

## General conclusion. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church's approach to reconciliation: The reappraisal

This book is about the Greek-Catholic Church's contribution to understanding and resolving the current conflicts in Ukraine. The key words of my research are forgiveness, memory, and reconciliation. But ultimately it is the transformation and development of Ukraine as an independent nation state that stays behind those crucial notions. The final version of my text was written during the months when conscious citizens of my country were protesting and being killed by snipers during the EuroMaidan. Later on the country was even put at the threshold of war. That gave new impulses to my study and made me realise once more the significance of the topic. It was tantalising to work on issues that are moving people emotionally in a context of uncertainty after the EuroMaidan, the Russian annexation of Crimea, and the danger of the Russian-Ukrainian war, all of which are directly connected with the problem of reconciliation.

My analysis of the Church documents is quite original since there are no systematic historical-ethical studies available on the Greek-Catholic documents about reconciliation as a whole. There were partial attempts to evaluate some texts on reconciliation between the Churches or some concrete pronouncements, such as, for instance, about the Polish-Ukrainian relations. However a comprehensive and systematic study of the Greek-Catholic theology of reconciliation on the basis of a critical confrontation between the official texts and the insights of three prominent theologians of reconciliation is now realised for the first time. As it was argued in the introduction, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has a long tradition of reconciliation. This tradition was actualised and further developed after the Church emerged from the underground after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Consequently, my analysis focuses on the central themes of the social teaching of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church of both the past and presence. In what follows I will identify the fundamental findings of the monograph.

## What is reconciliation needed for?

An economically and socially underdeveloped, substantially secularised or not-enough-evangelised Ukrainian society has for a long time not managed to improve social life by way of a political decision-making process capable of realising a just social order. The EuroMaidan revolt was the strongest voice of the Ukrainian civil society for the construction of a new social, political, and economic order based on genuine values. In my opinion it is precisely in such a context of transition that one can grasp the real meaning and significance of the Greek-Catholic discourse on reconciliation.

By re-evaluating the past through the lenses of Christianity and the process of the purification of memory the Church shows a path to the “return of the Christian moral and ethical element in all the spheres of social life.”<sup>1</sup> The significance of the texts dealing with the memories of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict or the memories of World War II consists in the fact that they show the deficiencies of the human condition, point at the personal responsibility for evil, the responsibility to reorganise social life, and to exclude killing, injustice, and discrimination. What Myroslav Marynovych concluded concerning the attitude towards the memory of the extermination of the Jews, describes succinctly the genuine aim of the reconciliation messages of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: “We need a vertical dimension that is directed to God – we need an ethical dimension.”<sup>2</sup> The documents about the past are oriented towards the future. They also teach to scrutinise the current sources of injustices in society. With her discourse on reconciliation the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church pursues one of the leading tasks of the Ukrainian Churches in the 21st century, “the actualisation of Christian social teaching for the sake of a

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- 1 Yuri Chornomorets, “Ukrainske ta rosiiske pravoslavia: neobhidnist ‘pere-zavantazhennia’ {Ukrainian and Russian Orthodoxy. Necessity of “re-downloading”}, [http://risu.org.ua/page.php?\\_lang=ua&path=expert\\_thought/&name=open\\_theme&id=45421&alias=&#\\_ftnref3](http://risu.org.ua/page.php?_lang=ua&path=expert_thought/&name=open_theme&id=45421&alias=&#_ftnref3) (accessed January 13, 2014). Translation from the original source.
  - 2 Myroslav Marynovych, “Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptytskyi ta yevrei: Etychno-istorychnyi analiz” {Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi and the Jews. Ethical-historical analysis}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/materials\\_conferences/47948/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/materials_conferences/47948/) (accessed January 14, 2014). Translation from the original source.

civilised way of the modernisation of the Ukrainian society, state, culture that is necessary today.”<sup>3</sup>

This idea runs as a red thread through the analysed pronouncements of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. All three Heads of the Church in independent Ukraine – Liubachivskyi, Husar, and Shevchuk – considered the healing of memory among the crucial tasks that the Ukrainian society of transition has to perform. As the variety and number of official documents on reconciliation proves that the hierarchs consistently referred to that objective.

