

## INTRODUCTION

Christian Church holds a special place in the context of Ukrainian national culture. It has always fulfilled and fulfills the role of the moral regulator of social relations, the integrator of all spiritual factors of national life into a single whole, it is the center of national character, it plays the role of guardian of national customs and rituals, the protector of national interests of the Ukrainian people in the most difficult times of their history. In different periods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ukrainian culture was greatly influenced by a whole set of ideas developed by progressive figures of both the Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches, who contributed to the formation of a peculiar and original ideology of the Ukrainian nation, focused on the rise of its national consciousness. The role of the Greek Catholic Church in this process is difficult to overestimate. After all, the union created the preconditions for the emergence of the national intelligentsia. The formal equation with the Catholic clergy opened the possibility for Ukrainian clergy to obtain secondary and higher education at European level. Polish, Roman, and later Austrian and their own spiritual institutions prepared not only priests: they produced the ecclesiastical and secular intellectuals who started and successfully carried out the Ukrainian national revival.

Among the prominent people of the previous century, it is difficult to find a person who, even in his lifetime, would have achieved such greatness and love from his people as Metropolitan of Galicia Andrey Sheptytsky. A prominent theologian, scientist, educator, pedagogue, politician, philanthropist... But, it must be agreed that at the same time it is not easy to find a person who has been attacked as much him. There is no need to give an overview of the huge number of “historical works” in which the “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist” and the “fugitive” (as he was often called by the Soviet scholarly men) was debunked, because there are no objective books or articles among them. True works, unfortunately, were published only abroad. The proclamation of Ukraine’s independence, which Metropolitan Andrey sought so much, allowed us to look at this extraordinary and truly powerful figure with very different eyes. Andrey Sheptytsky’s diverse activities have not lost their relevance to this day. His scientific, educational and pedagogical ideas withstood the test of time. Their study and comprehensive analysis are necessary in the conditions of building an independent Ukraine.

The main purpose of this monograph is to cover, as far as possible, the ecclesiastical, scientific, educational, cultural, social and political activities

of Andrey Sheptytsky on the background of his epoch. Along with the main purpose, the authors also tried to solve a number of specific problems:

- to analyze the documentary materials, which refer to the diverse and multifaceted activities of the Metropolitan of Galicia (Pastoral epistles, memorandums, letters, collections of documents, etc.);

- to give an objective evaluation of the memoirs of eyewitnesses and scientific publications of the Ukrainian and foreign researchers about Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky;

- to trace the life path of a prominent religious, social and political figure of the late XIX – the first half of the XX century on the background of the general characteristics of the epoch in which he created;

- to cover activity of Andrey Sheptytsky in the field of education and culture, raising the spiritual level of the Ukrainians;

- to make an analysis of Metropolitan's major theological works, following the evolution of his ecumenical views, to prove that Sheptytsky's ecumenism was not only limited to theoretical concepts, but also aimed at achieving concrete results;

- to find out the motivation of Andrey Sheptytsky's attitude to various political regimes, which during his pastoral activity changed each other in the Western Ukrainian lands (Austrian, Polish, Soviet, Nazi);

- to emphasize the peculiarities of the religious situation in Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus – Carpathian Ukraine) during the interwar period (1938-1939) and to highlight the position of the Metropolitan;

- to draw parallels between the epoch in which Andrey Sheptytsky lived and worked and the current state of the confessional situation in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine.