

# Chapter I. Religious context of Ukrainian society today – the background to research

## Introduction

In 1997, Ukrainian religious scholars Kolodny and Philipovitch spoke about the disintegrative role of the Churches in the processes of national revival because of the conflicts that those Churches are engaged in between themselves.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the issue of the reconciliation between the Churches occupies a lot of place in their social pronouncements. Hence, at the outset I consider it important to elaborate on the actual stance of the traditional Churches in Ukraine and determine the relations between them and existing lines of conflicts. This is important in view of the claim of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church that the reconciliation between the Churches would facilitate the social cohesion in the country, which in its turn would promote the political, economic, and social transformation of Ukraine. Another aim of this first part of the study is to evaluate whether the Churches as institutions have sufficient resources to deliver their reconciling message. Furthermore, it is equally important to draw a picture of the religiosity of Ukrainians to determine how deep people are concerned with the ethical message of the Churches and if they do it at all.

Interconfessional conflicts are mentioned in the concept of the National Security of Ukraine as a possible threat to the security of the state. Even though the present phase of this conflict is not particularly hazardous, its consequences are still noticeable since they among other things concern the identity division lines in society. Surprisingly enough, although the acute phase of the inter-Church conflicts is left back in the 1990s, according to the study published by the Razumkov Centre in February 2011, 12.5% of the respondents estimated that religion is a negative phenomenon because it divides the people into denominations and consequently

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1 Anatoly Kolodny and Ludmila Philipovitch, “The Non-Traditional Religiosity in the Context of the Spiritual Revival of Ukraine,” in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babinski (Kra-kow: Nomos, 1997), 303.

provokes conflicts.<sup>2</sup> In what follows in this chapter I will designate the main protagonists and the actual state of the conflict – traditional Ukrainian Christian Churches as well as point out reasons and outcomes of the struggle between them. In other words, I will define the backdrop against which I will outline the prospects of reconciliation between the Churches in Ukraine in the next chapters.

From the start it is necessary to elucidate the term “traditional Christian Churches” in Ukraine. Especially the word *traditional* demands further clarifications. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church are usually mentioned among the traditional Ukrainian Churches. The reason is the number of believers of those Churches and their common 1000-year-old historical roots.<sup>3</sup> Due to her century-long presence on Ukrainian lands, also the Roman-Catholic Church belongs to the traditional denominations. However, it is not a Church of the Kyiv tradition as the four mentioned before: “To the Kyiv tradition belong the Churches that trace their origins back to Orthodox Christianity adopted by the medieval Kyivan Rus state of the Patriarchate of Constantinople as early as 988.”<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 Religious pluralism in Ukraine

Contemporary Ukraine is a country with a pluralistic society in many regards, including the sphere of religion. According to the results of the sociological research at the beginning of 2013, 67% of Ukrainians denoted themselves as believers and 8% atheists or agnostics.<sup>5</sup> From the pie chart

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2 Razumkov Centre, “Riven i kharakter relihiinosti ukrainskoho suspilstva” {Level and character of the religiosity of Ukrainian society}, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini: problemy vzaïmovidnosyn* (Kyiv, 2011), 41, [http://www.irs.in.ua/files/publications/2011.02.08\\_centrazumkova\\_dopovid.pdf](http://www.irs.in.ua/files/publications/2011.02.08_centrazumkova_dopovid.pdf) (accessed February 13, 2014).

3 Myroslava Rap, “The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches in Ukraine as a Conflict of Identities. Where to Search for the Prospects of Reconciliation? A Reflection in the Light of the Theories of Paul Ricoeur and John Paul Lederach,” *Political Theology* (forthcoming in 2015).

4 Ibid.

5 Razumkov Centre, “Relihiinist ukraïntsviv: riven, kharakter, stavlennia do okremykh aspektiv tserkovno-relihiinoini sytuatsii i derzhavno-konfesiïnykh vidnosyn” {Religiosity of Ukrainians. Level, character, attitude to particular aspects of the

below it is evident that although the majority of the population is Christian and Orthodox, other religions equally found their place in society. 71% of Ukrainians identify themselves with Orthodoxy, the dominant confession; the second biggest denomination is the Greek-Catholic with almost 6%.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, a new clear tendency of the last decade is the growing number of communities of Protestant denominations, the quantity of which increases much faster than that of the traditional Churches.<sup>7</sup> Evidently, this happens at the expense of Orthodox and Catholic believers. The network of religious organisations in Ukraine includes Roman Catholicism in western regions, Islam in the Crimean Peninsula, and different Protestant organisations throughout the country. Those data demonstrate pluralism in the religious sphere in the country, in the same way as the variety of political parties and ideologies prove that Ukrainian society is pluralistic also in other spheres.

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Church-religious and Church-state relations}, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini: problemy vzaiemovidnosyn* (Kyiv, 2013), 23, [http://www.razumkov.org.ua/upload/Przh\\_Religion\\_2013.pdf](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/upload/Przh_Religion_2013.pdf) (accessed February 14, 2014).

6 Ibid., 26.

7 Razumkov Centre, “Relihiina merezha v Ukraini: stan i tendentsii rozvytku” {Religious networks in Ukraine. State and tendencies of development}, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini: problemy vzaiemovidnosyn* (Kyiv, 2011), 5, [http://www.irs.in.ua/files/publications/2011.02.08\\_centr\\_razumkova\\_dopovid.pdf](http://www.irs.in.ua/files/publications/2011.02.08_centr_razumkova_dopovid.pdf) (accessed February 13, 2014).

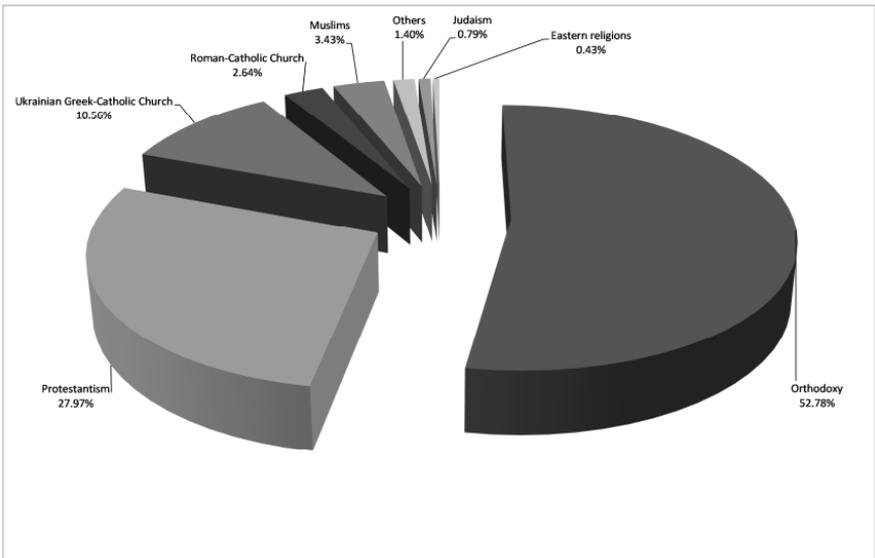


Diagram 1: Denominational map of present-day Ukraine (number of communities in per cent as for January 1, 2014)<sup>8</sup>

What concerns the regional distribution of the religious network of Ukraine the following peculiarities were confirmed in 2011: the density of religious organisations varies in different regions, the majority of religious organisations are located in the west and the centre, there are no monoconfessional regions in Ukraine, even though a particular confession may predominate in a certain region, and finally, there is no confession that dominates in all the parts of the country.<sup>9</sup> Among other interesting facts it is worth mentioning that we find the highest level of religious activity in the western part of Ukraine: at the end of the 1990s, 50% of all the parishes were registered in this region that counts only 20% of the population of the country.<sup>10</sup> This can be explained by the shorter presence of the communist regime in this region, its mostly rural character with a strong na-

8 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, “The Network of Churches and Religious Organisations in Ukraine for 1.01.2014,” <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/statistics/ukr2014/55893/> (accessed September 9, 2014).

9 Razumkov Centre, Religious networks, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 28.

10 Paul D’Anieri, Robert Kravchuk, and Taras Kuzio, *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, Westview Series on the Post-Soviet Republics (Cambridge, MA: Westview, 1999), 76.

tional Ukrainian identity, and the presence there of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, which as a persecuted Church in the underground enjoyed the deep loyalty of the people. At the same time, according to recent tendencies, the centre of religious life in the country is not concentrated exclusively in the western regions but slowly begins to extend to the central parts.<sup>11</sup>

Comparing to the growth of the traditional Orthodox, Catholic denominations, or even old and new Protestant communities, the new religious movements (neo-Christian, Oriental, pagan or synthetic religions) demonstrated an explosive rise. In 1991-2001 their congregations increased by an average of 500%.<sup>12</sup> However, the spread of the new religious movements is a regional and not a nationwide phenomenon: their communities appear most often in southern and eastern regions of Ukraine where traditional Churches are the worst positioned.<sup>13</sup> Traditional Churches, the state, and society show resistance to the spread of the new religious movements and cultivate a negative image of them. For instance, those communities are regarded as hostile and strange organisations “spreading false faiths, destroying the true spirituality of the Ukrainian people,” “making zombies out of Ukrainian people,” being “a serious danger to Ukrainian society, to the health of the nation and state security.”<sup>14</sup>

Religious experts univocally mention that the growing number of Protestant communities remains “the most dynamic factor of changing the denominational situation in Ukraine.”<sup>15</sup> The Ukrainian religious analyst Viktor Yelenskyi still in 1999 pointed to the fact that the success of new religious movements and protestant denominations can be explained by the unsatisfactory role of traditionally rural Orthodox or Greek-Catholic Churches in Ukrainian cities. This led to “the decomposition of the traditional forms of religious culture.”<sup>16</sup> In addition to the increasing number of

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- 11 Razumkov Centre, Religious networks, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 30.  
12 Ludmyla Filipovych, “Tendencies of Change and Growth of New Religious Movements in Ukraine,” in *Religions, Churches and the Scientific Studies of Religion: Poland and Ukraine*, ed. Irena Borowik (n. p.: Nomos, 2003), 131.  
13 *Ibid.*, 132.  
14 *Ibid.*, 144.  
15 Victor Yelensky, “Late’ Protestants in Post-Communist Ukraine,” in *Religions, Churches and the Scientific Studies of Religion: Poland and Ukraine*, ed. Irena Borowik (n. p.: Nomos, 2003), 73.  
16 Victor Yelensky, “Ukraine. Church and State in the Post-Communist Era,” in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (n.p.: Nomos, 1999), 143.

Protestants, in recent years there has been a tendency to an “increase in the number of “plain Christians,” “plain Orthodox,” and “plain Protestants.”<sup>17</sup> At the end it leads to the situation when “Ukraine impresses not so much with its number of new religious organisations and their members as with the new structure of religious life.”<sup>18</sup>

Commenting the present situation with the changes in the religious networks in Ukraine, Mykola Cherenkov maintained:

“While statistics of interested missiological centers indicate a continuing Christian boom in Ukraine, more fundamental and far-reaching studies point to a traditionalist consensus and slowed growth of new confessions. According to Ukrainian analysts, slower growth rates have been replaced by a decrease in church membership and quantity of churches, a loss of confessional identity and the growth of “mere Christianity.”<sup>19</sup>

The statistical data that I mentioned above substantiate that statement.

The bar chart below demonstrates the number of the officially registered communities of four Churches of the Kyiv tradition. However, when compared with the number of believers who claim their belonging to a particular Church, we get a different picture of the real size of the Churches. According to Kuzio, there are two main methods to measure the support of the Church: either by the number of religious communities or by the number of believers who identify themselves with a Church. Interestingly enough, those two parameters usually give significantly different results.<sup>20</sup> Let us illustrate this by the example of the public opinion poll, conducted by the Razumkov Centre in 2013. When the subject was asked which Church among Orthodox denominations the respondent belonged to, the answers were the following: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate – 28%, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate – 26%, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church – 1.2%, and 41% claimed to be “simply Orthodox.”<sup>21</sup> Evidently, these figures differ from the official ones that describe the networks of religious organisations in the country. In particular, the number of supporters of the

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17 Michael Cherevko, “Christianity in Ukraine. Commentary on Statistics,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert\\_thought/authors\\_columns/mcherevko\\_column/53398](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert_thought/authors_columns/mcherevko_column/53398) (accessed January 17, 2014).

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 76.

21 Razumkov Centre, *Religiosity of Ukrainians*, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2013), 26.

Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate is almost the same as that of the Moscow Patriarchate even though the latter has a lot more registered communities. The possible explanation of this discrepancy might be that while claiming their belonging to the Kyiv Patriarchate, people express their support for the Church that has a clearly Ukrainian identity. As we will demonstrate later in this chapter, the national identity of a Church plays a very important role in the Ukrainian context.

In Ukraine the main analytical category are the numbers of religious organisations and not the numbers of their members. Olexander Sagan gives some curious examples. For instance, when originally one community splits in two – that of the Orthodox Church of Moscow and of the Kyiv Patriarchate – two communities will be captured in the official statistics, however in reality not a single faithful more was added.<sup>22</sup> There are also differences regarding the quantity of members of a particular community. In western Ukraine the parishes are big, mostly comprising between few hundreds and several thousands of faithful, while in eastern regions some parishes are of the size just necessary for registration, that is twelve people.<sup>23</sup>

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22 Olexander Sagan, “Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Twelve Years of Transformation (1990-2002),” in *Religions, Churches and the Scientific Studies of Religion: Poland and Ukraine*, ed. Irena Borowik (n. p.: Nomos, 2003), 25.

23 Ibid.

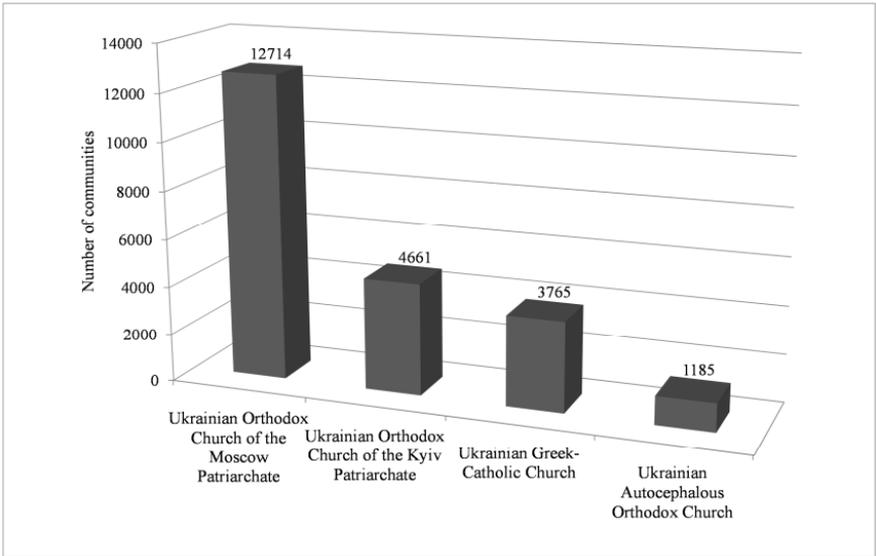


Diagram 2: The Churches of the Kyiv tradition (number of communities as for January 1, 2014)<sup>24</sup>

Notwithstanding official numbers and the variety of confessions, there is no univocal position among the scholars regarding the consequences of religious pluralism in Ukraine. For example, Oleksii Shuba, who studied the role of religion in the ethno-political development of the country, came to the following conclusion:

“With the sufficient level of democracy and tolerance the plurality of confessions as such will not harm Ukrainian national endeavour. In civilised societies characterised by the culture of interconfessional understanding and religious tolerance, religious pluralism is not only a negative feature, as it may seem from the first sight. Every religion brings into the national treasury its own part of the culture, enriching in this way the religious-cultural diversity of the country.”<sup>25</sup>

The author obviously praises the pluralism of denominations in Ukraine. However, there are also contradicting opinions. To those, doubting the positive contribution of religious pluralism belongs, for example, Serhii Zdiouruk, who wonders whether we will have a sufficient level of democ-

24 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

25 Oleksii Shuba, *Relihiia v etno-natsionalnomu rozvytku Ukrainy (politohichnyi analiz)* {Religion in the ethno-national development of Ukraine (analysis in politology)} (Kyiv, 1999), 253-254. Translation from the original source.

racy in the country and whether it is reasonable to assert that in this case the pluralism of confessions will not endanger the development of the Ukrainian state anymore.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, according to the same author, even in the contemporary world we encounter situations where religions play an important role in stirring conflicts just to mention Northern Ireland, former Yugoslavia, Palestine and many other places. To reinforce his statement, Zdioruk emphasises the words of Shuba that “religious pluralism is not only negative,” which means in fact that even though there are also positive contributions, it remains predominantly a negative phenomenon.<sup>27</sup> Accepting that the pluralism of religion can indeed contribute to escalating conflicts in cases when religion is manipulatively used by some political powers or groups in pursuing their interests, I believe that the peace message transmitted by the majority if not all faiths is still more important. Consequently, the statement that religious pluralism is an evil because it “brings about first latent and later open conflicts”<sup>28</sup> seems to be at least an exaggeration. In any case, the variety of religious confessions is a present-day reality in Ukraine and this fact will become more and more evident in the future.

## 1.2 Religiosity of Ukrainians

According to the research conducted in December 2013, the Church enjoys the highest rate of trust (64.3%) among social institutions of Ukraine followed by the mass media (58.4%).<sup>29</sup> Another survey from March 2012 conducted in the central-eastern regions of Ukraine shows that 27% of respondents presuppose the existence of God, 51% claim to be believers, and from them 84% identify themselves as Orthodox. For 42% of Ukrainians the value of religion and the Church consists in a national tradition.<sup>30</sup>

26 Serhii Zdioruk, *Suspilno-relihiini vidnosyny: vyklyky Ukrainy 21 stolittia* {Socio-religious relations. The challenges of Ukraine in the 21st century} (Kyiv, 2005), 90.

27 Ibid., 91.

28 Ibid. Translation from the original source.

29 “Naibilshe ukraintsi doviriavut Tserkvi, a naimenshe – sudam i militsii” {Ukrainians trust the Church the most and the court and police the least}, [http://www.irs.in.ua/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1316%3A1&catid=34%3Aua&Itemid=61&lang=uk](http://www.irs.in.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1316%3A1&catid=34%3Aua&Itemid=61&lang=uk) (accessed February 11, 2014).

30 {Obnarodovany novyye dannyye o ryeligioznoy samoidyentifikatsii ukraintsyev} {New data about the religious self-identification of Ukrainians were published},

At the same time, certain sociologists speculate that the decade-long trust of Ukrainians to their Churches can be explained by the generally very high distrust and disappointment regarding all other state institutions. Seeing no alternatives people turned to the Churches.<sup>31</sup> Hence, perhaps not the high moral authority of the Church but the lack of trust in other institutions of socio-political life make the Church the last resort where people find spiritual and mental comfort.

Yurii Chornomorets claims that the number of religious organisations exploded during the years of Ukrainian independence. However, although people consider themselves to be religious, especially in the western regions of the country, this religiosity is only external and ritual. The Christian morals do not dictate the daily behaviour of the people, hence Chornomorets speaks about “the secularisation of the souls.”<sup>32</sup> Every village and town has a church or even several of them, however, very often those ritual buildings are half full during Sunday mass. The fact that in a country with 46 million inhabitants and a vast majority of Christians only 4.4 million took part in the Christmas mass<sup>33</sup> in 2014 tells something about the real religiosity of Ukrainians, namely that it is mainly declared. There are many parishes but only a few communities where people indeed share the life of each other.<sup>34</sup> Many commentators of the celebration of the 1025th anniversary of the baptism of the Kyivan Rus in 2013 pointed to the discrepancy between the visible and real religiosity of Ukrainians. On the one hand, this feast was fabulous: 8 Orthodox patriarchs gathered in Kyiv, speeches about the deep Christian character of the Holy Rus were pronounced, state representatives of the highest ranks were present. However, commenting on this visibly glorious triumph of the Orthodoxy, the experts pointed to the genuine spiritual state of the faithful and society, claiming that there is an enormous gap between the declared Christianity and the

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<http://www.religion.in.ua/news/vazhlyvo/15283-obnarodovany-novye-dannye-o-religioznoj-samoidentifikacii-ukraincev.html> (accessed January 22, 2014).

- 31 Yevhen Stratiievskiy, “Pro osoblyvosti ukrainskoi doviry” {On peculiarities of the Ukrainian trust}, [http://zaxid.net/home/showSingleNews.do?pro\\_osoblyvosti\\_ukrayinskoyi\\_doviri&objectId=1288902](http://zaxid.net/home/showSingleNews.do?pro_osoblyvosti_ukrayinskoyi_doviri&objectId=1288902) (accessed January 17, 2014).
- 32 Yurii Chornomorets, “Dvadtsiat rokov bez dukhovnoho Renesansu: shcho dali?” {20 years without spiritual renaissance. What now?}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/open\\_theme/44006/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/open_theme/44006/) (accessed January 14, 2014).
- 33 “Bohosluzhennia na Rizdvo vidvidaly ponad 4.4. miliony ukrainsiv” {4.4 million Ukrainians attended Church services on Christmas}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all\\_news/culture/religious\\_holidays/54863/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/culture/religious_holidays/54863/) (accessed January 13, 2014).
- 34 Chornomorets, 20 years.

real life of the people.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, although Ukraine statistically belongs to the most religious nations, the country is among the leaders in corruption, abortion, other social evils.<sup>36</sup> The results of the sociological pool conducted in 2011 confirm that statement: in the list of the values that inform the life orientation of Ukrainians religiosity occupies the next to last place.<sup>37</sup> This is so, despite the fact that 56% of Ukrainians recognise the moral authority of the Church.

The 1990s are characterised by the exploding growth of networks of religious organisations and the striking increase of the number of believers from 5% of Ukrainians before the communist transition to 70% at the end of the 1990s.<sup>38</sup> However, the Polish proverb “Poles are religious but not very moral” also describes the religiosity of the Ukrainians. The ritualistic side of religious life is more important to people than the appropriation of Christian moral values and their application in political and social life.<sup>39</sup> Sociological data prove this conclusion. For example, a growing number of Ukrainians (61% in 2013 against 56% in 2010) is convinced that a person can be simply a believer without confessing a particular religion. Even 56% of those who consider themselves believers share that opinion.<sup>40</sup> I have already mentioned elsewhere the generally low attendance at religious services, so I will add only two numbers here. 53% of Ukrainian be-

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- 35 See some critical reflections on the topic: Kateryna Shchotkina, “Kredyt na tysiacholittia” {Credit for millennium}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/authors\\_columns/kshchotkina\\_column/53051/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/authors_columns/kshchotkina_column/53051/) (accessed January 20, 2014); Anatolii Babynskyi, “Rozdumy pid yuvilei” {Reflections over the jubilee}, <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/blog/~anatolius/53132/> (accessed January 20, 2014); Yevhenii Bilonozhko, “Chy ye v Ukraini khrystyiany?” {Are there Christians in Ukraine?}, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/daycomment/22691-chi-ye-v-ukrayini-xristiyani.html> (accessed January 20, 2014); Taras Antoshevskiy, “Sviato dvoslavia” {The feast of double-doxo}, <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/blog/~%D0%A2%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%96%D0%B9/53109/> (accessed January 17, 2014).
- 36 Antoshevskiy, Feast of double-doxo.
- 37 “Ukraiintsi ne vvažaiut relihiinist tsinnisnym oriientyrom u zhytti” {Ukrainians do not consider the religiosity as a value orientation in life}, [http://www.uceps.org/ukr/expert.php?news\\_id=2596](http://www.uceps.org/ukr/expert.php?news_id=2596) (accessed January 21, 2014).
- 38 Kolodny and Philipovitch, Non-Traditional Religiosity, in *New Religious Phenomena*, 301.
- 39 Janusz Marianski, “Reconstruction or Desintegration of Moral Values in Poland. A Sociological Essay,” in *Church-State Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Irena Borowik (n.p.: Nomos, 1999), 368.
- 40 Razumkov Centre, Religiosity of Ukrainians, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2013), 26.

lievers attend Church ceremonies only for big feasts.<sup>41</sup> At the same time, 41% of the followers of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church are present at the services once per week which makes a significant difference with other traditional Christian Churches where the followers gather at the church mostly for big yearly celebrations.<sup>42</sup> 63% of Ukrainians consider religion to be an important value in life,<sup>43</sup> however, 29% opine that religion does not answer the needs of the present-day person.<sup>44</sup> Among the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church this number is 12%. Only for every second Ukrainian the Church is a moral authority in society and the number of those who agree with the opinion that religion is one of the most important means of the regeneration of national conscience and culture shows a tendency to drop (from 78% in 2010 to 64% in 2013).<sup>45</sup> Finally, religion is only at the tenth place among the qualities that a child has to appropriate in the family.<sup>46</sup>

What concerns the essence of belief, it is rather ambiguous. For instance, in 2011, only 72% of believers gave a fully positive answer to the question if they believe in God, 50% of them agree that the immortal soul exists (an additional 30% answered “rather yes”) and as much as 40% (“yes” or “rather yes”) presuppose the reincarnation of the soul.<sup>47</sup> The Ukrainian faithful demonstrate quite a deep belief in the miraculous work of the holy relics (crosses, icons, candles) – 75.5%.<sup>48</sup> According to the same opinion poll, the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church are the most consecutive in their religious convictions and religious practices.

