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**ROMAN BAKHTALOVSKY (1897 – 1985), A PRIEST OF THE UNDERGROUND GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH: EVERYDAY LIFE THROUGH THE PRISM OF A CRIMINAL CASE**

**Abstract.** *The purpose* is to do the research on the possibilities of revealing the everyday life of a priest Roman Bakhtalovsky by studying the criminal case against him on September 13, 1949, by the Soviet law enforcement agencies. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of historicism, systematicity, scientificity, objectivity, and the application of source research methods, in particular the method of internal criticism of sources. **Scientific Novelty.** Criminal cases as a type of primary sources, despite their peculiarities (a strong subjectivity, individual inaccuracies, a low level of representativeness, certain arbitrariness of interpretation), contain a significant resource of

factual data, thereby supplementing the source base on the history of everyday life. **Conclusions.** The testimonies of the defendants (in particular, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky), due to their “subjectivity,” require a careful comparison with other primary sources, including memoirs, eyewitness accounts of the events, periodicals of that historical era, memoranda, and diaries. At the same time, they contain facts that reflect the everyday life of not only R. Bakhtalovsky himself, but also of many clergymen of the period of the “catacomb” Greek-Catholic Church, shedding light on their biography, appearance, material security, ideological beliefs, communicative environment, mentality, etc. The investigation materials reflect the subjective nature of these interrogations, bias in the selection of witnesses, facts of a psychological pressure on clergy and lay people. The criminal case as a source contains facts of R. Bakhtalovsky’s detention, the circumstances of his arrest by the Soviet special agencies, interrogations, examinations of his handwriting, decisions on bringing charges, a sentence, etc.

**Key words:** criminal case, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky, underground Greek-Catholic Church, historical monument, everyday life, Soviet special agencies.

### СВЯЩЕННИК ПІДПІЛЬНОЇ ГРЕКО-КАТОЛИЦЬКОЇ ЦЕРКВИ РОМАН БАХТАЛОВСЬКИЙ: ПОВСЯКДЕННЕ ЖИТТЯ КРИЗЬ ПРИЗМУ КРИМІНАЛЬНОЇ СПРАВИ (1897 – 1985)

**Анотація. Мета статті:** з’ясувати ступінь інформативності кримінальної справи на підпільного греко-католицького священника Романа Бахталовського як періоджерела до вивчення історії повсякденності. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах історизму, системності, науковості, об’єктивності, застосування джерелознавчих методів, зокрема методу внутрішньої критики джерел. **Наукова новизна.** Кримінальні справи як вид періоджерел, попри свої особливості (виражений суб’єктивізм, окремі неточності, низький рівень репрезентативності, певну довільність трактування) містять значний ресурс фактологічних даних, доповнюючи тим самим джерельну базу з історії повсякденності. **Висновки.** Свідчення підсудних (зокрема отця Р. Бахталовського) в силу їхньої “суб’єктивності” потребують уважного зіставлення з іншими періоджерелами, зокрема, мемуарами, спогадами про нього очевидців подій, періодичними виданнями тієї історичної епохи, нотатками для пам’яті, щоденниками. Водночас вони містять факти які, відбивають повсякденне життя не лише самого Р. Бахталовського, а й багатьох священнослужителів періоду “катакомбної” ГКЦ, проливають світло на їхню біографію, зовнішній вигляд, матеріальне забезпечення, ідеологічні переконання, комунікативне середовище, етос (спосіб життя), ментальність тощо. Матеріали слідства відбивають суб’єктивний характер допитів, тенденційність у доборі свідків, факти психологічного тиску на духовних і світських осіб. Кримінальна справа як джерело вміщує пізнавальні факти затримки Р. Бахталовського, обставини його арешту радянськими спецорганами, допити, експертизи його почерку, постанови про пред’явлення звинувачення, матеріали вироку тощо.

**Ключові слова:** кримінальна справа, отець Роман Бахталовський, підпільна Греко-католицька Церква, історична пам’ятка, повсякденне життя, радянські спецоргани.

