV, p. 197. See also Petre Ș. Năsturel, *Les fastes épiscopaux de la Métropole de Vicina*, “Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher”, 21 Bd. (1971), Athen, 1972, p. 41; Idem, *La partition de la Métropole de Hongrovalachie*, “Buletinul Bibliotecii Române”, Vol. VI (X), new series, 1977/1978, Freiburg, i. Br., 1978, p. 294-295.

²⁴ See the remarks of N. Iorga, *Istoria bisericii românești*, I, p. 32-33.

²⁵ For the first mention of the Bishopric of Asprokastron, belonging to the Russian diocese, see Jean Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Paris, 1981, p. 179-181 and 403.

to copy a book²⁶. But in five month, on 26 September 1387, he would be in Lwów, receiving the oath of allegiance from Peter, Prince of Moldavia, sworn to the newly enthroned king of Poland, Ladislas Jagello. We quote from the Peter's oath the particular lines referring to the ceremonial which took place on the occasion: "... we also made an oath, in agreement with the rite and customs of the Eastern Church, touching with our own lips the cross held in his hands by Lord Cyprian, metropolitan of Kiev"²⁷.

The significance of the senior-vassal relation established on 26 September 1387 has been dwelt on at length, and we shall make no further reference to it. We shall only note that it sprang directly from the new political setting in eastern Europe, the Polish-Lithuanian union occurred one year before. What obviously calls for attention is the presence at Lwów of Metropolitan Cyprian, Byzance's envoy. In this respect, we shall refer to the point of view recently formulated by Șerban Papacostea.

To begin with, the Romanian historian noted that history writers of both the Byzantine and Russian Churches flatly ignored the document of 26 September 1387, and consequently gave no attention to Cyprian's presence in Lwów and its significance²⁸. The only related aspect ever highlighted in the metropolitan's biography was his stop at Kiev, on which occasion he was thought to have arranged a matrimonial alliance between Vitold (Vitovt), Ladislas Jagello's cousin, and the Prince of Moscow, Dimitri²⁹. On the whole, Cyprian's mission of 1387 was defined by John Meyendorff in the following terms: "one can be almost certain that his mission to western Russia was connected with plans to counteract the effects of Jagello's marriage and apostasy from the Orthodox faith"³⁰.

²⁶ D. Obolensky, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

²⁷ M. Costăchescu, *Documente moldovenesti înainte de Stefan cel Mare*, Vol. II, Iași, 1932, n° 162, p. 600 (Latin) and 601 (Romanian translation). For the correct date of the document, see G. Duzinchevici, *O rectificare*, "Revista Istorică Română", III, 1933, p. 385. Using a later source, C. Rezachevici supposed that the ceremony of the oath of allegiance took place on 14 September 1387, which means that the documents had been written afterwards (*Mircea cel Bătrân și Moldova*, "Revista de Istorie", t. 39, 1986, 8, p. 748).

²⁸ Șerban Papacostea, *Byzance et la création de la "Métropole de Moldavie"*, in: *Études byzantine et post-byzantine*, II, recueillies et publiées par Emilian Popescu, Octavian Iliescu et Tudor Teoteoi, București, 1991, p. 136; the Romanian version: *Întemeierea Mitropoliei Moldovei: implicații central și est-europene*, in: *România în istoria universală*, ed. by I. Agrigoroaiei, Gh. Buzatu and V. Cristian, III/1, Iași, 1988, p. 528, n. 9.

²⁹ John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 244: the marriage between the elder son of Dimitri Basil, to Sophie, the daughter of Vitold, which eventually would be celebrated by Cyprian himself, in Moscow, in 1391. We also can note that in 1386, according to a notice in a Russian chronicle, Basil escaped from the Tartars - where he was a hostage - and found asylum "in the Great Wallachia, with Peter Voivode" (P. P. Panaitescu, *Mircea cel Bătrân*, București, 1944, p. 229-230). It is very possible that the next year he was still in Moldavia.

³⁰ John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

We shall presently cite the interpretation given by Șerban Papacostea to developments having taken place in Lwów in September 1387: "le fait encore plus important qu'il (le prince de Moldavie) a déposé son serment de fidélité entre les mains du métropolitain Cyprien et non d'Antoine métropolitain de Halicz indique clairement l'acceptation par Byzance à *cette date au plus tard* du droit de la Moldavie à une Métropole propre. Cette constatation n'exclut en effet pas la possibilité de négociations préalables autour de cette question entre la Moldavie et le Patriarcat constantinopolitain. Si cette dernière hypothèse est valable il s'en suivrait qu'à Lwów il n'a été question que de *confirmer* un accord de principe précédemment réalisé, accord en vertu duquel la Moldavie avait été douée d'un *siège* métropolitain propre. En troisième lieu enfin, il est évident que l'accord moldo-byzantine, rélévé ou seulement confirmé à Lwów, a aussi joui du consentement de la couronne polonaise, élément qui, à côté de certains autres, explique l'option de la Moldavie pour la souzeraineté du royaume polonaise qui lui laissait une plus grande liberté dans les problèmes confessionnels que ne lui permettait la Hongrie. Restait cependant non réglée à Lwów, en 1387, la question, d'une importance décisive d'ailleurs, de la désignation du successeur au siège métropolitain moldave le jour où le métropolitain Antoine serait mort et que cesserait, de ce fait, la primauté du métropolitain en exercice de Halicz - disparition qui allait du reste causer le détachement effectif de la Moldavie du diocèse de Halicz"³¹.

As it becomes evident, the whole demonstration is borne by the idea that in 1387 Anthony was still the occupant of the metropolitan See of Halicz. The outbreak in 1391 of a crisis both in the Polish-Byzantine and Moldo-Byzantine relations would have stemmed from the very death of Anthony³². But, as already pointed out, his pastoral office might have ended much earlier, in 1375, and, on the other hand, the Hungarian domination in the region of Halicz would only be overthrown in 1387.

We shall raise in our turn the following question: in what quality did Metropolitan Cyprian preside at the ceremony held in Lwów, a town newly recovered by the Poles in addition to all "Little Russia?" We shall have to dwell here on his status at our time of interest. And this status can only be understood if we recede somewhat further in time, so as to look at the evolution of the title borne by Cyprian.

Cyprian is known to have been ordained metropolitan on 2 December 1375 by Patriarch Philotheos, after his return to Constantinople from his first mission to Eastern Europe. On the occasion, he was awarded the title of metropolitan "of Kiev,

³¹ Șerban Papacostea, *Byzance et la création de la "Métropole de Moldavie"*, p. 137-138; Idem, *Întemeierea Mitropoliei Moldovei*, p. 529-530.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 138-139, and respectively, p. 530.

Russia and the Lithuanians", that is "of those parts, which the Metropolitan Lord Alexis left without supervision for many years". In time to follow, according to the synodal decree, "after the death of the Lord Alexis, the Lord Cyprian should take over the whole of Russia and be the one metropolitan of all Russia"³³. In other words, in 1375, very likely to give satisfaction to Duke Ol'gerd of Lithuania, Patriarch Philotheos yielded to the temporary establishment of a separate metropolitanate for Lithuania and Little Russia, with the idea that after the death of Metropolitan Alexis of Moscow the unity of the diocese of Russia should be restored under the pastoral office of Cyprian.³⁴

Alexis, bearer of the traditional title of "Metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia", died on 12 February 1378. Upon learning this, Cyprian left Kiev and headed for Moscow where he received a cold welcome from the Grand-Prince Dimitri, being actually arrested and thrown into jail. All the intricacies linked to the nomination of Alexis' successor have little bearing on the matter. Suffice it to say that the synodal document of 1380 by wich Pimen - "archimandrite of Pereyaslavl" - became "Metropolitan of Kiev and Great Russia" would only recognize Cyprian's title of "Metropolitan of Little Russia and the Lithuanians". And should Cyprian have died before Pimen, the latter "shall assume responsibility also for Little Russia and the Lithuanians", and concurrently, he shall then alone be proclaimed Metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia. Most importantly, during debates held at Constantinople in June 1380, the decision was reached to eliminate the name of "Kiev" from Cyprian's title. For the synodial document stated: "it is impossible for a high priest to be metropolitan "of great Russia", if he is not first called metropolitan "of Kiev", which is the Catholic church of all Russia and the primatial see"³⁵.

Given the aforementioned, we cannot but share the opinion recently formed by John Fennel, according to which Cyprian, "from 1380 to 1391, was, in name at least, metropolitan of Galicia as well as of the other sees under his control"³⁶. With

³³ John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 200-201 and 307.

³⁴ See the discussion of Dmitri Obolensky, *op. cit.*, p. 85-86.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 88-90; John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 212-221. The Greek original of the document: Miklosich-Müller, *Acta*, t. II, Wien, 1862, p. 17-18. We have seen that, meanwhile, Cyprian continued to use the title of "metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia", as for example in the colophon of 24 April 1387. But it was against the synodal decision of 1380.

³⁶ John Fennel, *op. cit.*, p. 160. V. Laurent, *Aux origines de l'Église de Moldavie: Le métropolit Jérémie et l'évêque Joseph*, "Revue des études byzantines", t. V, Bucarest, 1974, p. 163 thought that the absence of the Metropolitan of Moldavia at the ceremony in Lwów could have only two explanations: "C'est que le siège n'existait pas ou était vacant". But the quoted author prefers the second possibility because he considers that the metropolitan See of Moldavia was founded between 1381-1386. On the contrary, we believe that the first possibility is more plausible, especially after the new chronological interpretation of the note from the *Ekthesis nea*, used as an argument by V. Laurent. This note is not from 1386, but

this only observations: the ceremonial held at Lwów in September 1387 attests that Cyprian was at that very time metropolitan of Halicz not only "in name"! He was recognized as such by the Polish king Ladislas Jagello, and asked to receive the oath of vassalage by the prince of Moldavia, Peter I. As a result, we do not believe any "agreement" to have been reached at that time, be it merely in principle, concerning the "endowment of Moldavia with her own metropolitan See". As a matter of fact, in 1387 the Polish Kingdom had barely recovered the province of Halicz. And the Orthodox prince of Moldavia had just acquiesced to enter the political orbit of the said kingdom. Therefore, Cyprian's presence in Lwów could not have other purpose than to obtain consecration of his spiritual authority over these Orthodox territories.

