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“Description of Kiev-Pechersk Lavra” by Metropolitan Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) as an Attempt to Continue “Mohylian Tradition” in Describing the History of Kiev

Summary: The purpose of this paper is to determine the main elements of the writings of history of Kiev by the Metropolitan of Kiev Petro (Mohyla) (1597–1647) and other theologians under his scientific supervision; consideration of the reception of these elements in the work of Metropolitan of Kiev Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) (1767–1837) under the title “Description of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra”, as well as finding the elements that are strictly characteristic of Metropolitan Yevhenii’s work. The methodological basis of this article is the general scientific principle of historicism, objectivity, complexity and system, the implementation of which is carried out through the use of basic methods of historical research (analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction). The main conclusion is that Metropolitan of Kiev Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) was the successor of the tradition of writing history of the Church which was created by Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) and other famous Kievan theologians of the time, among whom Bishop Sylvestr (Cossov) stands out.

Key words: Mohylian tradition, Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, Pechersk saints, Petericon, Stauropegion.

In spite of the fact that many studies, including monographs, have been devoted to the life and activities of these two Kievan metropolitans, the question of the continuity of “the tradition of writing history” of the city of Kiev, created by Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla), has not been explored at all in Ukrainian and Russian historiography. The studies related to the subject of the article include the work of the professor of the Kiev Theological Academy S. T. Golubev (Голубев 1898), in which the author, describing the work of Metropolitan Petro and his staff, examines in detail the specifics of their methods and principles. In connection with the works of Metropolitan Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov), one can single out the researcher N. I. Poletaev, who, however, limited himself to only a few remarks about the “Description of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra...” analyzing the “Description of the Kiev-Sophia Cathedral...” (Поletaев 1889).

First, a few clarifications of the conceptual nature of this article should be made. First of all, it should be noted that the work of Metropolitan Yevhenii “Description of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra” reveals his outlook on the world in many ways, and most importantly, the methods and principles of his scientific work. As for the term “the Mohylian tradition of describing history”, it was first introduced into scientific circula-

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tion by Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) and his associates and implies the main elements in the writing of history of the city of Kiev. The importance of the study is in the fact that the actions of Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) and Metropolitan Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) had epochal importance for the Orthodox Church, and their researches in various fields of science, primarily in history, played a huge role in the development of the church and folk identity of our people.

When one starts to consider this work of Metropolitan Yevhenii, it is immediately noticeable that in choosing such a structure when describing the history of the KPL, Metropolitan Yevhenii imitated church historians of the Mohylian tradition. It is safe to say that he was the successor of the tradition of writing history, the creator of which was the Metropolitan of Kiev Petro (Mohyla). The latter, in his time, had to revive the historical monuments of Kievan Rus and establish the Kiev tradition of holiness in order to prove the revelation and effectiveness of the chosen path in favour of Orthodoxy of Eastern tradition as opposed to Uniatism¹ and Catholicism.

One can notice the overlapping moments, the attention to which was paid most of all both during the administration of Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) of the Kiev Department, and during the administration of Metropolitan Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov). Such acute questions included the following: the interpretation of the events of the Baptism of Russia, biographical information about Russian metropolitans, issues related to holiness, both of the KPL itself and the saints who slept in the Lavra Caves. All these questions were disclosed at the initiative of Petro (Mohyla) by one of the most famous Kievan theologians at the time, a teacher and a writer, Bishop of Mogilev, Mstislavskii and Orsha² Sylvestr (Kossov) in his book "Paterikon", published in Polish language in 1635. At the same time, Metropolitan Yevhenii examines these questions in two separate works (Болховитинов 1825; 1826). In addition, he considers them in the context of descriptions of certain architectural monuments of Kievan Rus, thereby shifting and placing accents in his own way, unlike Sylvestr (Kossov), who described them more specifically and clearly.

The work of Metropolitan Yevhenii, as well as the work of Bishop Sylvestr (Kossov) during the reign of Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla), was a forced move, claimed Polish magnates, many of whom remained in leadership positions, although of local importance, to impose their own ideology by imposing their own thoughts. Therefore, so that no one had any questions, Metropolitan set himself the goal of describing the history of Russian people, starting with the Baptism of Rus, in the apologetic manner, which he accomplished quite successfully.