**Problem Statement.** In our opinion, the decade of the Russo-Ukrainian war of 2014 – 2024 has brought to light a number of important socio-cultural issues, because at the present stage the Russian Federation, as a direct heir of the USSR, continues to pursue a shameful policy of levelling and eliminating of people who, to a greater or lesser extent, do not fit into its ideological matrix. Hence, there is the researchers’ substantive focus on “Sovietism” – culture, mentality, ethos, attitude to society, etc. It is important that this segment should, first of all, be considered in the socio-cultural dimension, since an excursion into the historical past is needed to search for and recreate similar circumstances and episodes with the participation of the Soviet law enforcement agencies.

This issue, in our opinion, “provokes” another, anthropocentric one, because it is capable of “raising to the surface” a decidedly different person who does not claim to be “famous”

or “outstanding” according to established academic visions and characteristics. But the methodological principles of the history of everyday life as a separate scientific direction of historical science have diversified the search tools, introduced a fundamentally new search method – “not to sift a single grain” (“Do not lose any grain” which means “do not lose any single detail”). This method involves a holistic approach to studying the historical “little” person down to the smallest details of life, and encourages more diverse and deeper monitoring of primary sources of a personal origin: “memories”, epistolary writings, diaries, etc.

**Review of Recent Research and Publications.** To some extent, the issues raised have already become the subject of research by Ukrainian historians. There should be mentioned the book by Nadiya Holeiko, “Bless us from Eternity. Confessor of the Faith of the 20th Century Servant of God Father Roman Bakhtalovsky, ChNI”, published in Lviv in 2017 (Holeyko, 2017). The publication does not claim to be scientific, although it contains some excerpts from R. Bakhtalovsky’s criminal case. It is also worth noting the work of R. Bakhtalovsky, “The Apostle of the Unity of Our Times. Memories”, which is dedicated to the life and work of Mykola Charnetsky, the Ukrainian bishop (Bakhtalovsky, 2001). In the book there is observed a subjective idea of the author’s worldview – R. Bakhtalovsky, his inner world, beliefs, interests. In the context of methodology of the history of everyday life as a direction of considerable interest are the studies of famous Ukrainian scholars – Olha Koliastruk and Oleksandr Udod. O. Koliastruk calls for a more thorough study of such situations as arrests, imprisonment, stay in special settlements of “little people”. It is certain that such plots enable a more complete study of a historical era, encourage understanding of relationship peculiarities between the state and citizen during a certain historical period (Koliastruk, 2007; Koliastruk, 2008; Koliastruk, 2019; Koliastruk, & Koliastruk, 2020). In his research, Oleksandr Udod outlines the advantages of the history of everyday life as a separate direction of historical research (Udod, 2005; Udod, 2010) The article by Kyiv historian Tetiana Zabolotna “The History of Everyday Life – “A Panacea for All Diseases” or a Trap for the Historian?” caused some resonance among everyday historians and fans of this direction (Zabolotna, 2010). For a more complete understanding of the historical era in which Father R. Bakhtalovsky lived, we have included informative articles by the following authors (Holeyko, 2014; Delyatynsky, Yehreshiy, & Solovka, 2016; Havrysh, 2021; Mishchanyn, & Isak, 2023; Haliv, 2013; Haliv, & Ohar, 2021; Popp, & Kantor, 2021; Popp, & Medvid, 2024; Yehreshiy, 2022). Some methodological aspects of studying this problem are highlighted in the works of Fernand Braudel (Brodell, 1995), Vitaliy Pidhayetsky (Pidhayetsky, 2005), Vitaliy Dmytrenko and Vita Dmytrenko (Dmytrenko, & Dmytrenko, 2020), Nadiya Levytska, Lyudmyla Luts and Bohdan Yakymovych (Levytska, Luts, & Yakymovych, 2022), Oleksandr Bondarenko and Anatoliiy Kotsur (Bondarenko, & Kotsur, 2023), Mykola Haliv and Vasyl Ilnytskyi (Haliv, & Ilnytskyi, 2021; Ilnytskyi, & Haliv, 2022).