What happened afterwards? What caused the 1391 crisis which triggered the detachment of Moldavia from the Orthodox ecclesiastical province of Halicz?

In January 1389, the elected ecumenical patriarch was Anthony - a friend of Emperor John V Palaeologus -, advocate of the restoration of the unity of the Russian Church, and protector of Cyprian. One of the first steps taken by the new patriarch was to depose Pimen and sanction Cyprian "Metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia" (February 1389). But, as noted by John Meyendorff, two obstacles hindered the application of the decision: "the opposition of Grand-Prince Dimitri and the presence of Pimen in Moscow". Both obstacles would be soon overcome, with Dimitri dying on 19 May 1389, and Pimen, having reached in the meantime Constantinople at the head of a delegation of Russian bishops and clergymen, also dying on 10 September in the same year³⁷. Consequently, on 1 October 1389, Cyprian, accompanied by two Greek metropolitans - Matthew of Adrianople and Nikandros of Ganos -, as well as by the five bishops from late Pimen's retinue, headed for Moscow, making there his entrance on 6 March 1390 and being warmly welcomed by the new Grand-Prince Basil Dimitrievich.

It is with great satisfaction that Russian chroniclers recorded the beginning of Cyprian's effective pastoral office: "And the confusion (*matezh*) in the metropolitanate ceased, and there was one metropolitanate/ of/ Kiev and Galich and all Russia"³⁸. In other words, Cyprian impersonated the restoring of the unity of the metropolitanate of Russia, his authority also extending over the diocese of Halicz! This situation is actually borne out by the path took by Cyprian in order to

with much more probability from the period 1389-1392 (Jean Darrouzès, *op. cit.*, p. 193; see also FHDR, IV, p. 313). For the reception in our historiography of the discussions around the Byzantine sources on the foundation of the Moldavia's metropolitanate, see Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Aux débuts des rapports moldo-byzantines*, "Revue Roumaine d'Histoire" t. XXIV, 1985, 3, p. 183-207.

³⁷ John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 239-241.

³⁸ John Fennell, *op. cit.*, p. 158; the source is *Troïtskaia Letopis*, edited in *Polnoe sobranie ruskich leatopisei*, t. I, Sankt-Petersburg, 1846, p. 233.

reach Moscow: he travelled by sea up to Cetatea Albă, and then he took the road of Kiev³⁹. Therefore, he began by crossing the territories formerly separated ecclesiastically by the metropolitanate of "Great Russia" headed by late Pimen.

From our point of view, the unexpected decision taken by the Polish king Ladislas Jagello in 1391 to designate Bishop John of Lutsk metropolitan of Halicz was little other than a natural reaction to the new status of Cyprian, that of "Metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia". Especially as upon his arrival in Moscow on 9 January 1391 Cyprian celebrated the marriage of the Grand-Prince Basil I to Sophie, Vitovt (Vitold)'s daughter. And it is worth noting that at the time Vitovt was still struggling against his cousin, King Ladislas, for control over Lithuania. The conflict between the two would only reach and end in the following year, when the king surrendered to Vitovt the helm of Lithuania and the Ruthenian territories⁴⁰.

It is fairly reasonable to believe, in our opinion, that the prince of Moldavia, Peter I, turned to good account the aforementioned development and proclaimed his bishop, Joseph, metropolitan of Moldavia, during the same year 1391⁴¹.

³⁹ PSRL, t. XI, Sankt Petersburg, 1897, p. 101; M-me de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires ruses en Orient*, Genève, 1889, p. 139-140. See also John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 240 and, more recently, Victor Spinei, *La genèse des villes de sud-est de la Moldavie et les rapports commerciaux des XIII-XIV^e siècles*, "Balkan Studies", 35/2, Thessaloniki, 1994, p. 237.

⁴⁰ See Oscar Halecki, *Borderlands of Western Civilizations. A History of East Central Europe*, New York, 1952, p. 118-119.

⁴¹ The prince of Moldavia of course was not able to create a new ecclesiastic province, as it was rightful underlined by V. Laurent (*op. cit.*, p. 160). But it is very plausible that Peter sent a request to the oecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople, which provoked the well-known reaction.

See also a recent discussion on the political significance of the title used by Cyprian: Andrei Pliguzov, *On the Title "Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus"*, in "Harvard Ukrainian Studies", Vol. XV, 1991, 3-4, p. 345-363. The author supposes that during the years 1391-1392 Vitold sustained Cyprian in his claim over the diocese of Halicz as well. We don't agree with the point of view that Cyprian assumed the title of "Metropolitan of Kiev and all Russia" starting only with the period March 1392 - August 1394.