Attachment to religious observances is one of the most typical features of the religiosity of Ukrainians. Anatolii Kolodnyi explains that “despite the shallow knowledge of Christian religious doctrine, they {Ukrainians} simultaneously strive to preserve the rites, considering them to be self-sufficient for their religiosity.”<sup>49</sup> The observing of the same religious rites made it possible to preserve the awareness of their belonging to the

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41 Ibid., 28.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., 31.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid., 26.

47 Razumkov Centre, Level and character, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 37-38.

48 Ibid., 37.

49 Anatolii Kolodnyi, *Ukraina v yii relihiinykh vyivakh* {Ukraine in her religious exposures} (Lviv: Spolom, 2005), 43. Translation from the original source.

Ukrainian nation in the situation when people were dispersed in different countries and continents.<sup>50</sup> Among the other features of Ukrainian religiosity are, for example, their superstitiousness, the high value of the family in religious rituals, piety with respect to the Holy Mary and the saints, deep reverence to the Holy Scriptures despite a superficial knowledge, respect for the clergy and anticlericalism, non-acceptance of an abstract religiosity, a certain nonchalance about confessional differences and consequently religious pluralism, attachment to a poetic and solemn spirituality.<sup>51</sup> The religiosity of the Ukrainians is very much connected to religious services and often does not go beyond the church's doors. This type of religiosity corresponds to the typical features of the ethno-psychological and ethno-religious make-up of a Ukrainian, which according to Petro Bilaniuk combines "two contrasting elements: the heroic, chivalrous (or simply Cossack) ideal of life and the withdrawn, passive, private and asocial existence of the peasant."<sup>52</sup>

Those considerations bring us to the similar conclusion as the one drawn by Katrien Hertog in her research about the religiosity of the Orthodox believers in Russia: the Ukrainian faithful demonstrate an eclecticism in their religious consciousness, they are often superstitious, not sufficiently familiar with and believing in the dogmas of their faith, not deeply practising, and "after a close look not much is left of the seemingly widespread religiosity."<sup>53</sup> It is in that regard that Mykhailo Dymyd asked that the big question of the contemporary ecclesial identity and mission of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is "how far the belonging of the faithful to the Church is consonant with their Christian way of life in the private and public dimensions."<sup>54</sup> Myroslav Marynovych speaks about the

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50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 43-45.

52 Petro Bilaniuk, "The Ukrainian Catholic Lay Movement 1945-1975. An Interpretation," in *The Ukrainian Catholic Church 1945-1975: A Symposium*, eds. Mirosław Labunka and Leonid Rudnytsky (Philadelphia, PA: The St. Sophia Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics, 1976), 91.

53 Katrien Hertog, "Religious Peacebuilding. Resources and Obstacles in the Russian Orthodox Church for Sustainable Peacebuilding in Chechnya" (PhD diss., Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit, 2008), 352-356.

54 Mykhailo Dymyd, "Eklezialna identychnist ta ekumenichna misiia Ukrainiskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy na pochatku III tysiacholittia" {Ecclesial identity and ecumenical mission of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church at the beginning of the IIIrd millennium}, <http://theology.in.ua/ua/bp/discussions/theme/51399/> (accessed February 19, 2014). Translation from the original source.

“evangelisation of hearts” as the big task of Ukrainian Churches.<sup>55</sup> In the next chapters I will unfold the situation of those Churches.

### 1.3 Religious revival and the traditional Ukrainian Churches

National security together with political and economic matters include a spiritual aspect. The latter is defined as “a complexity of cultural, religious, and worldview factors that influence the formation of the national unity, solidary, and the common historical destiny.”<sup>56</sup> Religious revival and high respect for the Church in Ukraine is explained not only by the belief in her salvific mission, but also by tradition. The Church is an institution that has existed on the territory of Ukraine for more than thousand years, comparing to which current democratic bodies, for example, appear as nearly temporary. It is also important for local elites that contemporary European culture was born and developed in the midst of the Church tradition and even though it is nowadays a secularised culture, still it can be best understood in reference to its religious Christian background.<sup>57</sup> This idea was clearly delivered by the Ukrainian Churches during the events of the EuroMaidan.<sup>58</sup> One should not forget the difficult living conditions, the society crisis, the lack of a clear vision of the future and other problems of the transitional society in Ukraine that make people refer to Churches for spiritual support.

In the period of the spiritual revival at the end of the 80s – beginning of the 90s of the 20th century, traditional Churches in Ukraine were developing in different ways. A variety of factors contributed to this religious revival, among them also the political changes in the country after the disso-

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55 Myroslav Marynovych, “Aventyky skhidnoho khrystianstva mozhe zbahatyty Zakhidnu Yevropu” {Authenticity of Eastern Christianity can enrich Western Europe}, interview by Anatolii Babynskyy, *Risu.org.ua*, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/interview/54232](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/interview/54232) (accessed January 17, 2014).

56 Anatolii Kolodnyi, ed., *Istoriia religii v Ukraini*. T. 10, *Relihiia i Tserkva rokov nezalezhnosti Ukrainy* {History of religion in Ukraine. Vol. 10, Religion and Church in independent Ukraine} (Kyiv, Drohobych, 2003), 324. Translation from the original source.

57 Ibid., 329.

58 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Dlia nynishnoi vlyady zvernennia yerarkhiv – ne vartuiut nichoho” {For today’s Ukraine the addresses of the hierarchs matter nothing}, interview by Yurii Chornomorets, *Risu.org.ua*, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/interview/54827/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/interview/54827/) (accessed February 14, 2014).

lution of the Soviet Union and the gaining of independence. Characterised at first by a rising number of believers and church buildings, the development of the Churches later circled around the internal sense of Church activities. Currently the number of growth of religious communities was stabilised and in 2007-2009 consisted of 2% of new communities per year.<sup>59</sup> After the Churches had significantly rebuilt their structures, they concentrated more on the deeper assessment of their role and place in society.

The appearance or revival of the new Churches on the denominational map of Ukraine at the beginning of the 1990s was accompanied by the growing number of interconfessional conflicts. Most of them at first circled around the redistribution of the Church property<sup>60</sup> and then leaned more towards gaining the leading position among the Ukrainian Christians. As of 2007, the public opinion among the reasons for conflicts between the Churches pointed to the strife for power among the hierarchs of different denominations, struggle for property and places of worship, altered attitudes to the national question in Ukraine, adjacency of Churches and politics and attempts to prove the truthfulness of the own faith.<sup>61</sup> According to a later sociological research from February 2012, still similar reasons fuel the interdenominational rivalry in Ukraine: political struggle, the fight for human and material resources, the impact of international politics, and finally the issues of faith.<sup>62</sup>

Let me illustrate this conclusion by providing a short analysis of the history of the traditional Ukrainian Churches after the country became independent. I will refer to this analysis later in the next chapters while attempting to assess the conflict potential of the Churches nowadays in the light of the idea of the unity of the Ukrainian Churches of the Kyiv tradition.

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- 59 Razumkov Centre, Religious networks, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 3.
- 60 For more information about the conflicts concerning the redistribution of parishes and places of worship at the beginning of the 1990s, see David Little, *Ukraine. The Legacy of Intolerance* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991), 39-54.
- 61 Liudmyla Shanhina, "Relihiinist ukrainskoho suspilstva: okremi tendentsii 2000-2007 roktiv" {The religiosity of the Ukrainian society. Some tendencies of the years 2000-2007}, *Natsionalna bezpeka i oborona* 8 (2007): 35.
- 62 Anastasiia Horobets, "Ukrainci vvazhaiut sebe viruiuchymy, ale buvaiut v khramakh, 'koly dovedetsia'" {Ukrainians consider themselves believers but attend the Church only occasionally}, <http://religions.unian.net/ukr/detail/10499> (accessed February 8, 2014).

### 1.3.1 Traditional Orthodox denominations

#### 1.3.1.1 The Ukrainian Orthodox Church

##### In the shadow of the Moscow Patriarchate

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (or the Ukrainian Orthodox Church) is a former exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church with the status of administrative autonomy since 1990.<sup>63</sup> The promulgation of the Ukrainian state independence in 1991 prompted the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and her Head, the metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko) to demand canonical autocephaly from the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>64</sup> There were several grounds for that request. First, it was stated that the situation of the Church in the new circumstances of the independent state and the growing Catholic and autocephalist movements demanded a new status for the Church. Additionally, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church satisfies all the requirements for autocephaly because the structure of the Church and the number of believers are more than sufficient. Finally, autocephaly is presented as desired by believers and clergy and therefore, autocephaly is “justified and historically inevitable.”<sup>65</sup> The metropolitan Filaret got a strong support from the nationally oriented politicians and personally from the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk.

However, the Moscow Patriarchate condemned the autocephalous initiative and forced the metropolitan Filaret to leave his post as Head of the Church. According to the official explanation of the repudiation of the request for autocephaly, the final decision on the issue is postponed until all the eparchies of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church unite around the claims of autocephaly.<sup>66</sup> In the opinion of the Canadian scholar Frank Sysyn, the

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63 “Opryedyeleniye Svyashchennogo Yubilyeynogo Arkhieriyeynskogo Sobora Russkoy Pravoslavnoy Tsyerkvi ob Ukrainskoy Pravoslavnoy Tsyerkvi” {Definition of the Holy Jubilee Council of the Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church concerning the Ukrainian Orthodox Church}, [http://old.risu.org.ua/ukr/resources/religdoc/uocmp\\_doc/roc\\_archcoun2000/definition/](http://old.risu.org.ua/ukr/resources/religdoc/uocmp_doc/roc_archcoun2000/definition/) (accessed February 15, 2014).

64 Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to Church: a Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2003), 97.

65 Serhii Plokhyy and Frank E. Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* (Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 2003), 123.

66 Davis, *A Long Walk*, 98.

response of the Moscow Patriarchate to the Ukrainian request for autocephaly and the forced resignation of the metropolitan Filaret “set the stage for the present religious turmoil in Ukraine.”<sup>67</sup>

The refusal from Moscow irrevocably put the metropolitan Filaret in an open opposition to his authorities, especially after he refused to resign. As a consequence, “accused of insubordination to the Church authorities, the creation of a Church schism, and of the brutal treatment of the bishops in his jurisdiction,”<sup>68</sup> the metropolitan was deprived of all his ranks and lowered to the status of a simple monk<sup>69</sup> and later in 1997 even anathematized.<sup>70</sup> At the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in May 1992, the majority rejected their signatures in favour of autocephaly and removed Filaret; then the metropolitan of Rostov and Novocherkask, Volodymyr (Sabodan) was elected to the office of the Head of the Church<sup>71</sup> holding this post until recently. On February 24, 2014 the metropolitan of Chernivtsi and Bukovyna, Onufrii was appointed to the office of the locum tenens of the Kyivan Metropolitan See. On August 13, 2014, after the death of Volodymyr Sabodan, metropolitan Onufrii became the Head of the Church.