**The purpose** is to do the research on the possibilities of revealing the everyday life of a priest Roman Bakhtalovsky by studying the criminal case against him on September 13, 1949, by the Soviet law enforcement agencies.

**Results of the Research.** The criminal case of Roman Bakhtalovsky details the circumstances of the priest’s detention and arrest. The priest was detained on September 13, 1949, in accordance with Article 100 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, for 24 hours to determine his identity (State Archives in Ivano-Frankivsk Region (SAIFR), f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 241). The next day, a warrant was issued for the arrest of R. Bakhtalovsky, and on September 15, 1949, the priest was arrested. As a preventive

measure, Father was placed in custody. In the arrest warrant for R. Bakhtalovsky it was stated that “while living in the territory temporarily occupied by the German invaders in the city of Stanislaviv, he worked as the proto-abbot of the Greek-Catholic Redemptorist monastery and carried out anti-Soviet nationalist work among the population” (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 242).

The subject matter of scientific interest for studying the daily life of R. Bakhtalovsky during a certain historical period is represented by a characteristic attributive component of all criminal cases – the prisoner’s questionnaire. It clearly states the year and place of his birth (November 21, 1897, the village of Yabluniv, Ternopil region); profession and specialty (a priest); last place of work or occupation before arrest (until April of 1946, R. Bakhtalovsky was the abbot of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery in Stanislaviv, later became illegal); nationality (Ukrainian), citizenship (USSR); party affiliation (R. Bakhtalovsky was not the party member); education (R. Bakhtalovsky obtained a higher theological education diploma) (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 245). The arrestee’s questionnaire also includes his origin (according to him, he came from a priestly family); a criminal record (R. Bakhtalovsky had no criminal record as of 1949). When asked by the investigator whether he had participated in the German-Soviet war, he gave a negative answer, but admitted that at that historical time he was in the occupied territory – since 1942 he had lived in Stanislaviv as “an illegal monk priest, abbot of the Redemptorist monastery”. As indicated in the “family composition” column, R. Bakhtalovsky’s father died in 1927, his mother – in 1938. The questionnaire records that R. Bakhtalovsky was not married and was childless, although he had a brother, Stepan (born in 1889) and a sister, Sofia (her surname after getting married – Saturdayska), born in 1885.

Criminal cases also feature a verbal portrait, which quite prominently characterizes the appearance of a person, in particular Roman Bakhtalovsky. The priest, as this section of the criminal case shows, was of an average height (165–170 cm), of full build, had a short neck, blue eyes, a round face, gray hair, a high forehead, straight eyebrows, a large nose and small ears and mouth, thin lips, drooping shoulders, and a straight chin. Father Roman Bakhtalovsky had no special characteristics, except for the “habit of bending his back to the right”.

More detailed information on the biography of Father Roman Bakhtalovsky can be found in the minutes of the first interrogation of the priest, which took place in Chernivtsi on September 13, 1949 (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 273). As the investigation materials show, in 1915 R. Bakhtalovsky graduated from the Ukrainian State Gymnasium in Kolomyia. That same year, he entered the Greek-Catholic Theological Seminary in Stanislaviv, but in 1919, without completing the last year of the seminary, he entered the monastery of the Redemptorist Fathers “Bo Plateau” in Belgium, where he continued his education for a year. In 1920, Father R. Bakhtalovsky returned to Lviv, where he was assigned to the monastery of the Redemptorist Order in the suburbs of Lviv – the village of Zboishcha. In 1921, Stanislaviv Bishop Hryhoriy Khomyshyn ordained R. Bakhtalovsky as a priest. During the same time, he studied at the Faculty of Slavic Languages of Jan-Kazimierz University of Lviv (nowadays – Ivan Franko National University of Lviv). From 1922 to 1942 he served as a priest and teacher of Theology, as well as Mathematics and Literature in the monasteries of the Redemptorist Order in Kovel, Holosko and Tukhiv. In 1942, Father R. Bakhtalovsky was appointed an abbot of the monastery of the Redemptorist Fathers in Stanislaviv, where he remained until the monastery was liquidated in the spring of 1946. Due to the experiences caused with the liquidation of the monastery that same year, he