The approaches of Liubachivskyi, Husar, and Shevchuk on reconciliation essentially coincide; some nuances were dictated by the very particular situations that they had to master. Myroslav-Ivan Liubachivskyi acted in the time of the emergence of his Church from the underground; hence, the majority of his documents are dedicated to the healing of memory of the relations between his Church and the Moscow Patriarchate and the issue of national cohesion in the young Ukrainian state. Liubomyr Husar equally extensively worked on the topic of the inter-Church relations and the existing vision of the united Kyivan Patriarchate is a product of mainly his efforts. Additionally, Husar referred to the broader picture of the Ukrainian past, appealing to reconsider the Holodomor and the communist past of the Ukrainian-Polish relations. The issue of how the social changes are made equally belonged to the key concerns of Cardinal Husar. Sviatoslav Shevchuk follows the line of his predecessor but emphasises that the rapprochement between the Churches at this stage should be searched in practical cooperation in social issues rather than in the theoretical elaboration of the ideas of unity. In the view of the current Ukrainian-Russian conflict it is obvious that both the past and present-day relations between those countries will be among the leading objectives for Shevchuk in the coming years.

### Present and missed dimensions of reconciliation

This study of the documents in the light of the texts of Lederach, Schreiter, and Volf has demonstrated that the pronouncements of the Church leadership are sufficiently based on a sound theological underpinning: the ideas of the purification of memory, repentance, forgiveness, and

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3 Ibid. Translation from the original source.

justice present in the texts greatly correlate with those of the reference authors. For example, the Greek-Catholic idea of personal repentance and reconciliation with God that will bear upon the reconciliation between people corresponds with Schreiter's vision of vertical and horizontal reconciliation. Both Schreiter and the Church's leadership primarily understood reconciliation as a metanoia needed for the restoration of the moral order of the person and of the whole society. Both agree that the reconciliation with God will promote social reconciliation. Both speak first of all of reconciliation as a process. While talking about reconciliation as a goal both theologies show a great hope in God as the One who initiates and promotes reconciliation. The biggest correlation between Schreiter and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church consists in their common focus on spirituality as the principal source of rapprochement.

One can equally list similarities between the thoughts of Miroslav Volf and the Church. The theology of Volf contains some elements which are not articulated well in the Greek-Catholic texts, however they are still present in the Church's tradition, for instance, the vision of reconciliation as an embrace and a gift. On the contrary, the idea that also victims have to repent for mirroring the behaviour of perpetrators is eloquently present in the texts of Volf and of the Greek-Catholic leadership. The duty to forgive the other because of the common participation in the mystical body of Christ is another correlating element. Volf's greatest contribution to the theology of reconciliation, which is his discourse on the purification of memory, reveals some more similarities with the teaching of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Among them is the obligation to remember and to do it truthfully, seeing the past with the eyes of the enemy, which is called "double vision" by Volf, or drawing lessons from the past.

The texts of John Paul Lederach highlight the two important features of reconciliation for the Ukrainian context, which is building trust and looking for justice as inexorable elements of the restoration of the fabric of community and social healing. However, the particular value of Lederach for the analysis of the Church documents consists in the fact that this author points at the missing practical dimensions of the discourse of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and helps define strategies for promoting reconciliation. The critical remarks concerning the practice of enhancing social changes which will follow further are also based mainly on the works of Lederach.

The analysis of the teaching of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has identified the following substantial dimensions of reconciliation: reconciliation as longing for the unity of the Church, reconciliation between

nations and peoples (Poland and Russia), reconciliation between clashing identities (the Ukrainian-Ukrainian rapprochement or the purification of the memory of war), and reconciliation as the pursuit of social justice. I have equally identified that the purification of the burdened historical memory will not be completed without addressing the question of the Ukrainian participation in the extermination of the Jews during World War II. To be authentic, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church should not abrade the contestable or inconvenient pages of history. However high the appreciation of the efforts for the independence of Ukraine might be, it should not mean that the anti-Jewish and anti-Polish attitudes of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army should be blurred or silenced. The purification of memory means telling the truth about the past.

In recent years more and more observers and in particular the authors of one of the leading Greek-Catholic journals “Patriarkhat” (“Patriarchate”) have indicated that their Church must proceed from words to actions and assume her role as an actor in Ukrainian civil society. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church started to elaborate on her vision of genuine democracy built on respect for human dignity already in the times of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi.<sup>4</sup> The importance of this contribution has been preserved in the theology of this Church until now and is revealed in her support of the “revolution of dignity” during the winter of 2013-2014. Taras Antoshevskyi maintains that the high degree of trust that Ukrainians grant to the Church obliges active lay persons or representatives of the clergy to denounce injustices in society, for instance, the facts of corruption and bribery, attempts at destroying the historical heritage or the unfair taxation.<sup>5</sup> The Ukrainian Orthodox religious scholar Yurii Chornomorets is even more radical postulating that not only the future of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, but also of Ukraine as a whole and her people depends upon the ability of that Church to enhance her activities in civil society in several ways, such as by defending the Ukrainian identity and preserving the Christian Kyivan tradition,<sup>6</sup> and suggesting an alternative pro-

4 Sviatoslav Kyiak, *Identychnist ukrainskoho katolytysizmu: henezys, problemy, perspektyvy* {Identity of the Ukrainian Catholicism. Genesis, problems, perspectives} (Ivano-Frankivsk: Nova Zoria, 2006), 430.

5 Taras Antoshevskyi, “2010: Rik velykykh peremin i vtrat?” {2010. A year of big changes and losses?}, *Patriarkhat* 1 (2011): 8.

6 Yurii Chornomorets, “Patriarkh Liubomyr – 10 rokiv predstoiatelstva” {Patriarch Liubomyr – ruling the Church for 10 years}, *Patriarkhat* 1 (2011): 14.

gramme for the development of the state, society, family, economics, politics, and culture.<sup>7</sup>

It has been argued that the Greek-Catholic approach to justice contains some flaws and needs further elaboration. Emphasising reconciliation as healing which is typical of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church as an eastern Church, the Church documents do not play sufficient attention to the dimension of justice more relevant to the juridical tradition of western Christianity. However, the change of social structures is needed because only efforts of individuals, merely the ontological renewal of the whole person does not mean yet the change of the whole structures. Moral claims cannot be directly transformed into state laws. This brings us to the next practical lesson of the investigation.

From words to strategy: develop and popularise

According to all the sociological surveys in the 23 years of Ukrainian independence people have shown a high level of trust and credit in the Church. Her public presence is huge. This resource obliges the Churches to become even more active in the public sphere. At the same time, there is an eloquent need to improve the quality of the action of the Ukrainian Churches which is also evidenced by the results of the opinion surveys I have quoted in chapter I. There is still much left to be done and improved when we consider the following evidences: people claim that they do not place religiosity high enough on the list of values for the education of their children; there is a significant number of those who believe that the Church does not play any explicitly positive or sufficiently remarkable role in society; two thirds do not believe that religion suits the needs of contemporary people; people agree that the Church sustains the rights of the well-off and powerful rather than the poor and unfortunate; the number of those who recognise the Church as a moral authority is smaller than the number of those who express their trust in that institution, and only every fourth Ukrainian believes that the representatives of the clergy demon-

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7 Yuri Chornomorets, "Bohoslovia v Ukrainskii Hreko-Katolytskii Tserkvi: nevykonani zavdannia" {Theology in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Non-accomplished tasks}, *Patriarkhat* 6 (2011): 10.

strate a high level of morals and spirituality.<sup>8</sup> As far as the main research issue of this book is concerned, in addition to issuing numerous messages the Churches should engage more in society because they have something to contribute to the so much desired social changes in Ukraine.

