

Tetiana TSYMBAL\*, Olena GEORGIIEVA\*\*

## **UKRAINIAN CHURCH IN THE DIASPORA AS A WAY OF BEING ROOTEDNESS OF IMMIGRANTS**

– *Abstract* –

The article presents the results of a historiographical study of the role of the Ukrainian church in the cultural area of the diaspora. The peculiarities of the foundation and functioning of Ukrainian churches of different confessions outside Ukraine, have been analyzed. The conditions of forming church centers of the Ukrainian diaspora and their functions have been considered. The Ukrainian church in the diaspora is seen as one of the ways of existential rootedness of immigrants on a new cultural and historical basis. The significant contribution of Ukrainian priests to the creation of a favorable socio-psychological climate in the Ukrainian diaspora, in particular, and to the cultural development of the countries of residence in general is emphasized. It is argued that the religious faith and the institution of the Ukrainian church are a way to preserve national identity and a means of existential rootedness of Ukrainian immigrants on a new cultural and historical basis.

*Keywords:* emigration; diaspora; faith; Ukrainian church; rootedness.

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The problem of emigration, in general, and the formation and functioning of the Ukrainian diaspora in particular is one of the most relevant in the socio-humanitarian field of contemporary Ukraine and central in the field of scientific interests of the authors of the article.

In Ukraine, the relevance of the study of migration is primarily due to the sharp increase in the number of emigrants during the years of independence and the large number of both external and internal migrants, whose resettlement is caused by the separation of the Crimea and military aggression in the east, which started in

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\* Kryvyi Rih National University, Ukraine (ttsymbol07@gmail.com).

\*\* Kryvyi Rih National University, Ukraine (owenah@hotmail.com).

2014. Today Ukraine ranks fifth in the world in the number of citizens who went abroad. Moreover, ethnic Ukrainians are in fact divided in half: one half of them, amounting about 23 million, live in the homeland, and a little less of the number live outside it<sup>1</sup>.

We emphasize the fact that getting into another country, into other people's socio-cultural context, man is "on the other side", in otherness, in the locus of "alterity". In order to compensate for the negative influence of a foreign country, the immigrant tries to transfer as many artifacts of native culture as possible to the host country: household items, books, national clothes, cultural artifacts, etc. However, the amount of material items that would resemble the native culture ones is limited. Therefore, people focus on the spiritual values of native culture such as their religion, folklore, fine arts, customs, traditions, language. It is in the conditions of emigration that man attaches special importance to preserving the feeling of their own "roots", national identity, traditions and customs, being prone to the sacralization of the latter.

The church, which has always played an important role in the life of Ukrainians, is the leading spiritual value of national culture in the conditions of diaspora existence in our opinion. However, it was of the biggest importance for emigrants during the first wave of Ukrainian emigration taking place at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. Priests and activists of church communities understood their unique role in the early stages of immigrants' lives and sought to help to verbalize the problems of immigrants and to delate them to power circles or to solve them by themselves when it was possible. In addition, the church became the epicenter of cultural life, supporting the national identity of the first immigrants and imparting it to future generations.

Despite the important role of the church in the life of the Ukrainian diaspora, this topic is insufficiently studied today, especially in the historiosophy aspect. Of course, there are several works written by Ukrainian historians, some works by representatives of the diaspora in the United States, Canada and Western Europe. The latter have become an important source for our study. However, most modern scholars, studying the cultural, educational, scientific achievements of the Ukrainian diaspora, include them in the general cultural area of the Ukrainians<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> „Migration in Ukraine: figures and facts,” 2019, accessed April 2021: [https://iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/iom-ukraine\\_facts-ukr\\_2019.pdf](https://iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/iom-ukraine_facts-ukr_2019.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Наталія Кривда, *Українська діаспора: досвід культуротворення* (Київ: ВЦ «Академія», 2008).

Among the research works dedicated to Ukrainian expatriate community, it is necessary to highlight the work of T. Hrynchyshyn, which provides a list, typology and cartography of religious communities in the diaspora. The historiography of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the Diaspora is quite rich. Special mention should be made of the works of O. Turiy<sup>3</sup>, O. Nedavnya<sup>4</sup>, I. Khymko<sup>5</sup>, which consider the issues of the relationship between nation and religion, the role of the church in the process of preserving the national identity of Ukrainians and others. However, recent research has only captured certain facts, based on the method of oral history and the study of individual documents. The essence of the processes of maintaining religious consciousness, the emergence of new beliefs in the Ukrainian diaspora, the peculiarities of the church's influence on the preservation of identity remained unclear.