“fell ill with a nervous illness and liver inflammation”, and went to his sister Sofia Saturdayska in Kolomyia for treatment, where until the end of June 1946 he lived in Sobieski Street, 56 (nowadays – Mykhailo Hrushevsky Avenue). For a short period of time, he also lived in the apartment of the former senior nun of the Basilian Sisters, Dariia Monastyrska (the disabled from birth), who lived in Hlinka Street at that time (nowadays – Liubomyr Huzar Street) in Kolomyia (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 345). At the end of June 1946, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky left for the village of Synkiv, near Zalishchyky, Ternopil region, to visit his old acquaintance Stefa Demianchuk, who for a short period of time directed the women’s choir in the church of the Redemptorist Fathers in the city of Stanislaviv. Her husband was once repressed by the Soviet authorities for political crimes, which prompted her to move to her mother, whom she helped with farming. In the autumn of 1946, Father R. Bakhtalovsky returned to live with his sister in Kolomyia, where he stayed for about a month, after which he rented a room for some time from a Polish citizen, the widow Markela Golynska.

By the way, a Roman Catholic priest, who later left for Poland, helped R. Bakhtalovsky to solve the housing issue in Stanislaviv. This priest helped him rent an apartment in Vovchynetska Street. In 1947, R. Bakhtalovsky managed to find housing in this city in Kapitulna Street, 12 (nowadays – Vira Levytska Street in Ivano-Frankivsk), the owner was the inspector of the regional drug control department, Ivan Pakholkiv, to whom he paid 300–400 rubles per room per month (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 281). The priest left I. Pakholkiv’s apartment due to some troubles that arose with the owner of the apartment due to the priest’s lack of a residence permit.

The priest also spent the winter of 1947 – 1948 in Stanislaviv with the family of a secondary school teacher named Kumanovsky. R. Bakhtalovsky spent the summer of 1947 with the Tselevych family in the village of Tsutsylyv, Stanislaviv region. From August of 1947, Roman Bakhtalovsky lived in Chernivtsi without a residence permit, where he settled in the apartment of a teacher Franz Karlovych Kinash in Dzhabula (Dzhabayeva) Street, 17, app. 2 (nowadays – Pavla Chubynsky Street). Renting an apartment from the latter, R. Bakhtalovsky paid the owner 600 Soviet rubles per month. The priest lived in this apartment until the moment of his arrest, occasionally leaving for Stanislaviv (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 275). In Chernivtsi, according to him, he focused on his education, he was engaged in writing a theological treatise dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and was treated by a famous specialist, Dr. Zuflucht, who lived in Ruska Street at that time. As a rule, the people who rented accommodation to R. Bakhtalovsky were proven ones whom the priest truly trusted.

In the field of studying the history of everyday life, the description of the clergyman’s property, which also appears in the search report of his residence, is of great importance. This, although schematic, makes it possible to present the ethos, to imagine the priest’s views, his inclinations, habits, preferences, and even his intellectual level and provision level. However, due to the fact that R. Bakhtalovsky had no permanent residence in recent years, it is difficult to create a complete picture of the property that belonged to the Greek-Catholic priest. According to the protocol of the personal search of the priest by the Soviet secret services, on September 16, 1949, in addition to his passport, 256 Soviet rubles and 43 American dollars were found and confiscated from him. Some items of church utensils (a church chalice and a yellow metal spoon) were found in the apartment. During the liquidation of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery, according to the order of R. Bakhtalovsky,



religious literature and monastic utensils were taken out of the monastery and transferred for safekeeping to individual residents in Stanislaviv. In December of 1949, the Soviet special services discovered a cache of weapons in Volodymyr Borysiuk's house property, a former parishioner of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery (he lived in Stanislaviv, in Rivna Street, 16) (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 242). The hidden valuables were found in the house owner's property near the well. In addition, during a search in the apartment there was revealed a white cigarette case, a mechanical 88-gram pocket watch made of a yellow metal, a wristwatch with a bracelet made by the "Arcadiia" company of a yellow metal, a white metal pocket watch made by the "Omega" company, a medal made of a yellow metal, and a brooch with a blue stone.