Reflecting on the text "Description of the KPL...", the main points that Metropolitan Yevhenii considered and analyzed, following the "tradition of Petro (Mohyla)", should

¹ Church Union of Berestia [Берестейська унія; Beresteiska uniia]. An agreement, proclaimed in 1596, between the Ruthenian (Ukrainian-Belarusian) Orthodox church in Poland and Lithuania and the Holy See. The recognition of the pope as the head of the church and the implications of this position for the faith, morals, practices, and church administration (defined by the Church Union of Florence in 1439) were accepted by the Orthodox clergy (Velyky A. *Church Union of Berestia* 1984).

² Since 1647- the metropolitan of Kyiv, Halychina and all Russia.

be noted. The first is that Metropolitan Yevhenii, from the very first lines, tries to show a special place that the monastery occupied in the life of Russian people from the very beginning of its establishment, and which, in fact, influenced its establishment. Secondly, the fact that the monastery originally, since princely times, differed from other monasteries by its holiness and wonder working, which was preceded by the feats and prayers of the Pechersk saints; its status, primarily Stauropegion³. These standpoints require detailed consideration.

As for the argument about the sanctity of the monastery, first of all, Metropolitan focuses on the divinely revealed nature of the establishment of the monastery. Here, it was enough for Metropolitan to simply highlight and emphasize the places from the annals and lists of Kiev-Pechersk Patericon⁴. For example, already at the beginning of the first chapter he writes that the Monk Anthony was not alone during his journey (Болховитинов 1826, 3), but was led by God, who showed him the way. The fourth chapter describes series of revelations from Patericon, related to the construction of the Great Church of Pechersk (Болховитинов 1826, 12). Particular attention is paid to the Mother of God, who personally participated in the construction of the monastery and blessed it with her miraculous icon (Болховитинов 1826, 83). At the same time, the Metropolitan focuses attention on the fact that, since antiquity, the Pechersk monastery has been revered as “holy and miraculous” (Болховитинов 1826, 14). The author also draws attention to God’s special abundant disposition in relation to the monastery, referring to the fact that, compared with other Russian monasteries, a huge number of saints were brought up in the Pechersk Monastery and more miracles happened there than in other monasteries (Болховитинов 1826, 14-15).

Metropolitan attached great importance to the status of a monastery, like Lavra and Stauropegion. From the text, it is clear that this issue is one of the central issues. In confirmation of this statement, in the Appendix, Metropolitan put a considerable number of documents, the main of which is a list of the letters patent of the Prince Andrii Boholiubskiy for the Stauropegion of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, while the original document, as noted by Metropolitan, burned down in 1590.

There are other letters patent of the Eastern Patriarchs confirming Stauropegion, such as the letters patent of the Patriarch of Constantinople Maxim (1481), the Patriarch of Jerusalem Paisius (1649), the Tsar’s Letter, John and Peter Alekseevich, and Sofia Alekseevna to the Stauropegion of the Patriarchate of Moscow (1688), Patriarch of Moscow Ioakim (1688). In addition, in the text itself without references and publications, but on the basis of the aforementioned letters, the hierarch asserts that other pa-

³ Stauropegion (stavropihiia). Initially a Greek term referring to the placement of a cross by a bishop, symbolizing his approval of the construction of a church or monastery on the site. Later the term designated an autonomous Orthodox church body (church, monastery, brotherhood) that did not come under the jurisdiction of local hierarchs but was responsible directly to the patriarch (or the Holy Synod in the Russian Empire after 1721). The institution enjoyed special privileges, such as control over the local clergy and, in some cases, even over the local bishop (Zhukovsky A. “Stavropigion” *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*).

⁴ Patericon (Ukrainian: pateryk). A collection of edifying tales, anecdotes, and apothegms about saints, the Church Fathers, and prominent monks (*Patericon. Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine* 1993).

triarchs, and later Russian emperors, repeatedly confirmed the monastery's right to the status of the monastery and the Stauropegion of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. These include the metropolitan patriarchs of Constantinople: Matthew (between 1594 and 1600), Raphael (1603), Timothy (around 1613-1621), Parthenius (1657), Joannicia (1659), Jerusalem: Theophanes (1620) and Paisius (1649), Paisius of Alexandria and Macarius of Antioch (1668) (Болховитинов 1826, 50-51). Since 1688, the KPL has already been Stauropegion of the Patriarchate of Moscow, as evidenced by the above-mentioned letters. By the decree of the Holy Synod of 1721, the KPL was appointed the Synodal Stauropegion.