This is the reason for the urgency of our attempt at a historiosophical understanding of religious life in terms of immigration. The aim of the article is to study the church as the epicenter of modern diaspora life in the context of the concept of existential rootedness of man, which is the scientific novelty of the work. Achieving the goal is possible by studying the phenomenon of faith as a way of human existential rootedness, outlining special features and forms of church and religious life of diaspora communities, as well as the importance of faith in preserving national culture and identity, clarifying the role of the Ukrainian diaspora as a consolidating force.

A comprehensive interdisciplinary approach represents the methodological basis for this work. The principles of objectivity and historicism, concrete-historical approach, general scientific and general philosophical methods are the leading ones for the study. Special emphasis is placed on the method of philosophical reflection, systematic and critical analysis of historiographical facts, comparative-historical method.

The actual historiosophical comprehension of the outlined issue requires clarification of the categorical content of the basic concepts of the research such as the existential rootedness of man, faith and diaspora, as well as some remarks on the basic principles of human life understanding, because personality, existence represent the subject of emigration. Life is seen in this context as a holistic

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<sup>3</sup> Олег Турій, „Греко-католицька церква та українська національна ідентичність у Галичині,” *Людина і світ* № 10 (2001): 21-26.

<sup>4</sup> Ольга Недавнія, „Місце греко-католицизму в само ідентифікації українців в їх цивілізаційному оточенні,” *Українське релігієзнавство* № 12(1999): 106-114.

<sup>5</sup> Іван Химко, „Релігія і національність в Україні другої половини XVIII-XX століть,” *Ковчег: Науковий збірник з церковної історії*, Ч. 4 (Львів; 2003), 55-66.

phenomenon that is not reduced to a certain dimension: biological, social or cultural. Our attention is focused on the individual existence of man, on the existential presence in the world, in space and time. Such epistemological concentration makes it possible to comprehend the meaning of actual existence rather than abstract one.

As noted above, our study of the phenomenon of emigration and derivative issues is based on the concept of existential rootedness of man, the main ideas of which are set out in the monograph of the same name<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, we will briefly outline its main points.

“Rootedness” as an issue and concept was introduced into the socio-philosophical discourse by a French thinker S. Weil<sup>7</sup>. According to S. Weil, rootedness is “the most important and least recognized need of the human soul, one of the most difficult to define”. However, situations are clearly seen when man loses roots, that is, roots out. Firstly, global rootedness occurs during military conquests. Secondly, economic domination may lead to root deprivation. Moreover, money and hired labor as a social position completely dependent on money are the main “poison” that uproots man in this case. Thirdly, the modern understanding of education and culture in general, the gap between educated people and the masses, an artificial culture that do not rely on the past, that has lost touch with tradition (including religion), lead to rootedness. Fourthly, idolatry such as fascism or totalitarianism (peculiar forms of pseudo-rootedness)<sup>8</sup>.

At present time, all of the four forms of rootedness are, in our opinion, objective factors in the migration of the Ukrainians. Both the war and the nature of work (and for the Ukrainians, rather, the inability to find a job and get a decent salary), and cultural and educational issues, and domestic political problems create the preconditions for internal and external migration of Ukrainians, which confirms our thesis concerning the main factor of emigration in general as the loss of man’s existential roots.

According to the authors concept, “rootedness” as an ontological, sociocultural category and existential aspect is “being-for-itself” and “self-culture”, the maximum fullness of human existence, self-actualization and self-realization of all essential forces, capabilities, abilities, culture meanings, goals and values, the horizon of personal temporal space to express the existential aspects of spirituality, creativity, freedom, sovereignty and responsibility<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Тетяна Цимбал, *Буттєвісне укорінення людини* (Київ: НПУ ім. М. Драгоманова, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> Симона Вейль, *Укорінення. Лист до клірика* (Київ, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Симона Вейль, *Укорінення*, 36.

<sup>9</sup> Тетяна Цимбал, *Буттєвісне*, 11-12.

We believe that in this context, faith will be one of the conditions for the moral improvement of the individual and a way of existential rootedness of man (especially under conditions of immigration). In the Christian tradition, man is seen to belong simultaneously to two worlds: the natural and the supernatural ones. According to M. Mamardashvili the supernatural world is an “unknown country”, “an invisible secret homeland of any conscious being, and all of us - because we are conscious beings - have a second homeland, and as spiritual beings, as people we are its citizens”<sup>10</sup>. That is, to be human means to be a moral being constantly activating consciousness (intellect) and spirit.