In a metal container from a canned food store, which was discovered in the chicken coop of V. Borysiuk's house by law enforcement officers, there were 139 American dollars, 10 German marks, 55 Soviet rubles, 20 Polish zlotys, a few Austrian crowns, and French francs were also found. In addition, yellow metal rings with blue and green stones were found in the metal jar. The list of seized items is eloquently confirmed by receipts dated December 26, 1949, which belonged to Father R. Bakhtalovsky. As the priest admitted during the investigation, the found money was the remains of donations from believers, which were intended for the development of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery in Stanislaviv.

According to R. Bakhtalovsky, during his illegal stay, he received means of subsistence from three sources: firstly, owing to a gradual sale of part of the former Redemptorist Fathers monastery's property in Stanislaviv by the parishioners of the monastery church. Secondly, owing to financial donations of believers, which he periodically received from them. Former parishioners of the monastery church, spiritual and secular figures visited him periodically: a priest-monk Anton Krochak, a forty-nine-year-old abbess of the Basilian monastery in Stanislaviv (Maria Isopenko), a twenty-five-year-old tailoress Volodymyra Zhovkivska (she worked in one of the artels in Stanislaviv), a thirty-year-old teacher from Nadvirna Stefaniia Tkachuk (for a short period of time she was a deputy of Nadvirna town council), a thirty-five-year-old Yevheniya Rostynska (she was the wife of a lecturer at the medical university in Stanislaviv, she lived in Vatutina Street in Stanislaviv (nowadays – Kruka Street) and other people (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 316). And thirdly, some material assistance (approximately 500–600 Soviet rubles) was provided to R. Bakhtalovsky personally by Joseph de Vocht, the proto-abbot of the Redemptorist Order in the USSR. As the priest admitted during the investigation, he had been to the Hoshivsky Monastery several times in order to sell some items from the church utensils of the former Redemptorist Fathers monastery.

By the way, the former abbess of the Basilian monastery, mentioned above, tried to help R. Bakhtalovsky obtain a new passport in the name of his mother's maiden name. It was assumed that the priest would bear the surname Herman. However, this attempt remained unrealized for various reasons. In addition, on the instructions of Father R. Bakhtalovsky, Yosyfa (Maria Isopenko) sold icons and gave the collected money to the Father. Priest Hryhoriy Melymuka helped R. Bakhtalovsky obtain a birth certificate (before the Lviv pseudo-council, H. Melymuka served as a priest in the Church of the village of Ostrivets, without converting to Orthodoxy).

The criminal case brought against underground priests characterizes the contact environment of Father Roman Bakhtalovsky quite vividly – the case includes the names of the "catacomb" priests who visited the priest during his illegal residence. The biographies of some of these