Viktor Zhukovskiy, a Greek-Catholic theologian and the editor-in-chief of the journal “Khrystyianyn i svit” (“A Christian and the World”), criticises his Church for the lack of a well-developed strategy, systematic approach, and responsibility on all the levels with regard to the accomplishment of the Church’s mission: “Christian social principles of subsidiarity, respect to the person, solidarity, and common good should be present not only in the Church documents but also in her actual concrete life.”<sup>9</sup> Only Church documents, seminars or small local projects do not suffice and notwithstanding 20 years since she came out of the underground, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church still remains behind the church fences.<sup>10</sup>

Another Greek-Catholic theologian Oleh Hirnyk even speaks of the failure of spiritual revival in Ukraine. He opines that what was and is rendered as national and spiritual renewal in the country is simply a “construction hysteria” that is expressed in the huge number of new sacral buildings and nominal parishes, however, without the real regeneration of the person in Christ.<sup>11</sup> The way political struggle is waged, economic reforms are introduced, and social relations function in contemporary Ukraine, prove that. Therefore, it makes me think that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church together with other traditional Ukrainian denominations have to reflect not only upon the purification of the memory of World War II or the Polish-Ukrainian relations but they must also re-interpret their own activities during the 20 years of Ukrainian independence and repent of their own omissions. A similar idea was expressed by the Ukrainian religious scholar Mykhailo Cherenkov in 2013 on the occasion of admitting the anniversary of the baptism of the Kyivan Rus where

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8 All the data have already been discussed in part I and are borrowed from the Razumkov Centre, Religiosity of Ukrainians, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2013), 23-47.

9 Viktor Zhukovskiy, “Suspilstvo zavzhdy, a osoblyvo teper, potrebuie slova Tserkvy” {Society always, and especially now, needs the word of the Church}, interview by Anatolii Babynskiy, *Patriarkhat* 3 (2010): 15. Translation from the original source.

10 Ibid.

11 Oleh Hirnyk, “Ecclesia Irredenta: kryza i reformy” {Ecclesia Irredenta. Crisis and reforms}, *Patriarkhat* 2 (2009): 18-19.

the author suggested that instead of praising the long Christian tradition in Ukraine, the Churches should make a honest analysis of whether this tradition is still alive and if a genuine Christianisation of people has really taken place.<sup>12</sup>

The experts write<sup>13</sup> that it is difficult to find in Ukraine people whether from the Church milieu or lay persons who can professionally comment on social issues in the light of the Church's teaching. The most recent events of the EuroMaidan and the active supportive role of the Churches show that such a comprehensive theology of change has to be developed. Applying the logic of Robert Schreiter to our case, it is clear that the new social relationships and circumstances that emerged after 1991 demand first-hand answers to what it means to be a good Christian in this epoch and which models of behaviour are compatible with Christian ethics.<sup>14</sup> The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church attempted to cover the actual issues and the collection of *Socially Oriented Documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (1989-2008)* presents some answers. However, this book is only the basic material that is neither further researched nor popularised. Oleh Hirnyk pointedly maintained that the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and many priests are not familiar with her social doctrine.<sup>15</sup> Hence this Church has the huge task to perform in developing her social doctrine and popularising it among the people who both declare their Church affiliation and remain in practice mostly secularised.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, Hlib Kovalenko maintains that "None of them {*Ukrainian Churches*} managed to present to so-

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12 Mykhailo Cherenkov, interview by Taras Antoshevskiy, *Youtube.com*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydUDACvI--8> (accessed January 17, 2014).

13 Antoshevskiy, *Something on the challenges*, 7.

14 Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 44.