Thus, faith contributes to the development of human spirituality, forms a responsible, sovereign, high moral personality, capable of creativity and self-creation as the formation of “self-culture”. Faith does not leave the existence alone with the issues of life sens, solving even the problem of death, because a believer who considers himself a citizen of the supernatural, spiritual world is not afraid of interrupting natural existence, seeking to approach the Divine ideal by their own moral and intellectual efforts. All this creates the ground for human life and allows us to define faith as an ontological, socio-cultural category and existential aspect, as well as a means of existential rootedness of an individual.

According to our assumption, faith acquires special significance in emigration, when it performs the function of uniting representatives of one culture, one nationality, and the function of preserving national culture, becoming a kind of identification marker that allows people to preserve their identity in a colorful globalized world. In addition, the church community in the diaspora helps people to solve everyday problems in a consolidated way (employment, medical treatment, family assistance at home, organization of Sunday schools, etc.).

The very concept of “diaspora” is an ethnic, primarily religious (confessional) and linguistic-cultural community or a set of individuals that exist and persist outside their maternal region, and who are aware of their genetic or spiritual unity with it. The concept originates from the ancient Greek language (“dissipation”), but meaningfully goes back to the Jewish tradition, meaning the dissipation of Jews around the world and the existence of compact religious and ethnic communities.

In Ukraine, the term “diaspora” is interpreted ambiguously. In some cases, it is understood as a concept that unites all Ukrainians in the world without exception; in others as only dispersed (dissipated) parts of them that do not constitute a

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<sup>10</sup> Мераб Мамардашвили, „Мысль под запретом. Беседы с А.Э.Эпельбуэн,” *Вопросы философии* № 5(1992): 105.

community. In addition, the diaspora is considered to represent all Ukrainians outside Ukraine, except those who live in neighboring countries in the original ethnic territory. An ambiguous interpretation of the concept “diaspora” leads to a variety of its definitions<sup>11</sup>.

According to its structure, the diaspora comes in two main forms such as dispersions, small inclusions in the foreign ethnic massif, and compact formations representing continuous ethnic areas. As for the nature of diasporas, they are formed either by conditionally voluntary migrations or as a result of the forced eviction of part of the ethnic group from the metropolis.

In our opinion, in emigration the diaspora in particular provides conditions for the preservation of national culture, for self-preservation and human development, for the creation of objective and subjective opportunities in order to change the reality and man himself, for the formation of values and goals. That is, the diaspora cares about the national culture and about the person as the bearer of the culture. After all, culture as a determinant of human existence helps it to evolve in something that seeks to be realized in objective reality, it wants to be embodied in its own unique image. At the same time, the diaspora is a part of the population of the country of residence, diasporas representants are citizens of the country, so the self-consciousness of members of diaspora communities includes not only ethnicity but also nationality. The latter allows, while preserving the roots of the ethnic homeland, feeling like full members of the community of the country of residence<sup>12</sup>.

Diaspora is one of the types of natural existence of an ethnos, a people; it is an instrument of economic, political and socio-cultural influence in the countries of residence; it is a means of establishing a positive image of the state in the international community and a factor influencing the state-building processes in the Motherland. However, the main thing is that diaspora formations help to keep the circle of communication in the native language, help to stay “in the native language”, in the native culture, and therefore – “in the house of being” (M. Heidegger). The national church, as a rule, is the center of diaspora life.

Thus, man, emigrating in order to achieve economic stability or for other purposes, finding new identities, even in today’s globalized world, increasingly seeks to sacralize the national, that gives him a sense of cultural rootedness. After all, particularly national traditions as the most important, deep element of identity

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<sup>11</sup> Жан Гощенко, Тамара Чаптикова, „Діаспора як об’єкт соціологічних досліджень,” *Социс* No. 12 (1996).

<sup>12</sup> Тетяна Цимбал, *Феномен еміграції: досвід філософської рефлексії* (Київ – Кривий Ріг, 2012).

allow us to maintain a state of existential rootedness, not by understatement of the importance of other cultures, but on the basis of mutual respect and intersubjectivity.

Having outlined the theoretical basis of the problem of the religious life of the diaspora, we will briefly consider the history of the founding churches of different denominations by Ukrainian emigration.