As for the ancient letters patent of Prince Andrii Boholiubskyi, the attitude towards them in different centuries and in historiography varied. If we refer to the lists of other letters patent, put in the appendix, we see that the monks appealed to Prince Andrii asking for confirmation of Stauropegion, and that in the letters of Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople (1592), the royal and patriarchs (1688), it is confirmed as and referred to as an unquestionable fact.

Without making distinctions between the letters, the Metropolitan quotes the same patriarchs in the main text. But still, he cites one critical remark about the letter of Prince Andrii, not completely confident in its authenticity: "However, the basis of this extract (from the metrical books of the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremiah) of Andrii's letter, at least when it comes to the possessions granted to the Pechersk monastery, is not doubtful because this monastery owned the town of Vasilkov with district volosts and enjoyed them unhindered before the authentic document burned..." (Болховитинов 1826, 50). However, Metropolitan considers the letters of the Eastern Patriarchs to be sufficient proof of the status of Lavra and Stauropegion. As for the modern historiography, after a detailed analysis of this letter, the candidate of historical sciences J. Zatylyuk came to the conclusion that this document was falsified at the end of the XVI century (Затилук 2008, 231), and that the document had legal power for two centuries (Затилук 2008, 231).

Whatever it was, Metropolitan Yevhenii himself confirms the fact that even during the lifetime of Prince Andrii in 1168, the Metropolitan of Kiev Constantine II conciliarly (by an ecclesiastical council) condemns the KPL archimandrite to imprisonment. Metropolitan Yevhenii refers to this incident as a "violation of the right to independence" (Болховитинов 1826, 47).

In this context, it is important to consider the question of the relation between the state power and hierarchy and the status of the monastery, especially the monastic Stauropegion. The Metropolitan managed to do the research based on the documents put in the appendix. Stauropegion was not always understood in the same way. Before the creation of the Polish kingdom, the brethren were given the opportunity to elect a prior with their own votes; under Polish rule, the elected candidate had to be approved by the king; after the Stauropegion of the Moscow Church, two or even three candidates were elected, out of whom the "sovereign" elected the superior; besides that, he was ordained in Moscow by the Patriarch himself.

Despite this, Metropolitan states that the KPL was self-governing and had many more rights than other monasteries. The collegiate body of twelve elders governed all

the affairs of the Church. This right was confirmed by the Patriarch of Moscow in 1688. Kiev Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) further expanded the rights of the monastery. He gave the Archimandrite the right to personally send the white clergy to all his estates and give them letters patent. Only ordination was performed by the ruling bishop. But this right was abolished by a synodal decree of 1769, after which all white clergy came under the authority of the diocesan bishop (Болховитинов 1826, 55). Another privilege, which was confirmed by the letter of the Patriarch of Moscow in 1688 (Болховитинов 1826, 54), was the possibility for the Archimandrite to wear an encolpion or panagia. Moreover, he was granted the opportunity to celebrate the liturgy in a special rite, which differed a little from the one of a bishop.

Metropolitan includes the full document about church services in his work, but admits that he does not have information about the time when this practice was introduced (Болховитинов 1826, 56-57).

It is necessary to pay attention to another fundamental issue in this essay. This is a question about scientific activity and education, this element was an innovation in describing the history of Kiev and belongs to Metropolitan Yevhenii himself. Here it is represented by the Metropolitan's study of Kiev-Pechersk Printing House, in which he deals with the question of starting printing in Slavic, not only in Slavic lands but also abroad, and examines the attitude of the KPL to this process.

The supplement contains documents related to the history and organization of the educational institution in the KPL by Metropolitan of Kiev, Petro (Mohyla). What is most important is that Metropolitan Yevhenii gives special consideration to the personality of St. Petro (Mohyla) in his other works, too.