The issue of the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church remained a burning one also in the next years and continued to cause divisions among the faithful and the clergy of this confession and with other denominations. The policy of the Moscow Patriarchate consists in diminishing or neglecting the claims for granting autocephaly. In particular, at the end of 1996 the Holy Bishop’s Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate again withdrew the official application for the autocephalous status and in August 2000 the Moscow Patriarchate’s leadership rejected even the mere request to grant the Ukrainian Orthodox Church an autonomous status.<sup>72</sup> The same tendencies prevailed ten years later until nowadays. Some

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67 Plokhly and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation*, 127.

68 Rap, *The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches*.

69 Plokhly and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation*, 132, 192.

70 “Itogovyie dokumyenty Arkhiyeryeyskogo Sobora Russkoy Pravoslavnoy Tsyerkvi. Moskva, 18-23 fyevralya 1997 goda. Akt ob otluchenii ot Tsyerkvi monakha Filaryeta” {Concluding documents of the Council of the Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church. Moscow, February 18-23. Bill of excommunication of the monk Filaret Denysenko}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church\\_doc/uocmp\\_doc/34695/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church_doc/uocmp_doc/34695/) (accessed February 18, 2014).

71 Davis, *A Long Walk*, 99.

72 Plokhly and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation*, 193.

commentators even speak about possible losses<sup>73</sup> of the Russian Orthodox Church when the three Orthodox Churches in Ukraine unite “into an independent (autocephalous) Church because Kyiv would resume its historical leadership among eastern Slavs as the direct descendant of the Kyivan Rus and the Kyiv Metropolitanate (the city of Moscow was founded 600 years after Kyiv).”<sup>74</sup>

To date, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is the biggest Ukrainian Church of the Orthodox denomination with its 12,714 religious communities, which constitutes over 60% of all Orthodox parishes in the country. As for 2014, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church has 10,456 priests, 214 monasteries, 14 mission centres, 20 educational institutions, 4,232 Sunday schools, and 109 periodicals.<sup>75</sup> The majority of the parishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church are situated in the centre and the east of Ukraine.

## Vectors of confrontations

Analysing the relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with other denominations in Ukraine, it is important to note that they are marked by the specific connections of this Church with the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>76</sup> Although the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is proclaimed autonomous, the real limits of this autonomy have always been changing. The Ukrainian

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73 Using the data on religious communities in Ukraine and Russia as of 2000, Taras Kuzio maintained: “The ROC is also concerned about maintaining its influence. In the former USSR, two thirds of ROC parishes were in Ukraine; today half of ROC parishes remain within Ukraine's borders. According to the Oxford-based Keston College, the ROC has a greater number of parishes outside the Russian Federation and within the former USSR (more than 9,000) than within the Russian Federation itself (7,000). In Ukraine, whose population is three times smaller than Russia's, there are two times as many Orthodox parishes as in the Russian Federation (14,000). This makes the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches potentially the largest Orthodox community of believers in the world.” (Taras Kuzio, “The Struggle to Establish the World's Largest Orthodox Church,” <http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/religion.and.society/interreligious.relations/orthodox.jurisdictions/> (accessed January 9, 2014)).

74 Ibid.

75 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

76 Nataliia Bielikova, “Mizhkonfesiini konflikty v Ukraini ta poshuk shliakhiv yikh podolannia” {Interdenominational conflicts in Ukraine. Searching for ways to overcome them}, *Nauka. Relihiia. Suspilstvo* 2 (2000): 18.

Orthodox Church justifies its antagonism with other denominations by claiming that the whole of Ukraine used to be canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church, belonging now respectively to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox clergy and faithful who joined other Ukrainian Orthodox Churches are usually qualified and referred to as *rozkolnyky* – those who broke the unity of the Church.<sup>77</sup> Non-Orthodox denominations are from time to time accused in proselytism. As the above-mentioned Bielikova points out, the relations between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate seem to be the most painful wound of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the 1990s.<sup>78</sup> The Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church first removed the metropolitan Filaret from his office as Head of the Church, and then excommunicated him. The fact that the Ukrainian government supported Filaret made the situation even more complicated, thus involving also political elements in that conflict. Consequently, the position of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church concerning Patriarch Filaret is very clearly stated: *rozkolnyks* have to come back to the true Church through penance, and there can be no negotiations or furthermore unity without it.<sup>79</sup> The Ukrainian Orthodox Church does not recognise the legal existence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, and consequently denies the status of her hierarchy and sometimes even doubts the validity

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77 For instance, in October 2010, in his interview concerning the results of the meeting of the mixed Catholic-Orthodox commission in Vienna, Hilarion Alfeyev, the chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, used only that notion (*rozkolnyky*) when referring to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (Metropolitan of Volokolamsk Hilarion, “Hovoryty pro “vyznannia tainstv” rozkolnykiv nemozhlyvo” {It is impossible to speak about “the recognition of the sacraments” of rozkolnyky}”, interview, *Patriarchia.ru*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/ua/db/text/1291833.html> (accessed January 23, 2014).

78 Bielikova, *Interdenominational conflicts*, 18.

79 “Because our Ukrainian Orthodox Church and only her in Ukraine corresponds to all the criteria of the local Church, there are no doubts that exclusively this Church is the genuine Local Orthodox Church in the Ukrainian state. One can talk only about the return to that Church of those who fall away from her in the schism (thus violating also the very principle of the local Church)...” (“Ukrainska Pravoslavna Tserkva ta vyklyky suchasnosti” {The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and present challenges}, [http://theology.in.ua/ua/bp/theological\\_library/theological\\_doc/confessional\\_doc/47505/](http://theology.in.ua/ua/bp/theological_library/theological_doc/confessional_doc/47505/) (accessed February 8, 2014). Translation from the original source).

ty of her sacraments.<sup>80</sup> It is worth mentioning that the relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church are also complicated even though not to such a degree as with the Orthodox of the Kyiv Patriarchate. The reason for the tensions is that the present-day Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church includes a number of former parishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The language of the religious services is another conflict-generating element in the practice of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. This pretty conservative Church still conducts prayers mostly in the old Church-Slavonic language, which is hard to comprehend for an average contemporary Ukrainian but it is conceived by the Church as a unifying element for the eastern Slavs.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, since many faithful of that Church are Russian-speaking, the issue of Ukrainian as the language of the Church services called little interest from the side of the Church hierarchy. By conducting services in Ukrainian the Church can contribute to popularising this language in the country. However, so far the Ukrainian Orthodox Church has demonstrated paucity in that regard. The use of Ukrainian is not prohibited; however there are no official liturgical books translated in that language. As a result, it was only in October 2010 that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church started to conduct Church services in the official state language in the capital of Ukraine.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, the officials of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church sometimes express a nega-

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80 Occasionally one finds in the media discussions about whether it is necessary to rebaptise those who were originally baptised in any of the non-canonical Orthodox Churches when such believers decide to join the canonical Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate later. For instance, there appeared an article about the practice of the rebaptism of *heretics* with reference to the contemporary situation in Ukrainian Orthodoxy on the official website of bishop Ionafan Yeletsykh of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (“Praktika pyeryekryeshchivaniya yeryetikov i raskolnikov v dryevnyey Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi” {The practice of the rebaptism of heretics and those who broke the unity of the Church in the ancient Orthodox Church}, <http://www.vladyka-ionafan.ru/articles/511> (accessed February 18, 2014)).

81 Svitlana Savoiska, “Ukrainska Pravoslavna Tserkva i mizhtserkovni movnopolitychni konflikty” {Ukrainian Orthodox Church and inter-Church language-political conflicts}, *Naukovi zapysky Instytutu politychmykh i etnonatsionalnykh doslidzhen im. I. F. Franka NAN Ukrainy* 10 (2008): 201.

82 “V stolychnomu khrami Ukrainkoï Pravoslavnoï Tserkvy pochaly pravyty ukrainskoïu” {They started to pray in Ukrainian in a parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the capital}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all\\_news/orthodox/uoc/38665/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/orthodox/uoc/38665/) (accessed February 18, 2014).

tive attitude towards the Ukrainian language. Sometimes they also appeal to introduce Russian as the second state language. Only recently the language policy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church has started to change. In February 2013, the metropolitan Antonii of Boryspil, the administrator of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, confirmed that in certain parishes of Kyiv and in the region of Volyn the Church services are already celebrated in Ukrainian. Because “the question of the choice of language of the service is not an issue of the Church conscience,” then “if two thirds of the parishioners prefer services in Ukrainian or another language, there will be no problem.”<sup>83</sup>

The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate use Ukrainian as language, which makes religious truths and the essence of religious services more understandable to believers. In that regard Svitlana Savoiska asserts that according to opinion surveys, the language of religious services, the sticking to Ukrainian traditions and the education of the spirit of patriotism are the second leading conflicting factor in the Orthodox milieu after the struggle for power and the sphere of influence.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, the language and political orientation of Ukrainian Orthodox denominations are such influential elements in the conflict that it is more reasonable nowadays not to speak of the unity of those Churches but only about them coming closer.<sup>85</sup>

Another dimension of antagonism is presented in the relations with the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church still recognises the validity of the Lviv Pseudo-council of 1946, which abolished the Brest agreement of 1596 when the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was created. As a result of the Lviv Pseudo-Council, all Greek-Catholic parishes were converted to Orthodoxy and forced to join the Russian Orthodox Church. However, in 1989 Greek-Catholics were legalised by the state and naturally claimed their ownership of the Church buildings that had belonged to them before 1946. Consequently, a typical accusation of the Moscow Patriarchate is the defeat of three Orthodox eparchies in western Ukraine by Greek-Catholics. In that regard, some scholars<sup>86</sup> high-

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83 “Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate Prepared to Switch to Services in Ukrainian,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/orthodox/uoc/51223](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/orthodox/uoc/51223) (accessed January 22, 2014).

84 Savoiska, *Ukrainian Orthodox Church*, 197.

85 *Ibid.*, 203-204.

86 Myroslav Marynovych, “Stvorennia kontseptsii ekumenichnoi pozytsii Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy: peredumovy i sponuky” {Creating the

light that, even though indeed at the beginning of the 1990s the majority of parishes abandoned the Russian Orthodox Church, not all of them joined the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Notwithstanding the popularity that the Greek-Catholic claim in the west of the country, a significant number of believers remained Orthodox changing their jurisdiction to autocephaly. Obviously, the fifty-year long presence of Orthodoxy in western Ukraine has left its traces.

The following conclusions can be drawn concerning the conflicts between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and other denominations in Ukraine.<sup>87</sup> There are historical reasons for conflicts, which are centred around the validity of the decisions of the Pseudo-Council of 1946 on the abolition of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. One can also suggest canonical reasons, those caused by the perception of Ukraine as Orthodox canonical territory, or arguments stemming from the split of Orthodoxy in Ukraine and the creation of several Orthodox denominations, or even clashes based on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church belonging to the wholeness of Orthodoxy through the Russian Orthodox Church. This in its turn is directly linked to the traditional opposition between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Additionally, a significant number of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church turned to the new Orthodox denominations in Ukraine, which emerged in the 1990s. This is an obvious reason for hostility towards them from the side of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as the direct successor of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Besides, we have to consider that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church remains important to the Moscow Patriarchate due to the number of believers, properties, finances as well as due to its historical and spiritual qualities. Therefore, Kuzio assumes that attempts to exempt that Church from the Moscow jurisdiction as it happened with the Estonian Orthodox Church in 1996 would lead to a new schism in the relations between Constantinople and Moscow.<sup>88</sup> During that Estonian conflict, Patriarch Filaret appealed to the Ukrainian authorities to follow this example and proclaim the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the ground that Moscow is still preserving “the essence of an imperialist Church. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Church wants to keep a

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concept of the ecumenical position of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Pre-conditions and motivations}, *Bohoslovia* 65 (2001): 69-94.

87 Bielikova, *Interdenominational conflicts*, 16-22.

88 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 83-84.