priests are unknown not only to a narrow but also to a wide circle of scholars. In particular, we come across the names of such priests as: a priest-monk Ivan Dmukhovsky (his brother was a member of the OUN); Ivan Valnytsky (after rejecting the Lviv pseudo-council, he guarded one of the companies in the city of Stanislaviv, and was also the confessor of R. Bakhtalovsky; Yevhen Pelek; a monk Avkseniy Kinashchuk and the others. During interrogations, R. Bakhtalovsky, “under pressure” of the special services, had to specify the data about these people. In particular, Yevhen Pelek, born in 1920, was a former priest, a Redemptorist monk in Stanislaviv. After the liquidation of the monastery, he lived for some time without any specific occupations, and later he was recalled to the monastery in Holosko (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 313). Avksentiy Kinashchuk was a little over 40 years old, also a former brother-monk of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery, and lived in Stanislaviv for some time. Anton Krochak (40 years old, a former Redemptorist monk. After the monastery was liquidated, he moved to Borshchiv, Ternopil region, to his sister for some time). Yaroslav Soviak was the parish priest of Broshniv before the Lviv pseudo-council, although he was born near Drohobych. Petro Hereliuk was a former student of the Theological Seminary. Soon he was arrested and convicted by the Soviet authorities. The interrogation also included priest Kutsak Vasyl, born in 1920, who was born in Lviv region and studied at the “Juvenat” school in Zboishcha until 1936. For some time he was a Redemptorist monk in the village of Holosko, from 1939 to 1941 he was in Tukhiv monastery, later in the monastery of the Redemptorist Fathers in Stanislaviv. In 1942, Vasyl Kutsak was ordained a priest in Dashava.

The criminal case also includes the names of the fathers of the underground Greek Catholic Church, Mykola Khmelevsky and Ivan Ziatyk. The latter was a hieromonk of the Order of the Redemptorist Fathers and a teacher of Theology at the Lviv Redemptorist Monastery, and was later transferred to Zboishcha, where he was the abbot of the monastery for some period of time.

Criminal cases illustrate the everyday life of a Greek-Catholic priest in an illegal position – the specifics of his ministry, his communication with the clergy who decided to join the Initiative Group, and then become priests of the Russian Orthodox Church. And on the contrary, the clergy who decided to “not sign Orthodoxy” or gave a receipt to law enforcement agencies that they would not perform religious services or did not give this receipt were in an illegal situation, as Roman Bakhtalovsky. During interrogation, R. Bakhtalovsky admitted that he was and remained a convinced Greek-Catholic, and took a hostile position towards the Initiative Group. During interrogation, R. Bakhtalovsky named the surnames of the priests with whom he had conversations about converting to Greek Catholicism: Vasyl Baran, who lived in Stanislaviv at that time (R. Bakhtalovsky met him only once in 1946); Fathers Malynovsky and Sleziuk, who did not convert to Orthodoxy and were both arrested by the Soviet authorities soon; Father Dobriansky, who did convert to Orthodoxy and, as of the late 1940s, lived in Ternopil region. During the interrogation there was also mentioned a fifty-two-year-old priest from the village of Trukhaniv, Skole district, Drohobych region, Ksenofont Kersha, who was also arrested by the Soviet authorities soon after, and Yosyf Savrash (who converted to Orthodoxy despite R. Bakhtalovsky’s warnings). During interrogation, Roman Bakhtalovsky also mentioned the surname of a priest from the town of Horodenka, Roman Vynnychuk (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 2, p. 304).

Criminal cases contain information regarding the internal discipline of the clergy of the Greek-Catholic Church in the second half of the 1940s. If a priest had previously “signed Orthodoxy” but decided to return to the fold of Greek-Catholicism, then in the presence of

two witnesses he had to write a statement in which he expressed his desire and give a “promise to be faithful to the Greek-Catholic Church until death”. After that, Roman Bakhtalovsky confessed the returnee. According to the priest, until April of 1946 (i.e., before the liquidation of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery), he had accepted only five applications from fathers who had changed their minds about belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church (the Soviet investigators did not confirm this figure, citing a sevenfold higher figure – 35 fathers). For the purpose of conspiracy, on the instructions of R. Bakhtalovsky, a former novice of the Redemptorist Fathers monastery, Iliia Menchuk, hid the statements previously sealed in a bottle in the monastery garden, but later changed his mind and destroyed them.