It is common to divide the history of mass Ukrainian emigration into certain stages or waves, each of them has its causes and consequences, is characterized by specific forms, quantitative parameters, socio-cultural significance (at the same time, individual emigration is continuous, in our opinion). Traditionally, four waves in the history of Ukrainian emigration are distinguished: the first wave took place in the end of the XIX - beginning of the XX century, the second was the post-revolutionary one (after 1917), the third was the post-war (after 1945), the fourth one is the contemporary emigration. We believe that it would be logical to single out the emigration of the late 1960s and early 1970s (the thaw period) as the fourth wave, and to define the contemporary emigration as the fifth wave. Obviously, the fourth wave was not as massive as the previous ones or the last wave, but it had a significant impact on the development of political processes.

In addition, there are different views on the beginning of emigration from Ukraine. Thus, the first emigrants, according to T. Hrynychshyn, were Transcarpathian Ukrainians, who moved north to the territory of present-day Serbia in 1745, in order to colonize the underdeveloped lands, as well as the Cossacks, who after the liquidation of the Zaporozhian Sich in 1775, left the Russian Empire and founded the Transdanubian Sich at the mouth of the river Danube in Turkey (now - Romania), which existed until 1828, and where, according to various estimates, from 15 to 20 thousand people lived<sup>13</sup>.

Every new wave of emigrants considered it to be their duty to establish a church in their new place of residence. Even in the Transdanubian Sich, the Orthodox Sich Church of the Intercession of the Mother of God was built according to the Cossack tradition. The Cossacks decorated it opulently, bequeathing all their property before they died.

In general, the Ukrainian diaspora has the largest number of representatives of Greek Catholicism (given the affiliation of the vast majority of pre-war emigrants who came from Western Ukraine to this denomination) and a little less of the Orthodoxy. As for Protestants, they tend to join local churches, but there are

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<sup>13</sup> Тарас Гринчишин, „Українська Греко-Католицька Церква за кордоном України станом 2010 року: короткий огляд,” *Історія релігії в Україні: у 10 т., Т. 9, Релігія і Церква в історії української діаспори* (Київ, 2013), 25-64.

exceptions: for example, Lviv Pentecostal churches have their own subsidiary churches in the United States.

Currently, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Diaspora is an independent branch of Kyiv Metropolis, and since 1995 it has been in canonical unity with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. In 2018, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States celebrated its 100th anniversary. The metropolis of the Church is located near New York in Bound Brook city. There is a Church-Memorial of St. Andrew, the Seminary of St. Sophia, the Ukrainian Orthodox Cultural Center. This place is called "Ukrainian Jerusalem".

It should be noted that before receiving the Tomos in December 2018, Ukrainian Orthodoxy had three branches: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the UOC of Moscow Patriarchate. Each of these branches has its own representations and its own believers in the diaspora. Although the latter was deprived of the right to establish its own communities abroad, in the twentieth century Moscow Patriarchate itself had, in addition to its own Dioceses, a number of related Churches in the countries dependent on the former USSR. Moscow Patriarchate sent Ukrainian bishops (by origin) to the Patriarchate parishes in Canada, Argentina, Brazil and other countries of compact settlement of the Ukrainians.

The founding of UAOC churches in the diaspora (starting with the United States) is associated with political post-revolutionary emigration. In the 1920s, there was the Bishop of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Ivan Teodorovich among the settlers, he headed the church. Over time, it expanded considerably due to the departure of some believers from Moscow Patriarchate and the emergence of new Ukrainian immigrants. It is important to emphasize that among the leaders of the UAOC there were many famous Ukrainian intellectuals, for example, Mstislav Skrypnyk - His Holiness Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus'-Ukraine, Ukrainian statesman, politician, public and church figure, First Hierarchy of the UAOC in the USA, cornet of the UPR Army, Simon Petlyura's nephew and Ilarion Ogienko, a full member of the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society, the first rector of Kamyanytsya-Podilsky State Ukrainian University, the initiator and chairman of the Ukrainian Scientific Theological Orthodox Society in Canada, the rector of the Winnipeg-based Ukrainian People's University, and the dean of the theological faculty of the St Andrew collegium of the University of Manitoba, and others.