15 Oleh Hirnyk, "Hreko-katolytskyi vybir pislia vyboriv: sotsialna doktryna chy politychna teolohiia?" {The Greek-Catholic choice after the elections. Social doctrine or political theology?}, [http://theology.in.ua/article\\_print.php?id=39189&name=society\\_digest&lang=ua&](http://theology.in.ua/article_print.php?id=39189&name=society_digest&lang=ua&) (accessed January 24, 2014).

16 There are single attempts to speculate about certain elements of the social doctrine of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. For instance, Yurii Chornomorets and Oksana Sheremeta reflect on the ideology of Christian democracy for contemporary Ukraine on the basis of the works of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi: Oksana Sheremeta and Yurii Chornomorets, "Khrystyianskyi solidaryzm Andreia Sheptytskoho" {Christian solidarism of Andrei Sheptytskyi}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies\\_of\\_religions/35426/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of_religions/35426/) (accessed January 24, 2014).



ciety a clear and understandable social teaching about the necessity of the order of law as a demand of Christian morality.”<sup>17</sup> Except for several documents, the Churches do not make sufficient efforts to acquaint people with their social teaching. The situation with the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is better, however also this Church is very unsystematic in disseminating her social teaching that (additionally or consequently) does not wake any great interest in society.<sup>18</sup> Hlib Kovalenko wonders why the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church only calls politicians to be good Christians and follow democratic principles instead of promoting a well-elaborated concept of social doctrine that reflects the current Ukrainian situation.<sup>19</sup> The task posed before the Ukrainian Catholic University – “to suggest Christian solutions to the present moral problems of the healthcare, promotion of human rights, public service, securing social justice, ecology and environmental protection, psychological health, informational technologies, mass media, political culture and practice and other spheres of human life”<sup>20</sup> – remains one of the most demanding for the whole Church. Fundamental research projects such as “Social teaching and the ethics of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: from Andrei Sheptytskyi to the Patriarch Sviatoslav”<sup>21</sup> suggested by the Orthodox the-

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- 17 Hlib Kovalenko, “Tserkva i vybory-2010: klerykalizatsiia bez moralizatsii” {Church and elections-2010. Clericalisation without moralisation}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/comments/38649/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/comments/38649/) (accessed January 23, 2014). Translation from the original source. Yurii Chornomorets expressed the same thought concerning all the traditional Ukrainian Churches: Yurii Chornomorets, “Relihiiniy faktor v ukrainskomu hromadianskomu protystoianni” {Religious factor in the civil struggle in society}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/analytic/35414/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/analytic/35414/) (accessed January 24, 2014).
  - 18 Kovalenko, Church and elections-2010.
  - 19 Hlib Kovalenko, “Vybyry v Ukraini ta sotsialne vchennia Tserkov: vypadok Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy” {Elections in Ukraine and the social teaching of the Churches. The case of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/monitoring/society\\_digest/38955/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/monitoring/society_digest/38955/) (accessed January 24, 2014).
  - 20 “Poslannia Blazhennishoho Sviatoslava z nahody 50-richchia zasnuvannia Ukrainskoho katolytskoho universytetu” {Message of His Beatitude Sviatoslav on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Ukrainian Catholic University}, [http://news.ugcc.org.ua/articles/poslannia\\_blazhennishoho\\_svyatoslava\\_z\\_nagodi\\_50richchya\\_zasnuvannya\\_ukrainskogo\\_katolitskogo\\_universitetu\\_68458.html](http://news.ugcc.org.ua/articles/poslannia_blazhennishoho_svyatoslava_z_nagodi_50richchya_zasnuvannya_ukrainskogo_katolitskogo_universitetu_68458.html) (accessed February 10, 2014).
  - 21 Yurii Chornomorets, “Mozhlyvosti dlia rozvytku teolohii v Ukrainkomu katolytskomu universyteti: propushchenyi shans” {Possibilities of the development of

ologian Yurii Chornomorets should find their place in the research agendas of the Greek-Catholic theologians. My inquiry proves the need of studies in that domain.