The criminal case, as a primary source, vividly conveys the mentality of the prisoner, certain traits of his character, etc. Father Roman Bakhtalovsky, in order not to betray people close to him, at first categorically denied his communications with the priests of the underground Greek-Catholic Church. To encourage the clergyman to give a truthful testimony, the Soviet special services often organized face-to-face meetings: with the abbot of the Basilian monastery in Stanislaviv, Hryhory Balahurak (April 19, 1950 (investigators were interested in the method of distributing and sending out leaflets of an anti-Soviet nature)) (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 2, p. 107); with the priest of the underground Greek-Catholic Church, Yaroslav Soviak, and the nun Yosyfa (Maria Isopenko) mentioned above. In particular, face-to-face meetings with Ya. Soviak and Sister Yosyfa exposed Father R. Bakhtalovsky for illegally sending the nun abroad for contacts with representatives of the Ukrainian Christian Church, and for talking to Ya. Soviak about his illegal crossing the border with the help of the OUN underground. After face-to-face interviews, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky was often forced to revise his previous confessions. Sometimes, in order to force the priest to tell the truth, the Soviet secret services provided “necessary quotes” from transcripts of interrogations of previously arrested fathers.

Finally, on June 14, 1950, the Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Major General Yepypenko, signed an indictment in the investigative case of Roman Bakhtalovsky. Father R. Bakhtalovsky was accused by the Soviet investigative bodies of the fact that, “in 1922, after returning from Belgium as a hieromonk of the Order of the Redemptorist Fathers, he carried out active missionary work to spread Catholicism among the believers of the Orthodox Church in Volyn, he conducted anti-communist propaganda and spread slanderous thoughts about the USSR. In 1939, R. Bakhtalovsky fled to the territory of the so-called General Governorate, where he also carried out anti-Soviet and missionary activities. R. Bakhtalovsky maintained illegal ties through OUN members with the proto-abbot of the Redemptorist order, de Vocht, who was in Lviv. During the German-fascist occupation of Ukraine, R. Bakhtalovsky, as the abbot of the Redemptorist monastery in Stanislaviv, actively helped the Germans and was used by the SD to obtain confessions from those arrested in Stanislaviv prison. After creating an Initiative group to reunite the Greek-Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church, R. Bakhtalovsky made criminal ties with the illegal Bishop Balahurak, with whom he launched an active struggle against the Initiative group. At the end of 1945, R. Bakhtalovsky wrote an extensive report of an anti-Soviet slanderous nature to the Vatican, which, with Balahurak’s sanction, he tried to send abroad owing to the OUN’s foreign relations, using Isopenko, Heryliuk, and Father Soviak as couriers” (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, pp. 244, 245).

In addition, R. Bakhtalovsky was accused of writing letters of anti-Soviet content in which he called on Greek-Catholic priests who had converted to Orthodoxy to return to the bosom



of the UGCC; he held illegal religious services and delivered anti-Soviet sermons; he was the author of anti-Soviet nationalist documents and kept a number of them. We should add that Father Roman Bakhtalovsky was exposed by the testimonies of the previously arrested Bishop Hryhoriy (Balahurak), Archimandrite Klymentiy (Sheptytsky), Fathers Ya. Soviak, Ye. Pelekh, I. Kotiv, a monk I. Menchuk, the nun Yosyfa (M. Isopenko), and a number of other witnesses. A priest R. Bakhtalovsky was also exposed through face-to-face meetings with the above-named clergymen, as well as through physical evidence and operational materials (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 247).

In addition, during the arrest and search of R. Bakhtalovsky, the manuscripts of anti-Soviet content were found: "The Idea and Act of Ukraine" (on ten sheets), "The Relation of Religion to Nationalism" (on eighteen sheets), "Because Our Emigration" (on eighteen sheets). Considering that the manuscripts listed above were material evidence that exposed R. Bakhtalovsky in "criminal activities," the Soviet special services decided to subject the above works to expert examination. The samples of Roman Bakhtalovsky's handwriting were presented in the form of his autobiography and diary. As a result of a comparative study of the handwriting of the performers of all three anti-Soviet manuscripts, it was determined that they fully corresponded to each other in terms of general and personal characteristics, i.e. they gave reason to assert that they were performed by the same person. We should add that Father Roman Bakhtalovsky agreed to the charges, pleading guilty.