The UAOC underwent several divisions in exile and operated, in addition to the United States, in Canada, South America, Western Europe, and Australia. At present, the UAOC in the Ukrainian diaspora and the UOC of the USA are



subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In general, the UOCC, members of which make up about 32,700 according to the census, has a shortage of clergy: there are only a few permanent deacons and fewer than 10 seminarians in the whole Church today.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate in the diaspora was formed mainly by representatives of the fourth wave of emigration, who did not want to belong to the churches of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Thus, the vicariate of the UOC-Kyiv Patriarchate operate in the United States and the parish does it in Australia.

Among the traditional religions of the Ukrainians in the diaspora, Greek Catholicism, represented by a number of church organizations, occupies a prominent place. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of the diaspora includes two metropoliae in the United States and one in Canada, more than ten dioceses, several vicariates, and four exarchates in Western Europe. That is, the UGCC has its own structures on virtually all continents, including Australia and New Zealand. In total, about 1.2 million believers of the diaspora belong to the GCC today. The beginning of the formation of Greek Catholic church organizations outside Ukraine dates back to the end of the XIX century, to the so-called first wave of mass migration of Ukrainians from the western lands to the countries of North and South America. At that time, Uniate missionaries, who organized the first parishes, dioceses, as well as schools and charitable communities, emigrated along with migrant workers. The need to organize the church by the first settlers is explained, in our opinion, by their desire to create such conditions abroad that would resemble the homeland ones. Therefore, in addition to housing, it was necessary to build a school and a church. At first, Roman Catholics, then the Russian Orthodox Church wanted to take Ukrainian Greek Catholics into the care, but the Ukrainians did not agree. Having realized the danger of losing some of the believers, Metropolitan A. Sheptytskyi sent Ukrainian bishops to the United States.

Today, the Greek Catholic Church is the most widespread and most organized in the diaspora. In fact, this is explained by the fact that most representatives of the first wave of emigration and the third (postwar) one actually consisted of Western Ukrainians who professed Greek Catholicism.

Canada and the United States are the largest centers of Greek Catholicism in the Ukrainian diaspora. Today about 374,000 Ukrainians are Greek Catholics in the United States, and more than 207,000 in Canada. As early as in 1904, the first exarch was appointed for Greek Catholics in the United States, and later two Greek Catholic dioceses were established: Philadelphia and Pittsburgh ones. In 1958 they

acquired the status of metropolises. In Canada, the first diocese was formed later, in 1912, and the Metropolis of Winnipeg appeared in 1959. At present, in Canada there is an extensive network of monastic orders, most of which are the Basilian and Redemptorists. Ukrainian Greek Catholics in Canada provide support to many public associations of Ukrainians, participate in the organization of the manufacture and installation of monuments (for example, to Lesya Ukrainka, I. Franko, V. Stefanyk, etc.)<sup>14</sup>.

In South America, about 80% of Ukrainian immigrant believers are Greek Catholics. In Argentina, their number is about 66%, and in Brazil it makes up 85%. The presence of a large number of Greek Catholics in Latin America is due, as noted above, to the peculiarities of the first wave of Ukrainian emigration at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. In 1882 their order was reformed in Ukraine, it consolidated their privileged position on the one hand, but also contributed to the strengthening of Latinization influences, on the other. There is one diocese in Brazil and one in Argentina today, but there are more priests in Brazil: 100 versus 20 in Argentina.

Today, church circles in the UGCC of the United States and Canada are debating the language use for worshipping. Some religious figures consider it appropriate to introduce the language of the country of residence: English, French, etc., but a part of the Ukrainian diaspora considers it necessary to keep the Ukrainian language in the Ukrainian church to preserve ties with the roots in order not to lose national identity.

As for European countries, there are separate communities of the UGCC in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Austria, Greece, Romania, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and there is a significant number of believers in the Greek Catholic communities that are part of the administrative-territorial entities of other Eastern Churches in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro.

According to official data, more than 60,000 ethnic Ukrainians live in contemporary Romania, most of them in Maramures County and Southern Bukovina (however, some experts, such as W. Bruter, believe that this number is twice as much in terms of language and ethnicity, but not politics appurtenances). According to the current legislation, there are two public organizations of ethnic Ukrainians in Romania, they are the Union of Ukrainians of Romania (since 1990), represented in the Council of National Minorities under the Government of Romania, and the National Forum of Ukrainians of Romania (since 2009).

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<sup>14</sup> Володимир Трошинський, *Українці у світі* (Київ: "Альтернативи", 1999).