In addition to research activities, the Church should familiarise her faithful better with her social pronouncements. During my work on *Socially Oriented Documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (1989-2008)* as well as on this book I was surprised by having discovered so many official texts on the topic. But the Church pronouncements mostly remain unknown and improvements are indispensable in this sphere. At the same time, it is not easy to awake an interest for social teaching. I have experienced this while promoting the above-mentioned collection of the Church documents at the presentations on the level of dioceses, seminaries, and universities. For most people the practical value of those documents is vague because the Church is regarded as a source of private piety and psychological refuge from the problems of daily life and not as the vanguard of social changes. The Church suggesting the programme of social transition is often encountered by a common Christian with an indulgent smile or more often with indifference. The Church leadership must make great educational efforts in order to change that attitude of scepticism and non-understanding.

The Church has to promote her teaching in the Church media. In recent years a progress has appeared with the growing presence of the Church on the Internet. Every diocese and the biggest parishes have launched their websites. Notwithstanding the sometimes unsatisfying quality of those resources, they contain links to the official Church's documents and make them accessible in that way. However, this is not enough. For the older population and the faithful in smaller towns and village areas the most effective way to get acquainted with the opinion of the Church on social and any other issues is effective preaching. The Church leadership should pay attention to how the Sunday homilies are made since they can be a workable instrument to deliver the essence of the Church's pronouncements to the faithful. For the moment, in the majority of the parishes of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, familiarising with the Church pronouncements happens twice per year, that is when the parish priests read the Eastern or Christmas greeting of the Head of the Church or the local bishop. The parish clergy should be encouraged to include the pronounce-

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theology in the Ukrainian Catholic University. A missed chance}, <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/blog/~chernomorets/46063/> (accessed February 28, 2014).

ments of the Head of the Church or of the Synod of Bishops in their Sunday homilies. For that aim the practical training of the future priests should be improved as I have suggested in the book.

The Church can preach and educate. She can introduce programmes to instruct believers to take initiative and become responsible citizens. The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has launched a number of activities that pursue that objective. For instance, a new project of the Commission entitled “Active citizen” aims at familiarising and tutoring the young generations with the methods of social-political activity based on the principles of Catholic social teaching.<sup>22</sup> The regular parish encounters pursue the goal to spread the knowledge of the social teaching of the Church among the faithful and sustain their active position on the level of their religious community and civil society.<sup>23</sup> The all-Ukrainian project “Democratic values in society” longs for the political, economic, and social education of first of all active young people through a series of meetings, schoolings, and lectures.<sup>24</sup> The Commission on Matters of Youth and the Commission on Matters of the Laity equally attempt to work for a similar purpose.

The work with the youth should build the cornerstone of the educative and pastoral programmes. I have listed some successful examples of the work with children and youth in the parishes in paragraph 6.2 of chapter VI based on the recommendations of John Paul Lederach and Robert Schreiter to concentrate the activities for changes on the local community, to build local platforms for collaboration. The Church should stop being merely a provider of religious rituals and should become an actor that transforms and ignites people to stand up for changes.

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22 The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, “Rozpochynaetsia vseukrainska aktsiia ‘Aktyvnyi hromadianyn’” {Begins the all-Ukrainian action “Active citizen”}, [http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=223:rozpochynaetsia-vseukrainska-aktsiia-aktyvnyi-hromadianyn&catid=11&Itemid=166](http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=223:rozpochynaetsia-vseukrainska-aktsiia-aktyvnyi-hromadianyn&catid=11&Itemid=166) (April 17, 2014).

23 The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, “Parafialni zustrichi” {Parish encounters}, [http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=17:parafialni-zustrichi-lystopad-hruden&catid=2:bez-katehorii](http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17:parafialni-zustrichi-lystopad-hruden&catid=2:bez-katehorii) (accessed April 17, 2014).