Therefore, guided by Article 204 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR, investigative case No. 149434 on the indictment of H. Balahurak, R. Bakhtalovsky and R. Soviak (during the investigation, due to the similarity of the criminal proceedings, the case of the three priests was combined into one) was sent for consideration by the Special Meeting of the MGB of the USSR. It was suggested applying to the clergy a punishment of 25 years each with confiscation of a personal property (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 251). The sentence of 25 years was approved by the Prosecutor of the Ukrainian SSR R. Rudenko on June 24, 1950.

However, an extract from the minutes No. 48 of the Special Meeting at the USSR Ministry of State Security dated October 11, 1950, referred to the sending of Father R. Bakhtalovsky to a correctional labour camp for a term of ten years, from September 15, 1949 (i.e. from the day of his arrest). It was decided to confiscate the property of Father R. Bakhtalovsky. Soon a special order was issued according to which Roman Bakhtalovsky was sent to the Ozerny camp of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (SAIFR, f. R-2157, d. 1, c. 7498P, in 3 vols., vol. 1, p. 251). Later, the priest ended up in a special camp in Sosnovka, Irkutsk region, where he worked as a hospital orderly for five years.

In 1955, Father R. Bakhtalovsky was granted amnesty (Holeyko, 2017, p. 91). The certificate of release of R. Bakhtalovsky from places of exile, issued by the head of the correctional labour camp in the village of Sosnovka, Irkutsk region, dated November 14, 1955, noted that the clergyman was released by the decision of the permanent session of Irkutsk regional court dated November 1, 1955 due to illness (in 1951, the clergyman underwent a complex surgical hernia operation). Roman Bakhtalovsky was released on November 30, 1955, and lived in the town of Kolomyia permanently, where he served as a priest underground.

For his active work in the Congregation and in educating young people for the priesthood and monastic orders, on October 13, 1968, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky was detained by the Soviet law enforcement agencies again. The priest was arrested for the second time and

sentenced to three years of strict regime and five years of exile in Krasnoyarsk Krai. The trial of the 72-year-old priest took place in Kolomyia from June 10 to 13, 1969. On August 22, 1969, Roman Bakhtalovsky was sent to serve his sentence in the Mordovian correctional labour camps, and later to the village of Ignash, Krasnoyarsk krai (Holeyko, 2017, pp. 113, 114). Only on September 27, 1976, at the age of 78, the priest returned to Ukraine and settled in the town of Khmilnyk, Vinnytsia region (Roman Bakhtalovsky was forbidden to return to Ivano-Frankivsk region). The priest lived in Khmilnyk for more than nine years, where he died on October 6, 1985, at the age of 88. Father Roman Bakhtalovsky was buried in the local cemetery (Holeyko, 2017, p. 128).

**Conclusions.** The testimonies of the defendants (in particular, Father Roman Bakhtalovsky), due to their “subjectivity,” require a careful comparison with other primary sources, including memoirs, eyewitness accounts of the events, periodicals of that historical era, memoranda, and diaries. At the same time, they contain facts that reflect the everyday life of not only R. Bakhtalovsky himself, but also of many clergymen of the period of the “catacomb” Greek-Catholic Church, shedding light on their biography, appearance, material security, ideological beliefs, communicative environment, mentality, etc. The investigation materials reflect the subjective nature of these interrogations, bias in the selection of witnesses, facts of a psychological pressure on clergy and lay people. The criminal case as a source contains facts of R. Bakhtalovsky’s detention, the circumstances of his arrest by the Soviet special agencies, interrogations, examinations of his handwriting, decisions on bringing charges, a sentence, etc.

A careful reading of criminal cases reveals the historical era in which the activities of underground clergymen unfolded, shedding light on the methods of the Soviet special services, dealing with individuals (in this case, underground fathers of the Greek-Catholic Church) who posed a danger to the Soviet state.

Criminal cases, as a special type of historical monuments, bring new impulses to the study of the history of everyday life, encourage us to see and understand the historical past in a new way, in particular the place of the underground Greek-Catholic clergy in the socio-cultural life of the region.

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