The testament of Metropolitan Petro, which largely characterizes his outlook on the world and attitude towards knowledge, should be cited: "I made the following promise to God - to allocate part of my whole estate, which I inherited from my parents, and the entire residue of the income from the estates which appertain to the holy office entrusted to me, to the reconstruction of those churches of God which have been destroyed and of which only miserable ruins remain, and one part for the maintenance of schools and the consolidation of the rights and freedoms of the Ukrainian people" (Болховитинов 1826, 197). Here, he calls the "collegium" (Kiev Orthodox Educational Institute, which was founded by him) "the only pledge of his". Furthermore, "my entire library, consisting of books in different languages, which I collected all my life, is now entrusted to the vicar of Sophia, who is in charge of saving it; I have already given the register to my colleagues with the signature of my hand" (Болховитинов 1826, 198). In this regard, one can note the similarity between Metropolitan Petro and Metropolitan Yevhenii, who put maximum efforts into the development of the scientific and educational element in the dioceses.

Even if we compare the wills of the two Metropolitans, we can see that Metropolitan Yevhenii, above all, took care of science and of his own huge library of books and manuscripts. It should be noted that in the "Description of the Kiev-Sophia Cathedral," the Metropolitan also published his own research on the history of the Kiev Orthodox Theological Academy (KTA). All these studies, whose subject was the history of education, showed a new direction in the history of Kiev, which was later continued by

Metropolitan Makarii (Bulgakov) in his multi-volume history, as well as other prominent professors of the Kiev Orthodox Theological Academy and teachers of other orthodox schools of the Kiev district. And today this area is a priority in studying at Kiev Orthodox Theological Academy.

Further research considers this issue in Ukrainian historiography, especially at the present stage. Furthermore, the use of "the tradition of Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla)" can serve as a broad field for modern scholars.

It turned out that Metropolitan of Kiev Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) was the successor of the tradition of writing history of the Church, which was created by Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla) and other famous Kievan theologians of that time, among which Bishop Sylvestr (Cossov) stands out. This tradition was primarily shown in the study of its own ancient architectural monuments, as well as in the apologetic protection of the Eastern Church tradition. The main elements of this tradition of writing history of Kiev, adopted by Metropolitan Yevhenii from Metropolitan Petro, include the following: focus on the special place of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra in the lives of Russian people throughout history, as well as on the special status of the monastery in the Orthodox world (Lavra and Stauropegion); the argument of the sanctity of the monastery and the saints, who rest in the Lavra, the divinely revealed origin of the monastery, as defence against the Catholics and Uniates; evidence that Christianity is the right choice is the Eastern rite. Among the special elements inherent in the works of Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov), it is possible to include a study of scientific activity and education in Kiev. In addition, the study established some more similarities between Metropolitan Yevhenii and Metropolitan Petro (Mohyla). First of all, they have to do with their sacrificial attitude towards Kievan theological schools, in particular, to the KTA, to architectural monuments and to bibliophilism. It was also found that the description and analysis of theological education and scientific activities conducted by Metropolitan Yevhenii (Bolkhovitinov) and reflected in the "Description" were an innovation that later turned into a tradition that has survived to the present day, since the KTA's own history is one of the subjects of greatest importance for the research.

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„Опис Кијевско-печерске лавре“ митрополита Јевгенија Болховитинова као покушај настављања „могилске традиције“ описивања историје Кијева

Резиме: Сврха овог рада је одређивање главних елемената списка о историји Кијева митрополита кијевског Петра (Могиле) (1597-1647) и осталих теолога под његовим научним надзором, затим испитивање рецепције тих елемената у делу кијевског митрополита Јевгенија (Болховитинова) (1767-1837) насловљеном „Опис Кијевско-печерске лавре“, као и откривање оних елемената који карактеришу искључиво митрополита Јевгенија. Методолошка основа овог рада је општи научни принцип историцизма, објективности, комплексности и система, који је имплементиран кроз употребу базичних метода историјског истраживања (анализа и синтеза, индукција и дедукција). Основни закључак јесте да је митрополит Јевгеније био наследник традиције писања историје Цркве коју су утврдили митрополит Петар (Могила) и остали познати кијевски теолози тог доба, међу којима се нарочито издваја епископ Силвестар (Косов).

Кључне речи: Могилска традиција, Кијевско-печерска лавра, печерски светитељи, Патерикон, ставропигија.