Most Ukrainians in Romania were Orthodox, as they converted to Orthodoxy after the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in Romania in 1948. Currently, the Vicariate of the Orthodox Church consists of 25 parishes, and after the restoration of the Vicariate of the Greek Catholic Church in 1996 (Suceava city), it included 19 parishes, uniting more than 6,000 believers<sup>15</sup>. Almost all educational and cultural activities of the UUR and the UGCC are aimed at preserving the national language, national identity and own cultural traditions.

The cultural and educational role of Ukrainian churches in the diaspora is undeniable, as almost all Ukrainian Sunday schools have been established on their basis. Moreover, the church not only provides premises for classes, but also provides a proper teaching staff. Ukrainian priests in the diaspora consider educational activities to be an integral mechanism for fulfilling the church's tasks. This area of activity in the life of the diaspora remains under the constant control of the church, which allows teaching the Ukrainian language to children (and not only to them), engaging in education, creating various scientific associations of the Ukrainian intellectual elite, as well as special educational institutions (universities, academies, seminaries, colleges), which have become the center of education, national and cultural life of the Ukrainians. This approach allows preserving the national identity of immigrants and their children born outside Ukraine. For example, in five Canadian provinces, Ukrainian is taught in secondary schools and Ukrainian studies are delivered in twenty universities. Church periodicals (*Life and Word*, *New Way*, etc.) and Ukrainian-language TV and radio programs are also popular.

Since 1991, the Ukrainian Church of the diaspora has intensified its work in Ukraine, founding a number of educational institutions, the most famous of which is the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv. In addition, the Society of Ukrainian Catholics "St. Sophia" (Philadelphia) built a museum-memorial complex of Patriarch Joseph the Blind in his native village in Ternopil region.

The creation and operation of libraries also contributes to the preservation of Ukrainian national identity in the diaspora. One of the largest and most famous libraries of the Ukrainian diaspora, located in the building of the former St. Basil's High School, has a collection of over 70,000 Ukrainian books and Ukrainian-language periodicals<sup>16</sup>.

The activity of the Ukrainian Church (especially the UGCC) contributed to the preservation of the cultural identity of the diaspora members. After all, getting

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<sup>15</sup> „Українська діаспора в Румуні,” accessed June 2021: [http://buktolerance.com.ua/?page\\_id=8](http://buktolerance.com.ua/?page_id=8).

<sup>16</sup> Володимир Трошинський, *Українци*.

into the predominant multicultural environment, a person is in danger of complete assimilation. However, by uniting, providing education in communities, teaching children in Sunday schools, the Ukrainian Church creates conditions for integration into a multicultural environment while preserving national and religious consciousness.

Nevertheless, given the tendencies of secularization and the desire of new Ukrainian emigrants, the younger generation to reconsider the theological paradigms of diasporic life, the Ukrainian church outside the metropolis seeks to establish the practices of the national church, thus creating conditions for preserving national identity. According to the head of the UGCC, Sviatoslav Shevchuk, this is only possible if the church's identity is preserved, and it should be manifested in the need to preserve spiritual heritage and provide pastoral care for emigrants. The head of the UGCC emphasizes that “the support of emigrants... should consist in preserving their ecclesiastical identity under the guidance of the priests of their Church and cultivating relationship with it”<sup>17</sup>. Aimed at the above mentioned, the church in the diaspora is constantly looking for real opportunities to remain significant, influential for the Ukrainian diaspora. In addition to the educational mission and vocation to preserve national identity, the church in immigration is an important moral and ethical force that directs pilgrims not only to religiosity but also to support traditional Ukrainian spiritual and moral values, to a responsible balanced civic position of Ukrainians .

What is more, the church is not only a cultural but also a social center and a means of psychological assistance for Ukrainian immigrants, which allows the latter to feel “at home” in the diaspora. Churches organize cultural festivals held in the cities of compact residence of Ukrainians. These festivals not only immerse immigrants in the space of their native culture, allow them to meet, share ideas on solving certain problems, etc., but also to acquaint locals with Ukrainian culture, traditions and history.

A striking example of this is the festival “Uketoberfest” in Chicago, organized by the parish of St. Joseph. It is worth emphasizing that the temple itself is one of the most beautiful among the cult architectural structures. The church was built in 1976 by architect Z. Mazurkevich, but to this day it impresses with its modernity and unusual shapes, it ranks eighth in the world among religious

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<sup>17</sup> „Глава УГКЦ: Українські емігранти мають зберегти свою церковну ідентичність,” accessed June 2021: <http://vidia.org/2013/9759>.

buildings in terms of the parameters. No wonder the church with 13 domes was chosen by American pilots as an air landmark.