24 The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, “Demokratychni tsinnosti v suspilstvi” {Democratic values in society}, [http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21:universytetski-dialogy-demokratychni-tsinnosti-studentskoi-molodi&catid=2:bez-katehorii](http://www.iupax-ugcc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21:universytetski-dialogy-demokratychni-tsinnosti-studentskoi-molodi&catid=2:bez-katehorii) (accessed April 17, 2014).

Corresponding measures must be introduced in the education of priests and pastoral workers. For instance, modules on reconciliation and the purification of memory and on the Church's social teaching in general should find a solid place on the educational agenda of the future priests and theologians. Greek-Catholic priests, mostly born and educated in the seminaries in western Ukraine, who go to work in the east-southern regions of the country, should be equipped with knowledge about dealing with the past differently perceived by people of various backgrounds and identities. Such knowledge would make the future clergy able to interact with the differences in a more professional way than the older generation of priests. Active work with the future priests is needed to promote the ideas contained in the Church documents on reconciliation.

For ecumenism in practice: unity of diversities in common action

The leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church promotes the idea that reconciliation between the Ukrainian Churches in one united Kyivan Patriarchate will bring about social cohesion in the country. This durable tradition in the 20th century took its origins in the works of the Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, was developed by Patriarch Yosyf Slipyi, and is sustained by the current Head of the Church, Sviatoslav Shevchuk. The findings of this book question the feasibility of that project. Despite the highly declared rate of believers among Ukrainians and the deep trust in the Church of over 60%, the religiosity of the people often remains traditional, being part of the cultural heritage rather than a personally cultivated spirituality when often no deep convictions stay behind the outer observance. Hence, the chance is small that the unity of the Kyivan Church will significantly contribute to social change.

The EuroMaidan of the winter of 2013-2014 has shown that the divisions are preserved in society although in the years of the independence of Ukraine the line has moved from a clear-cut east-west identity split to the division between the generations on the basis of values. The EuroMaidan was the revolution of the middle-class, the representatives of which can be found in different regions of the country. However, the subsequent Russian annexation of Crimea has proved that even if the people do not genuinely support the Russian expansive politics, they have not found enough mobilisation power to oppose it. The great majority of the people remained passive. In this sphere the Ukrainian Churches have to do some-

thing in order to promote social changes. Some practical tips can be found in the thoughts of Schreiter and Lederach.

In contemporary Ukrainian society the priority should not be the search for spiritual unity. Remaining important as it is in the light of the commandment “May all be one,” instead of longing for the creation of the Kyivan Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church should be present for the people where she is needed and should help people practically sustain social changes. Viktor Zhukovskiy argues that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church should focus on the transformation of society by bringing there the dynamics of Christian life instead of demanding the patriarchal status.<sup>25</sup> The common activities of the traditional Ukrainian Churches make a chance for rapprochement as bishop Yevstratii Zoria of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate contends: “From the search for the organisational or Eucharistic unity which still remains little fruitful we should turn to the ecumenism in practice – to the common witness about Christ before the face of the secular society.”<sup>26</sup>

The reconciliation between the Ukrainian Churches is underway through the cooperation in social and pastoral issues. The Churches already work together in the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations, where they join efforts in lobbying for or against state laws which define the framework of the functioning of religious communities in the country. However, the Churches can do more than that because such a cooperation should be strengthened in other domains. They can extend their activities beyond the religious sphere and even beyond some initiatives in the humanitarian domain as, for instance, the opposition against the new law on languages. The Churches can express themselves in support of the anti-corruption legislation. This could be a practical concretisation of the spiritual message of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to repent and stop giving bribes. Other laws, which concern the issues of social justice, should equally not evade the attention of religious organisations in Ukraine.

Perhaps the very conflicting relationship between the traditional Ukrainian Churches and the failure of all the attempts to solve it by ad-

25 Viktor Zhukovskiy, “Termopily’ nashoho bohoslavia” {“Thermopylae” of our theology}, interview by Anatolii Babynskiy, *Patriarkhat* 6 (2010): 16.

26 Yevstratii Zoria, “Ekumenizm – ale bez ‘podviinoho dna’” {Ecumenism – however without “the double bottom”}, *Patriarkhat* 4 (2009): 24. Translation from the original source.

ministrative, political means, and negotiations should be regarded as “the instruction of the Providence regarding the perspective of conciliarity and the necessity to accept each other as different.”<sup>27</sup> Hence the relevance of Lederach’s understanding of conflict according to which every conflict already contains hints for its solution. If the Churches did not manage to merge during those two decades of struggle, perhaps they should learn to accept their differences and cooperate. The potential for mutual projects is evident and it is precisely there that the Ukrainian Churches should look for prospects of rapprochement. The Churches are already united in the mystical body of Christ and share the task of promoting human dignity. In those questions the potential for Church unity should be searched for.

As it follows from the work of John Paul Lederach, the constant lesson from all this is that the conflict is not primarily about the problem but about opportunities to rebuild the relations between individuals and groups in a more constructive and fulfilling way. The cooperation between the Churches could lead to the insight that despite the differences between the three Orthodox denominations on the one hand and the Greek-Catholics and Orthodox on the other hand, there remains a space for joint efforts for the sake of the Ukrainian state and its citizens. If they follow the suggestions made by Lederach, the Churches would demonstrate an example of how people, who differ in their identities, can still peacefully coexist and pursue common aims.

Miroslav Volf, who is especially attentive to the interaction with the different other, and Lederach who pays great attention to language and metaphors, teach that the very rhetoric about the other must be changed in order that it contributes to reconciliation. For the Churches it means that the unfriendly accusing rhetoric that distorts the true facts must be banned. It is difficult to engage into dialogue with someone who is denoted as *roz-kolnyky*. It is equally practically impossible to relate in a friendly way to someone who is described as fascist or *moskal* (this is how western Ukrainians denote Russians and sometimes Russian-speaking citizens of the country). The double vision, the attentiveness, is necessary in order to understand that the position of the other has an equal right to exist.

What is said above captures one of the most important findings of this piece of research, namely that the discourse of the Ukrainian Greek-

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27 Bohdan Ohulchanskyi, “Ukrainska Pravoslavna Tserkva v zmahanni identychnosti” {The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the struggle of identities}, *Patriarkhat* 6 (2011): 13.

Catholic Church on reconciliation has to be complemented with a corresponding strategy. The initiatives above illustrate several concrete examples of such strategic undertakings. The current Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, Sviatoslav Shevchuk, thinks in that direction when he maintains that the establishment of the fruitful practical cooperation is among the priorities of the ecumenical stance of his Church.

The last lesson of this book is about hope. Lewis Smedes, a Catholic thinker, who was a great source of inspiration for Miroslav Volf claimed that “forgiveness and hope are vitally linked to each other”<sup>28</sup> because “forgiveness begins with reconciliation. Hope creates the moral energy to pursue it.”<sup>29</sup> The poem of Seamus Heaney expresses it even more pointedly:

“History says, don’t hope  
On this side of the grave  
But then, once in a lifetime  
The longed-for tidal wave  
Of justice can rise up,  
And hope and history rhyme.”<sup>30</sup>

Hope is sustained and deepened through prayer. In that sense, the hope for reconciliation with God’s help as one of the core messages of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church preserves the horizon of the visible unity of Ukrainian Christianity. The further deeper studies of the issue of the re-establishment of the Kyivan Church conducted together with the Orthodox theologians will help unveil the potential of the Greek-Catholic ecumenical position.

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28 Lewis Smedes, “Stations on the Journey from Forgiveness to Hope,” in *Dimensions of Forgiveness. Psychological Research and Theological Perspectives*, ed. Everett Worthington (Philadelphia and London, Templeton Foundation Press, 1998), 341.

29 Ibid., 353.

30 Quoted in Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, 27.