Since the church foundation, Ukrainians dreamed that it would become a support for new emigrants, so from the first years of the twentieth century the diaspora members held picnics and festivals near temples. Today, Uketoberfest is a festival where Ukrainian songs and Ukrainian words are resounded, Ukrainian dishes are served, and the funds raised during the festival are donated to the needs of the Ukrainian community. The festival allows not only to meet representatives of foreign Ukrainian communities, but also to communicate with guests from Ukraine, who are traditionally invited to participate in it.

It should be noted that today there is a tendency in the diaspora (as in Ukraine itself) to the increase in the number of people wishing to practice non-Christian religions, which are based on ancient Slavic traditions (Ladovira, the Convocation of the Native Faith, RUNVira, etc.). These neo-pagan beliefs focus on an emphatically mythologized national identity and patriotism.

The most famous mythologized ethnogenetic concept of Ukrainian immigration is substantiated by L. Sylenko, a Canadian of Ukrainian origin, who created the Ukrainian Neo-Pagan Church (RUNVira - Native Ukrainian National Faith) in the 60s of the twentieth century and set out the essence of his own religious-historiosophical teaching in the work "Maha Faith" (translated from Sanskrit as "mighty faith"). This faith is designed to reform the polytheistic belief of the Ruthenians in the contemporary monotheistic religion. The central ideas of L. Sylenko's concept are the idea of the greatness and significance of Ukrainian history, culture and language as "the language of the aristocracy of the whole world", the idea of a single national god Dazhboh, who created everything, and the idea of "blood factor" as a leader in determining belonging to a certain culture ("it is not important where you were born, but who gave birth to you"). Special significance is attributed to the glorious past of Ukrainians, the importance of Ukraine in the history of all mankind. It makes no sense to list all the ideas of the author of this myth<sup>18</sup>. It should only be noted that it is aimed at the emigrant consciousness and acts as a means of overcoming the complex of "dispersion". According to Silenko, the glorious past and the national neo-pagan religion should unite Ukrainians all over the world and prevent them from full assimilation into new societies.

RUNVira was founded in the 60's during the heyday of sectarian doctrines in America, when at the same time the period of unsuccessful Khrushchev's thaw

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<sup>18</sup> Лев Силенко, *Мага Віра. Українська Рідна Віра (PUNVira)* (Нью-Йорк, 1979).

ended and the stagnant Brezhnev years began on the territory of Ukraine. The new-old faith was presented as a return to the roots, to the forgotten native. The emergence of the “native Ukrainian” faith not in Ukraine but in the diaspora is the first proof of the doubtfulness of its authenticity. Representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the United States responded quickly to attempts to implement and popularize it by publishing a number of articles in the Ukrainian Orthodox Word that explained the inappropriateness of certain “innovations”.

It is noteworthy that studying and knowing the faith of the distant ancestors is commendable, but idealizing, trying to revive the old faith is too dubious. In addition, the pagan beliefs of pre-Christian Ukrainians are insufficiently studied, as there are no relevant artifacts left, and what can be analyzed rather characterizes the beliefs of all Slavs. On the other hand, we can say that the RUNVira does not contribute to the being rootedness, but on the contrary, it opposes the Ukrainianness to the world and leads to an imaginary or pseudo-rootedness and internal breakup of the Ukrainian diaspora.

The study of the historiosophy aspect of the religious faith essence, special features of church and religious life of diaspora communities allows affirming the importance of faith in preserving national culture and identity, as well as emphasizing the unique role of the national church as a consolidating force for Ukrainians in contemporary political and cultural context.

The Ukrainian Church in particular becomes the center of preservation of the native language, customs, rites, traditional forms of communication, and thus it becomes the center of attraction of immigrants. Therefore, the church in the diaspora can be recognized as a means of integration and a connection between migrants and the Motherland, it promotes consolidation and inhibits the processes of assimilation, dissolution of Ukrainian culture in another cultural area, so there is every reason to recognize faith and the church to be the field of being rootedness of man abroad.

Further study of the place and role of the church in Ukrainian diaspora life will, in our opinion, prevent the dispersion of Ukrainians abroad, unite them with the Ukrainians of the metropolis, using as a powerful tool of influence of clergy, who, given the large number of believers, can be real agents of influence of the state of Ukraine abroad.

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