Church empire in the form of the Moscow Patriarchate.”<sup>89</sup> That is the typical rhetoric of the Patriarch in order to justify the need for the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

### 1.3.1.2 The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

At the rampart of Orthodox autocephaly in Ukraine

The first parishes of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were already created in Lviv in August 1989 when the local parish priest Volodymyr Yarema abandoned the allegiance to the Russian Orthodox Church and passed over to the autocephalists guided by one of the Russian Orthodox Church’s bishops Ioann (Bondarchuk). The Initiative Committee for the renewal of that Church, created in 1989, prompted the re-establishment of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in independent Ukraine,<sup>90</sup> an idea that was supported in Ukraine and in the Ukrainian diaspora in the west in the situation of a conflict with the Moscow Patriarchate and the rivalry with the growing Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>91</sup> In 1990, the primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America, bishop Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), was elected Head of the Church

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89 Quoted in *ibid.*, 84.

90 The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was founded in 1921 and existed until 1930, when charged with collaboration with the underground “league for the liberation of Ukraine (SVU) the authorities staged in January 1930 the so-called “Extraordinary Sobor” which formally “dissolved” the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.” (Bohdan Bociurkiw, “The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1920-1930. A Case Study in Religious Modernisation,” in *Ukrainian Churches under Soviet Rule. Two Case Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Ukrainian Studies Fond, 1984), 316-317). After the short revival of the Church under German occupation during World War II, it was suppressed again, and the Church hierarchy and part of the believers immigrated to North America. There they created the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, thus uniting some already existing Orthodox communities of the Ukrainian diaspora. It was those people that at the decline of the Soviet Union greatly supported the idea of an autocephalous Church in Ukraine.

91 Oleh Turii, *Relihiine zhyttia ta mizhkonfesiini vzaiemyny u nezalezhnii Ukraini* {Religious life and interdenominational relations in independent Ukraine} (Lviv: Instytut Istorii Tserkvy UCU, 2007), 22.

as the Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine.<sup>92</sup> After the quick death of this aged Patriarch, his successor, Dymytrii (Yarema), led the Church until 2000. His successor, the metropolitan Mefodii (Kudriakov), had been ruling the Church until his death on February 24, 2015 in the status of administrator of the Patriarchate in accordance with the testament of Patriarch Dymytrii.<sup>93</sup> On February 27, 2015 metropolitan Makarii of Lviv was elected to the office of the locum tenens of the primate of the Church.

During her legal existence the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church significantly developed her structures, which now include 12 monasteries, 7 educational institutions, 294 Sunday schools, 7 mission centres. The Church activities are covered by 6 periodicals, and 1,185 parishes are served by 706 priests.<sup>94</sup> The bulk of the parishes – almost 70% – is located in the western regions of Ukraine.<sup>95</sup>

## Vectors of confrontations

Turning now to the inter-confessional conflicts that the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church is involved in, it has to be stated that most of the confrontation exists in the relations to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate. It is due to the history of the foundation of both Churches. According to Nataliia Bielikova, the first two Patriarchs Mstyslav and Dymytrii influenced the attitude of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church towards the Kyiv Patriarchate<sup>96</sup> as they did not acknowledge the figure of Patriarch Filaret and consequently repudiated the idea of unity with his Church. In his testament, announced at the Church Council in 2002, Patriarch Dymytrii warns his bishops against any attempts of unification with the Kyiv Patriarchate.<sup>97</sup>

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92 Oleh Turij, „Das religiöse Leben und die zwischenkonfessionellen Verhältnisse in der unabhängigen Ukraine“, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe. Anthologie von Texten der Ukrainischen Griechisch-Katholischen Kirche zu Fragen der Kirchengemeinschaft mit Kommentar*, trans. and eds. Andriy Mykhaleyko, Oleksandr Petrynko, and Andreas-A. Thiermeyer (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University Press, 2012), 51.

93 Ibid.

94 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

95 Razumkov Centre, Religious networks, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 14.

96 Bielikova, Interdenominational conflicts, 19.

97 Ibid.

Patriarch Dymytrii Yarema developed an own exclusionist ideology according to which a global war is being waged between Ukrainian Christianity and all the major Christian centres – Rome, Moscow, and Constantinople.<sup>98</sup> Hence the prohibition of the reunion of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate as long as this community is being led by Patriarch Filaret, one of the leading figures among the evil forces, according to patriarch Dymytrii.

Currently, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church is oriented towards the Ecumenical Patriarchate believing that in the status of the Metropolitane of the Patriarchate of Constantinople she would be defended from the pressure of the Moscow Church imperialism.<sup>99</sup> Two Ukrainian Orthodox denominations with unregulated status would perhaps get chances of recognition by the Constantinople Patriarchate if they would not time and again screw up the negotiations about union. In 2011 the negotiations were terminated because of the position of the metropolitan Mefodii Kudriakov who claimed that his Church would be ready for eventual unity with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate if Patriarch Filaret resigned<sup>100</sup> and if Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate was involved in the negotiations.<sup>101</sup> Consequently,

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98 Yurii Chornomorets, “Ideolohichni viiny u pravoslavni Ukraini. Chastyna II” {Ideological wars in Orthodox Ukraine. Part II}, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/daycomment/2714-ideologichni-vijni-u-pravoslavnij-ukrayini-ch-ii.html> (accessed January 10, 2014).

99 Ibid.

100 The anathema of Patriarch Filaret, the fact that the Ecumenical Patriarch has not blessed him to lead the united Church in Ukraine, the opposition of Filaret to the idea of Ukrainian autocephaly when he guided the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 1987-1992, and his non-acceptance by the patriarchs, his predecessors are mentioned as reasons why the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church cannot accept Patriarch Filaret as the leader of the eventually united Ukrainian Orthodox Church (“Obstavyny ta chynnyky, shcho uskladnuiut obiednannia Ukrainy Avtokefalnoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy ta Ukrainy Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu v yedynu tserkovnu strukturu (pid ehidoiu ta kerivnytstvom Patriarkha Filareta)” {Circumstances and reasons that complicate the unification of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate in one ecclesial structure (under the protection and guidance of Patriarch Filaret)}, [http://uaoc.net/2012/01/obstavyny\\_ta\\_chynnyky/](http://uaoc.net/2012/01/obstavyny_ta_chynnyky/) (accessed January 14, 2014)).

101 Yurii Chornomorets, “Uroky provalu perehovoriv Ukrainy Avtokefalnoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu i Ukrainy Avtokefalnoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy” {Lessons of the failure of negotiations between the Ukrainian Orthodox

the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate asked the interested parties of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church to continue the dialogue for unification on the level of eparchies and parishes.<sup>102</sup> The metropolitan Mefodii Kudriakov, officially only administrator of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, appeals to other Orthodox Church leaders to refuse the struggle for the guidance of the future united Ukrainian Orthodox Church.<sup>103</sup> He believes that the head of such a Church has to be exempt from any accusations of contribution to the existing Orthodox conflict and, therefore, it has to be a new personality.

While analysing the reasons for the disagreements between the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and other confessions in Ukraine, Bielikova draws our attention to the fact that this Church did not manage to create its strong identity nowadays.<sup>104</sup> In contrast to the Orthodox of the Kyiv Patriarchate, which developed a convincing ideology of national Church, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church builds its identity on its origin in the 1920s, which coincides with the short period of the existence of the independent Ukrainian state. However, this historical background cannot be fruitfully communicated in contemporary Ukrainian society. Whereas the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate pretends to be the national Church, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church presents itself as a nationalistic one that does not attract many believers. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church emphasises her Ukrainian identity, hence “nation, language, Ukrainisation, autocephaly,

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Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/comments/46071/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/comments/46071/) (accessed January 10, 2014); see also “Zvernennia Sviashchenoho Synodu Ukrainskoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu do arkhiiereiv, dukhovenstva i viruiuchykh Ukrainskoi Avtokefalnoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy shchodo obiednannia” {Message of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate to bishops, clergy, and faithful of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church concerning unification}, <http://www.cerkva.info/en/holy-synod/2017-zvernennia-synodu-do-uapc.html> (accessed January 11, 2014).

102 Message of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate to bishops, clergy, and faithful of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church concerning unification.

103 Mytropolyt Mefodii, “V ochikuvanni kanonichnoho vyznannia” {Waiting for the canonical recognition}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, January 24-30, 2009.

104 Bielikova, Interdenominational conflicts, 20.

the local Orthodox Church in Ukraine, patriotism and “salvation of the Ukrainian people” are representative of the discourse of that Church.”<sup>105</sup>

Though there is less tension in the relations with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, the latter does not recognise the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in canonical terms and considers it schismatic. All attempts of the autocephalous Orthodox to achieve canonical recognition from the Orthodox community only irritate the Moscow Patriarchate. Moscow continues to label the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church as schismatic and considers only one unification model, which is the return to the canonical mother-Church.

### 1.3.1.3 The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate

#### On the way to a national Church

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate was created on June 25, 1992 when a number of bishops of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox united with the followers of the metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko)<sup>106</sup> with the support of state authorities and nationally oriented politicians. This Church claimed to be the direct heir of the old Metropolis of Kyiv established after the baptism of the Kyivan Rus by the Grand Prince Volodymyr in 988.<sup>107</sup> The very first act of the newly established Church council, that except for the Church leaders included the leading Ukrainian national democratic politicians of the time, “was the symbolical annulment of the act dated 1686 according to which the Kyivan Metropolis was transferred to Moscow.”<sup>108</sup> Those developments demonstrate

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105 Rap, *The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches*. Those ideas one encounters, for instance, in the reflections of Metropolitan Mefodii on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of the Kyiv Patriarchate on the Local Council of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church on June 5-6, 1990: Mefodii, Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine, “Proholoshennia Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu: zdobutky, pomylky ta shliakhy yikh podolannia” {Proclamation of the Kyiv Patriarchate. Achievements, mistakes and the ways to overcome them}, [http://theology.in.ua/ua/bp/theological\\_library/theological\\_doc/confessional\\_doc/38396/](http://theology.in.ua/ua/bp/theological_library/theological_doc/confessional_doc/38396/) (accessed February 16, 2014).

106 Davis, *A Long Walk*, 99.

107 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 82.

108 Rap, *The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches*. Interestingly enough, at the same time Viacheslav Chornovil, the leader of Rukh, a national-oriented

the desire to justify the necessity of the creation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church independent from Moscow. Hence, one may logically infer that the autocephalous movement in Ukrainian Orthodoxy was based upon the practical considerations of refuting the Russian legacy in the newly created state. The current Orthodox division in Ukraine is indeed greatly provoked by the durable colonial status of the country and the absence of Ukrainian statehood.<sup>109</sup>

After the death of Patriarch Mstyslav in Canada in 1993, from October 1995 Filaret has been Head of the Church and has held the title of Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine. His controversial figure is perceived by many as one of the biggest obstacles on the way to the unity among the Ukrainian Orthodox. It is partly due to Filaret's ambiguous past including his links to the KGB<sup>110</sup> in Soviet times, to the organisation of a number of provocations against the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, and partly due to his ambitions as Patriarch. One should also mention dubious details of his personal life like that of living with his wife and children or his authoritative management of the Church. On the other hand, Patriarch Filaret is an example of the influence that a powerful personality can have

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Ukrainian political party, also symbolically annulled the 1654 Russian-Ukrainian Treaty of Pereiaslav that brought Ukraine under the rule of the Tsardom of Russia (D'Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 82). This Treaty signed between the Ukrainian Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, the leader of the Cossacks Hetmanate state on the territory of Ukraine, and representatives of the Moscow tsar, had far-reaching consequences for Ukraine. It brought about the gradual domination of neighbouring Russia over Ukraine, intensive politics of Russification, infringements of the rights of the local Ukrainian administration, later the change of the allegiance of the Kyivan Metropolitane from Constantinople to Moscow in 1686. In fact, since the implementation of the Pereiaslav Treaty, most of the territory of Ukraine has remained under the control of Russia till 1991. In the view of nationally oriented Ukrainians, this treaty signifies the actual loss of Ukrainian independence that lasted for more than three centuries. An interesting fact to be mentioned in relation to the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Treaty in 1954 is the transfer of the Crimea Peninsula from the Russian to the Ukrainian Republic of the Soviet Union.

109 Oleh Gerus, "In Search of a National Ukrainian Church: Ukrainian Orthodoxy in Canada and Ukraine," in *Society in Transition. Social Change in Ukraine in Western Perspectives*, ed. Wsevolod Isajiw (Tontonto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2003), 181.

110 KGB – the Committee for State Security, a national security agency of the Soviet Union that included internal security, intelligence and a secret police. The established fact is the cooperation with that organ of a number of the clergy that caused great publicity in the early 1990s.

on the development of the situation both in the Church and the political milieu. At the same time, analytics believe that the figure of Patriarch Filaret is a stepping stone in all efforts towards Orthodox unity and it is even plausible to claim that the very idea of Ukrainian Orthodox autocephaly is controversial because it is associated with Filaret.<sup>111</sup>

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate is the second-largest Church in Ukraine according to the number of parishes (4,661). Her structure includes 3,132 priests, 60 monasteries, 28 mission centres, 18 education institutions and 1,461 Sunday schools, 35 periodicals.<sup>112</sup>

Both the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate have no canonical recognition from other local Orthodox Churches. Nevertheless, according to the Ukrainian legislation both have legal status. I presume that the mere fact that the discussions in the Orthodox environment are centred around the issue of canonicity and that there are no differences in faith dogmas or rites can engineer the possible reconciliation in the future.

### Vectors of confrontations

The dominant cause of the conflicts that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate is engaged in, derives from her relation to the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church belonging to it. Therefore, this Church consistently substantiates her existence in bringing counterarguments to the accusations from Moscow. In the message of the Synod of Bishops from October 2010, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate justifies the validity of her sacraments and mentions that there is no canonically defined procedure of gaining autocephaly. The Church leadership substantiates the possibility of the existence of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in Ukraine according to the principle “independent state – independent Church” since the political independence of

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111 Yurii Chornomorets, “Ideolohichni viiny u pravoslavnii Ukraini. Chastyna I” {Ideological wars in Orthodox Ukraine. Part I}, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/analitica/2684-ideologichni-vijni-u-pravoslavnij-ukrayini-ch-i.html> (accessed January 10, 2014).

112 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

Ukraine is not fully realised under the spiritual allegiance to Moscow.<sup>113</sup> The bishops claim that Ukrainian and Russian peoples stay close to each other but still they are two different nations. Finally, they present the *Russkiy Mir*<sup>114</sup> theory of the Russian Orthodox Church as the example of the anti-ecclesiastical mentality of ethno-philetism.

According to Patriarch Filaret, the Moscow Patriarchate is responsible for the division among Ukrainian Orthodox because it refuses to abandon the control over the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.<sup>115</sup> The Moscow plot in both the Ukrainian Church and state affairs appears in many official pronouncements of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.<sup>116</sup> In 2010 – early 2011 there were many discussions about the campaign of Patriarch Kirill to destroy the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate by using different unjust methods to make priests and

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113 Oleksandr Sahan and Serhii Zdioruk, “Pomisna Pravoslavna Tserkva: problemy i prohozy konstytuivannia” {Local Orthodox Church. Problems and perspectives of creation}, in *Ukraina relihiina: prohozy relihiinoho zhyttia Ukrainy*, eds. Anatolii Kolodnyi et al. (Kyiv, 2008), 139.

114 I will discuss the ideology of the *Russkiy Mir* in section 1.4.1.2 of the current part of the monograph.

115 Filaret, Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine, “Zvernennia z nahody sviata torzhestva pravoslavia” {Address on the occasion of the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy}, <http://www.cerkva.info/ru/patrosposlania/2220-patr-zvernennia-dopuc-mp.html> (accessed February 18, 2014). There are more pronouncements of Patriarch Filaret where the same thought is reiterated. For example, the very title of an interview with Patriarch Filaret from April 2012 testifies to that: Patriarch Filaret, “Moskva rozkolola ukrainsku Tserkvu i ne daie yii obiednatsia” {Moscow has divided the Ukrainian Church and does not allow it to unite}, interview by Liudmyla Tsybulko and Anton Shchehelskyi, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/intervju/2347-moskva-rozkol.html> (accessed January 11, 2014).

116 For example, the following documents of Patriarch Filaret can be enumerated: Patriarch Filaret, “Address on the occasion of the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy”; “Svyatyeyshiy Patriarkh Filaryet pozdravil Sobor Ukrainskoy Pravoslavnoy Tsyerkvi” {His Holiness Patriarch Filaret greeted the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church}, <http://www.cerkva.info/ru/patrosposlania/1717-soboru-upc.html> (accessed February 18, 2014); “Ukrainska Tserkva ye i bude.” Slovo Patriarkha Kyivskoho i vsiiei Rusy-Ukrainy Filareta na urochystii Akademii v Natsionalnii operi Ukrainy z nahody yuvileiv 50-littia yoho rukopolozhennia na yepyskopa i 45-littia sluzhinnia na Kyivskii kafedri” {“The Ukrainian Church is and will endure.” Address of the Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine Filaret to the solemn academy in the National Opera of Ukraine on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his episcopal ordination and the 45th anniversary of his service on the Kyivan seat}, <http://www.cerkva.info/ru/statjidoklady/2151-patr-slovo-na-akademii.html> (accessed February 18, 2014).

whole parishes join the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Obviously, the reaction of Patriarch Filaret and his bishops was lamenting and fierce.<sup>117</sup> Further, because the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is only independent in administration and thus not of a completely independent or autonomous status, she is not a local Church properly speaking and she does not answer to the spiritual needs of the Ukrainian faithful.<sup>118</sup> Consequently, “nationalistic and patriotic demands for the union of all Christians and Churches of the Byzantine-Ukrainian tradition in this self-proclaimed Patriarchate {of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate}”<sup>119</sup> define the ecumenical horizon of the Church of Patriarch Filaret.

Bielikova maintains that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate strives for holding the leading position among Ukrainian Christians.<sup>120</sup> Patriarch Filaret aims at the recognition of his Church as the

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117 See, for instance, those interviews with Patriarch Filaret and Yevstratii Zoria, the secretary of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate: Patriarch Filaret, “Kyivskyi Patriarkhat znyschtyty nemozhlyvo” {They cannot destroy the Kyiv Patriarchate}, interview, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/intervju/1438-nemojlyvo.html> (accessed January 11, 2014); Patriarch Filaret, “Koly zlo povertaietsia na dobro” {When evil turns to good}, interview by Olena Chekan, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/intervju/1283-int-ut.html> (accessed January 11, 2014); Patriarch Filaret, “I v skladnykh umovakh treba rozbudovuvaty Tserkvy” {We have to develop the Church also in difficult circumstances}, interview by Andrii Hanus, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/intervju/1222-patr-int-express.html> (accessed January 11, 2014); Yevstratii Zoria, “Moskva ne hoche, shchob Ukraina bula nezalezhnoiu i mala yedynu Pomisnu Tserkvu” {Moscow does not want that Ukraine is independent and that it has one local Church}, interview by Oksana Klymonchuk, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/publications/intervju/1230-int-unian.html> (accessed January 11, 2014); Yevstratii Zoria, “Ruinuiuchy Kyivskyi Patriarkhat, hochut zruinuvaty nezalezhnist Ukrainy” {Destroying the Kyiv Patriarchate they want to destroy Ukrainian independence}, interview by Yurii Chornomorets, *Cerkva.info*, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/publications/intervju/1228-epevstraty.html> (accessed January 11, 2014).

118 “Istoryko-kanonichna deklaratsiia Arkhieiereiskoho Soboru Ukrainskoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu ‘Kyivskyi Patriarkhat – pomisna Ukrainka Pravoslavna Tserkva’ {Historical-canonical declaration of the Council of the Hierarchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate ‘Kyiv Patriarchate – Local Ukrainian Orthodox Church’}”, <http://www.cerkva.info/ru/icd.html> (accessed February 15, 2014).

119 Oleh Turii, *Greek-Catholics, Latins and Orthodox in Ukraine: Who’s Who?* (Lviv: Institute of Church History, n. d.), 9.

120 Bielikova, *Interdenominational conflicts*, 17.

local Orthodox one, at least inside the country, thus moving to the complete independence of Ukrainian Orthodoxy. That complicates his relations with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, which also demonstrate leadership ambitions. Additionally, there was the hard period of the redistribution of Church buildings between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate. Nevertheless, the former positions itself as a national Church and emphasises that the existence of an independent Orthodox Church, that it pretends to be, strengthens the existence of young independent Ukraine; that it is canonically justified and historically inevitable.<sup>121</sup>

Recently, indications have appeared of a shift in the identification of Ukrainians with various Orthodox Churches. Since 2008 the number of those who recognise themselves as belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate began to grow in comparison with the declared supporters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.<sup>122</sup> The results of the sociological surveys conducted before 2008 repetitively gave an opposite picture. The Ukrainian religious scholar Viktor Yelenskyi has two explanations for that phenomenon. First, new parishes of the Orthodox Church appear mostly in the east and south of Ukraine because in the western regions the parish network is already saturated; hence it is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate that establishes new communities. Additionally, the Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate did not manage to attract new believers by the quality of her theology and pastoral work. However, such results do not mean that the Russian identity begins to dominate because in the same public opinion pool only 0.7% of respondents claimed their belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>123</sup> Still, despite the new correlation between the sympathisers with the Orthodox Church of the Moscow and Kyiv Patriarchates, identity plays a significant role in the identification of the Ukrainian faithful with a particular Church.

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121 Davis, *A Long Walk*, 97.

122 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Religion of the 00s: A Summary of the Decade,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert\\_thought/analytic/40964](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert_thought/analytic/40964) (accessed February 17, 2014).

123 Ibid.

### 1.3.2 Traditional Catholic denominations

#### 1.3.2.1 The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

##### Survival in the Soviet underground

Catholics in Ukraine are represented by two Churches. The Catholics of the eastern right or, as they are sometimes referred to, “uniates” trace their origins back to 1596 when the Brest Union agreement was signed between a number of bishops of the Kyiv Church and the Roman See.<sup>124</sup> Thus, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was founded.<sup>125</sup> After the incorporation of the western territories of Ukraine into the Soviet Union at the end of Second World War, the Soviet authorities in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church defeated the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church at the Synod of Lviv of 1946. Without the presence of bishops and with the help of a few former Greek-Catholic clergymen this Synod voted for the annulation of the Brest statutes and the “return” of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church with all the faithful and property to the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>126</sup>

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124 See the ground-breaking research about the circumstances and reasons of the establishment of the Union of Brest in Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolis, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest*, Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001). In 2002, the foundation PRO ORIENTE launched a project that aims at the scientific examination of the controversial circumstances of the Union of Brest and its consequences for the Churches in Ukraine, Poland, and Russia and for the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue as a whole. For more information about the project see „Union von Brest“, <http://www.pro-orient.at/?site=pr20050202150708> (accessed September 10, 2014).

125 The term “Greek-Catholics” was introduced in 1774 by the decree of the Empress Maria Theresa after the territory of today’s western Ukraine with the majority of adherents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was included into the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The name of the Church derives from the Eastern Greek rite and the canonical belonging to the jurisdiction of the Catholic Pope (Turij, *Das religiöse Leben*, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 34).

126 Little, Ukraine, 19. There are a number of studies on the issue. See, for instance, the following texts: Antoine Arjakovsky, “Les mémoires du (pseudo)-synode de Lvov/Lviv,” in *En attendant le concile de l’Église Orthodoxe* (Paris: Les éditions du CERF, 2011), 489-500; Ivan Bilas, “The Moscow Patriarchate, the Penal Organs of the USSR, and the Attempted Destruction of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church during the 1940s,” *Logos. A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 38, nos. 1-4 (1997): 41-92; Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic*

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, “the silent Church”<sup>127</sup> during several decades of the underground, survived the persecution and with the politics of liberalisation, introduced in the last years of the existence of the Soviet Union, her faithful used the chance to re-establish their Church. The campaign for the recognition, and return of her former sacral buildings was led by the Committee for the Defence of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>128</sup> Finally, on November 28, 1989 the Greek-Catholics obtained the right of the official registration and this initiated a rapid revival of the Church.<sup>129</sup>

In 1991, Myroslav Ivan Cardinal Liubachivskiy, the Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, returned to Ukraine. In the following years new seminaries were opened, the number of parishes and clergy continued to increase steadily, and religious educational institutions were established. However, most of the parishes in western Ukraine came under the control of the Greek-Catholics during the events of a large-scale inter-confessional rivalry, which was often accompanied by violent clashes of the faithful often provoked by their religious and political leadership.<sup>130</sup> When at the beginning of 1992 the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church had communities only in half of the regions of Ukraine, nowadays her parishes can be found in the whole country. In 2004, the seat of the Greek-Catholic Major Archbishop was moved from Lviv to Kyiv and the construction of the main Greek-Catholic cathedral of Christ’s Resurrection was initiated. Both events point to the expansion of this Church: “The UGCC’s decision-making, principle and contemporary voice in complex and critical is-

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*Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950)* (Edmonton, Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1996); Bohdan Bociurkiw, “The Uniate Church in the Soviet Ukraine. A Case Study in Soviet Church Policy,” in *Ukrainian Churches under Soviet Rule. Two Case Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Ukrainian Studies Fond, 1984), 89-113; Bohdan Bociurkiw, “Le synode de Lviv (8-10 mars 1946),” *Istina* 34 (1989): 266-289; Bernard Dupuy, “La dissolution de l’Église gréco-catholique en 1945 par le régime soviétique dans les territoires conquis,” *Istina* 34 (1989): 290-305.

127 The term borrowed from John Mowatt, “The Vatican and the Silent Church,” in *The Ukrainian Catholic Church 1945-1975. A Symposium*, eds. Miroslav Labunka and Leonid Rudnytsky (Philadelphia, PA: The St. Sophia Religious Association of Ukrainian Catholics, 1976), 70-89.

128 Davis, A Long Walk, 74.

129 Andriy Mykhaleiko, „Geschichte und Gegenwart der Ukrainischen Griechisch-Katholischen Kirche“, *Religion und Gesellschaft in Ost und West* 11-12 (2013): 13.

130 Davis, A Long Walk, 75.

sues of Ukrainian public life as well as a decision made to transfer the UGCC's headquarters to Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, are the most evident features of UGCC's gradual development."<sup>131</sup>

After the death of Cardinal Liubachivskyi, from 2001 until February 2011, Cardinal Liubomyr Husar was leading the Church. On March 27, 2011, his successor, Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the youngest bishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, aged 41, was enthroned. Currently the Church has between 3 and 5 million supporters in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has 3,765 parishes, 2,625 priests, 120 monasteries, 16 educational institutions and 23 mission centres. The number of the Church periodicals reaches 28.<sup>132</sup> As of 2011, 93% of Greek-Catholic communities were located in the western regions of Ukraine.<sup>133</sup>

### Vectors of confrontations

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has a special status among the Ukrainian Churches, insofar as for her believers the strife for independence, national idea and religion is closely intermingled not only on the level of slogans and pronouncements. Those elements belong essentially to the heart of the Church – the people, who after 40 years of Soviet regime and Church existence in the underground perceive categories of nation and religion as inseparable. Consequently, it is not surprising that the revival of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the western part of Ukraine caused such a negative reaction from the Russian Orthodox Church (later the Ukrainian Orthodox Church). In fact, the restoration of traditional confession, typical of that region, made locals leave the Russian Orthodox Church and join the Church of their ancestors, which was a big loss for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.<sup>134</sup>

Unlike those with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has better contacts with the two canonically un-

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131 Olha Nedavnya, "Transformations of Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches in Ukraine (1990s – early 21st Century)," in *Religions, Churches and the Scientific Studies of Religion: Poland and Ukraine*, ed. Irena Borowik (n. p.: Nomos, 2003), 63.

132 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

133 Razumkov Centre, Religious networks, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2011), 15.

134 Bielikova, Interdenominational conflicts, 21.

recognised Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. This can be partly explained by their unregulated status, which puts those three Churches in a similar position from the point of view of the Moscow Patriarchate. However, there remain traditional Orthodox-Catholic arguments for rivalry starting from the birth of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church out of the Orthodox confession. The next stages of the conflict are also connected with the question of the very existence of this Church – the liquidation of the Brest Union in 1946 and the re-emergence of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in 1989. The radical opponents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church deny her right to exist, while the more moderate critics would confine her activity only to western Ukraine. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church positions herself as a national Church with strong anti-communist claims (she has the status of a repressed Church), is connected with western European civilisation because of her Catholicity, and represents at the same time the Kyiv tradition because she was born out of Kyiv Orthodoxy.<sup>135</sup>

Still nowadays, in the opinion of certain radical Orthodox the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was established in 1596 and regenerated in 1989 because of the intrigues of the Vatican. For example, the idea of the existence of this Church as a result of the exclusivist Vatican ecclesiology is extensively treated in the doctoral dissertation of Avhustyn Markevych, archbishop of Lviv of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, published in 2010 under the title *Uniatism. Theological Aspects*.<sup>136</sup> In that research project the political and polemical approach prevails over the theological one.<sup>137</sup> The author sustains the established collections of beliefs about the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church from the Soviet times. For example, Avhustyn Markevych claims that Greek-Catholics cooperated with the German occupiers during World War II<sup>138</sup> and this caused the destruction of this Church by Stalin. The events con-

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135 Ibid.

136 Avhustyn Markevych, *Uniatstvo. Bohoslovski aspekty* {Uniatism. Theological aspects} (Kyiv-Lviv, 2010), <http://orthodox.lviv.ua/books/EAUniat.pdf> (accessed January 10, 2014).

137 Myron Bendyk, “Vidhuk na doslidzhennia arkhyiepyskopa Avhustyna (Markevycha) ‘Uniatstvo. Bohoslovski aspekty’” {Response to the study of Archbishop Avhustyn Markevych “Uniatism. Theological Aspects”}, <http://dds.edu.ua/en/publications/publications/miscellaneous/770-vidhuk-na-uniatstvo-mark-evycha.html> (accessed January 10, 2014).

138 Markevych, *Uniatism*, 149.

nected to the Lviv Pseudo-synod are not treated in all their historical truth. As his critics suggest, Archbishop Avhustyn does not allow the thought that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has regenerated in the beginning of the 1990s because of her faithful who wanted to live and practise their faith in that particular Church.<sup>139</sup> Instead Archbishop Avhustyn claims that the identity crisis in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church can be solved in the future either by her return to the Orthodox Church or by complete incorporation into the Roman Catholic Church, thus ceasing to play the game of a bridge between East and West; there is no third way for the “theologically infertile uniatism.”<sup>140</sup>

We cannot discard the fact that a particular source of the tensions between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate relates to the issue of the Patriarchate.<sup>141</sup> The Catholics of the Orthodox right in Ukraine have not yet got their recognition as a Patriarchal Church from the Vatican. The main reason for that is the position of the Moscow Patriarchate that unanimously opposes the creation of one more Patriarchate on its canonical territory where Ukraine belongs and the Vatican does not want to engage into a new spiral of conflict with Moscow.

On October 11, 1963, addressing the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, Yosyf Slipyi, the Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, in a strong hope expressed the request for the Patriarchal dignity for the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church<sup>142</sup> and in 1975 proclaimed himself Patriarch of Kyiv and Halych. However, the Vatican postponed the confirmation explaining that the Patriarchate could not be created in exile and it is necessary to wait until the Church returns to Ukraine.<sup>143</sup> On the other

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139 Anatolii Babynskiy, “Uniatstvo. Dumky na poliakh” {“Uniatism.” Thoughts on the margins}, <http://risu.org.ua/ru/index/blog/~anatolius/37683/> (accessed January 10, 2014).

140 Markevych, Uniatism, 206. Translation from the original source.

141 An elaborated article about the history of the perturbations between Rome and Moscow for the recognition of the Patriarchate of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church until mid-1990s: Serhii Plokyh, “Between Moscow and Rome: Struggle for the Greek-Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine,” *Journal of Church and State* 37 (1995): 849-867.

142 Jaroslav Pelikan, *Confessor between East and West. A Portrait of Ukrainian Cardinal Josyf Slipyi* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 204-205.

143 The refusal of the Vatican to grant such a status was among other things dictated by the fact that since the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church cannot legally exist in Ukraine because of the repressive politics of the Soviet authorities, Patriarch

hand, the positive attitude towards the Patriarchal status of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church by the Vatican was demonstrated when in 1980 the Pope recognised the Synod of Ukrainian Bishops created by Slipyi as a legitimate organ of the Patriarchal structure, which caused a negative reaction from the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, after Ukrainian independence and the re-establishment of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Ukraine, the Vatican still postpones the granting of the Patriarchal status simply by claiming that it is not the right time yet.<sup>145</sup> Even after the Lviv Synod of the Church in 1992, where the main bodies of the Patriarchate were created and it was requested simply to recognise the existing Patriarchal structure of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, the Vatican refused to satisfy that appeal. Similar complications concerned the creation of the additional Greek-Catholic eparchies in central and eastern Ukraine – at first the Vatican also refused to sanction this. Even later in 2001, during the visit of Pope John Paul II in Ukraine, expectations thrived that finally this martyrdom Church would be elevated to the Patriarchal rank and they failed again. This reflects a significant hostility from the side of certain circles of clergy towards the Moscow Patriarchate and consequently towards its local branch, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Without going deeper into that question, it is plausible to say that the non-recognition of the Greek-Catholic Patriarchate nowadays is considered by some observers as the continuation of the Vatican *Ostpolitik* from 1960-1980, which is “too “pro-Moscow” to be strictly ecumenical.”<sup>146</sup>

In November–December 2011, according to the decision of the Synod of Bishops, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church established three new archeparchies (archdioceses) in western Ukraine. This step was differently appreciated by the Orthodox denominations. While the Moscow Patriarchate rejected that Greek-Catholics create new structures on presumably Orthodox canonical territory, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate spoke about the right of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

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Slipyi is not able to exercise his canonical power over his hierarchy or faithful (Yevhen Nebesniak, “Patriarkh Yosyf v konteksti “Ostpolitik” Vatykanu” {Patriarch Yosyf in the context of the Ostpolitik of the Vatican}, *Patriarkhat* 1 (2011): 18).

144 Plokyh, *Between Moscow and Rome*, 850.

145 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 79.

146 Myroslav Marynovych, “Obstacles on the Road to Ecumenism in Present-Day Ukraine. A Psycho-Sociological Analysis,” [http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/religion\\_and.society/interreligious.relations/analysis/](http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/religion_and.society/interreligious.relations/analysis/) (accessed January 9, 2014).

to develop her structures as she found it necessary according to her internal law.<sup>147</sup>

So far the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was accused of defeating Orthodox eparchies in western Ukraine. The new phenomena of the last years are reproaches with the proselytism in the eastern regions of the country which flow from the transfer of the seat of the Greek-Catholic Major Archbishop to the capital of Ukraine and from the establishment of the new eparchies in this part of the country.<sup>148</sup> Commenting upon the negative reaction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the transfer of his Metropolitan seat to Lviv, Cardinal Husar noted that it does not go about transfer but about the return of his Church to Kyiv as one of the heirs of the currently divided Kyivan Metropolinate with the pastoral aim to minister the faithful of that Church in the eastern regions of the country.<sup>149</sup> Interestingly enough, a certain criticism was heard from the Greek-Catholic side as well. Mykola Krokosh is convinced that instead of enlarging her structures in eastern Ukraine the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church should better engage in common pastoral and social projects with the Orthodox in those regions.<sup>150</sup>

Further, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was criticised for her decision to cooperate more closely with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate. For example, it was the case with the statement of Sviatoslav Shevchuk from November 1, 2012 in which his Church recog-

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147 “The Bishop of the Kyivan Patriarchate Comments on the Establishment of New Greek Catholic Metropolitanates,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/confessional/interchurch\\_relations/45431](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/confessional/interchurch_relations/45431) (accessed February 18, 2014).

148 “The Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate not Happy about the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church’s Pastoral Care in Eastern Ukraine,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/confessional/interchurch\\_relations/52633](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/confessional/interchurch_relations/52633) (accessed January 15, 2014).

149 Liubomyr Husar, “Treba zrozumity vsim nam, shcho dlia toho, aby buty spravzhnomy khrystyianamy, maiemo buty obiednany” {We have to understand that in order to be genuine Christians we have to be united}, interview by Yuliana Lavrysh, *Ugcc.org.ua*, <http://www.ugcc.org.ua/2425.0.html> (accessed January 14, 2014).

150 Mykola Krokosh, “Holos volaiuchoho v ekumenichnii pusteli, abo Moi “piat kopiok” do dyskusii pro prozelityzm Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy na Skhidnii Ukraini” {The voice crying out in the ecumenical wilderness or my two cents to the discussion about the proselytism of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Eastern Ukraine}, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/analitica/18193-golos-volayuchogo-v-ekumenichnij-pusteli-abo-moyi-pyat-kopijok-do-diskusiyi-pro-prozelitizm-ugkc-na-sxidnij-ukrayini.html> (accessed January 22, 2014).

nised baptism administered in the Church of Patriarch Filaret.<sup>151</sup> The Metropolitan Volodymyr maintained that with this recognition the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church violates the current principles of ecumenical dialogue according to which the Churches should not establish official contacts with religious groups that are not legally acknowledged.<sup>152</sup> Furthermore, certain observers named this step of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church as not wise because in this way the biggest Ukrainian Church, that is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, was left aside.<sup>153</sup>

In part II of the book I will analyse the original ecumenical project of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church that presupposes the re-establishment of the ancient Kyivan Metropolitanate. We will see in which way and for which purpose the Greek-Catholics aim at the reunion of the current Churches of the Kyivan tradition into a united Ukrainian Patriarchate.<sup>154</sup>

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- 151 “Vykladeno pozytsiiu Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy shchodo diisnosti Tainstva Khreshchennia v Ukrainskii Pravoslavnii Tserkvi Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu” {The position of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church concerning the validity of the sacrament of baptism in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate}, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/publications/articles/2824-baptugcc.html> (accessed January 16, 2014).
- 152 “Doklad Mitropolita Kiyevskogo i vsyeya Ukrainy Vladimira na Arkhiieryeyskom Soborye Russkoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi” {Report of the Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine Volodymyr on the Synod of Hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church\\_doc/uocmp\\_doc/51163/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church_doc/uocmp_doc/51163/) (accessed January 16, 2014).
- 153 Yurii Chornomorets, “Yubilej kryshchyniia Rusi: sostoyaniye Tserkvyey” {Jubilee of the baptism of Kyivan Rus. Situation of the Churches}, interview by Syergyey Shtyeynikov, *Religion.in.ua*, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/daycomment/22130-yubilej-kreshheniya-rusi-sostoyanie-cerkvej.html> (accessed January 15, 2014).
- 154 Among the Greek-Catholic theologians who popularise the project of the united Ukrainian Patriarchate it is worth considering Myroslav Marynovych, *An Ecumenist Analyses the History and Prospects of Religion in Ukraine* (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University, 2004); Myroslav Marynovych, *Vybrane. T. 6, Ukrainska ideia i khrystianstvo* {Selected works. Vol. 6, The Ukrainian idea and Christianity} (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University, 2010).

### 1.3.2.2 The Roman-Catholic Church

The Roman-Catholic Church (or Catholic Church) eparchies were spread in Ukraine on those territories that belonged to neighbouring Catholic countries. After those regions were annexed by the Soviet Union, their Catholic eparchies were abolished and a considerable part of clergy and faithful were repressed. Only some hundred eparchies were functioning under strict state control.<sup>155</sup> On the wave of the religious revival and the emergence of the independent Ukrainian state, the hierarchical structure of the Roman-Catholic Church was renewed in 1991. To date, this denomination has 942 communities, 612 priests (a significant number of them are foreigners – 267, unlike in any other traditional Ukrainian Church), 108 monasteries, 40 mission centres, 9 educational institutions, 483 Sunday schools, and it publishes 9 periodicals.<sup>156</sup>

The image of the Roman Catholic Church began to change after Ukraine became independent and after this Church “has begun to open itself to the adoption of a Ukrainian identity.”<sup>157</sup>

“In the past, Roman Catholicism was invariably perceived as a strictly foreign, usually Polish, phenomenon, although Hungarian and German Roman Catholics were and still are to be found in Ukraine. This fact derives from the Polish political domination (part of the Polish Kingdom in the 14th-18th centuries) and the interwar years of the 20th century (1918-1939), when the confessional divide between Ukrainians and Poles coincided with the national division.”<sup>158</sup>

By virtue of successful enculturation in the Ukrainian context of the originally mostly Polish-oriented Church, her modern evangelisation methods and theology, the Roman-Catholic Church became an attractive option for Ukrainians tired of the sometimes rigid ritual character of other Churches.<sup>159</sup> Still, some misunderstandings appear occasionally between the

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155 Turij, *Das religiöse Leben*, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 54.

156 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, *Networks of Churches*.

157 Iwan Dacko, “The Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches of Ukraine,” <http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/religion.and.society/interreligious.relations/catholic.churches/> (accessed January 9, 2014).

158 Ibid.

159 Olha Nedavnia, “Fenomen ukraintsiv v Rymo-Katolytskii Tserkvi: zdobutky, problemy, potentsii” {Phenomenon of Ukrainians in the Roman-Catholic Church. Achievements, problems, potentials}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies\\_of\\_religions/40902/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of_religions/40902/) (accessed January 22, 2014).

Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Roman Catholic Church including property conflicts.<sup>160</sup>

#### 1.4 The interconfessional conflict in Ukraine as a conflict of identities

Let us try to draw some preliminary conclusions about what the interconfessional situation in present-day Ukraine looks like. It is plausible to claim that the religious revival and deep engagement of people in the life of the Church at the beginning of the 1990s can be explained by the previous historical experience of Ukrainians who were deprived of the right to freely profess the religion they wanted. Petro Kosuha, the renowned Ukrainian specialist in religious studies, describes the situation like this:

“Religion, and first of all Christian tradition, during the years of atheism gained both the unique experience of survival in the extreme circumstances under the pressure, and the experience of searching for ways to human hearts and souls. Rebellious consciousness that desired, strived for, and looked for the genuine spiritual-moral values willingly accepted contemporary calls for love, good, unity, and other all-human values.”<sup>161</sup>

However, as the previous short analyses of the establishment and conflict lines of the traditional Churches showed, the religious revival of Ukraine was anything but unobstructed.

Among the positive factors contributing to the normalisation of the relations between Ukrainian Churches belongs the solution to the problem of the places of worship in the case of the struggle of two confessions for one Church building, the absence of doctrinal differences in the case of the Orthodox (cultural and liturgical ones are still preserved), the growing understanding of the need for dialogue. Finally, as disturbing elements remain

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160 See two reactions to the claims that the Archbishop of Lviv Mokrzycki expressed during a radio interview in September 2011 that Greek-Catholics have stolen the Roman Catholic cathedral in Lviv: Myron Bendyk, “Vrazhennia hreko-katolyka pislia oznaiomlennia z intervju Lvivskoho rymo-katolytskoho mytropolyta” {Impressions of a Greek-Catholic after the interview of the Roman Catholic Metropolitan of Lviv}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/monitoring/society\\_digest/44730/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/monitoring/society_digest/44730/) (accessed February 18, 2014); Kateryna Novikova, “Etnorelihiina pastka” {Ethno-religious trap}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/open\\_theme/45112/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/open_theme/45112/) (accessed January 22, 2014).

161 Petro Kosukha, ed., *Suchasna relihiina sytuatsia v Ukraini: stan, tendentsii, prohozy* {Contemporary religious situation in Ukraine. State, tendencies, prognoses} (Kyiv, 1994), 34. Translation from the original source.

the interconnectedness of Church and political life, the ambitions of Church leaders, often still the old Soviet mentality about the way the Church functions in society, and the search for identity which characterises Ukraine as a typically post-communist country in transition.

This religious revival was accompanied by the search for the self-identity of the Churches as they were striving to find their place on the spiritual map of Ukraine. Novychenko identified two aspects of interconfessional conflicts in the 1990s. The first is the Orthodox-Catholic dimension, the rivalry between all branches of Orthodoxy on the one side and Roman-Catholics and Greek-Catholics on the other side. Another conflict dimension concerns the relations between the Orthodox themselves.<sup>162</sup> According to the Ukrainian Church historian Oleh Turii, the underlying reason for those conflicts is the absence of a positive and clear answer to the question “who we are.” Because the Churches did not manage to establish and claim their identities in a positive way, they are inclined to formulate it through emphasising the differences between them. The formula becomes, therefore, “we, not they” or even a more radical one “only we but not they.”<sup>163</sup> I cannot disagree with that conclusion because the identity element essentially clarifies the complicated set of disagreements that the Ukrainian Churches have not been able to solve so far.

The religious division in Ukraine reflects the disunity in the rest of society and politics. According to Oleh Turii, the split on the basis of identity is the real division line in Ukrainian Christianity.<sup>164</sup> Viktor Yelenskyi, a prominent scholar and President of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Freedom, characterises the inter-Church conflict in Ukraine “as the most coherent and institutionalised conflict of identities,” which in the absence of other open conflicts seems to be so menacing.<sup>165</sup> On another place Yelenskyi characterised the conflict between the Orthodox in Ukraine as a “more or less adequate reflection of the social, political, and cultural contradictions of Ukrainian society, as well as of the distinctions in the levels

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162 Mykola Novychenko, “Mizhkonfesiini konflikty v Ukraini: prychny i naslidky” {Interconfessional conflicts in Ukraine. Reasons and effects}, *Liudyna i svit* 9 (1995): 17.

163 Turij, *Das religiöse Leben, in Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 63.

164 Ibid.

165 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Protystoiannia v ukrainskomu pravoslavii yak konflikt identychnosti” {The struggle in the Ukrainian Orthodoxy as a conflict of identities}, *Liudyna i svit* 6 (2000): 2-10.

of the national self-realisation.”<sup>166</sup> Therefore, it would be reasonable to explore that issue more in detail.

Oleh Turii distinguishes the identity problem of the Ukrainian Churches on three levels: governmental, national, and ecclesial and derives them from the present instability in Ukrainian society.<sup>167</sup> I will single out the main points of that scholar as I believe them to be illustrative of what actually happens in contemporary Ukrainian Christianity. In this subchapter I will define and summarise the most visible factors of the opposition between the Churches as a struggle of identities within and between the Churches.

#### 1.4.1 The issues of the self-identity of the Churches

##### 1.4.1.1 Identity and Orthodox denominations

An identity problem is most evident in the case of Orthodox denominations primarily due to the problem of schism. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was created partly because of the desire to re-establish this Church after two forced dissimilations in the 20th century and partly because of the internal crisis within the Russian Orthodox Church. In the opinion of Oleh Turii, the collaboration of the latter with the atheistic regime, the cultural Russification of the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition, and the growth of the national movement fostered the creation of this branch of Ukrainian Christianity.<sup>168</sup>

The expression of the internal crisis of post-Soviet Orthodoxy was the development of the autonomous and autocephalous tendencies, articulated best by Patriarch Filaret in the creation mainly by his efforts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.<sup>169</sup> The internal conflict in Ukrainian Orthodoxy reflects the entire spectrum of different contradictions which exist in contemporary Ukrainian society. For some Orthodox it is evident that the city of Kyiv is 600 years older than Moscow.

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166 Viktor Yelensky, “Orthodoxy and Post-Communist Changes. The Case of Ukraine,” in *Orthodox Christianity and Contemporary Europe*, eds. Jonathan Sutton and Wil van den Bercken (Leuven-Paris-Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2003), 550.

167 Turii, Greek-Catholics, 8.

168 Turij, Das religiöse Leben, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 64-65.

169 Ibid., 65-66.

Those believers are aware of the fact that the Kyiv Metropolis was illegally transferred to the Moscow jurisdiction by the Russian tsars in 1686. Consequently, they ask themselves the question why the Ukrainian Orthodox Church should be governed from Moscow and legitimate in that way the creation of the autocephalous Orthodox confession. Therefore, Taras Kuzio is right when he claims that “although rooted in religion, there are notions with important political consequences. An understanding of confessional politics in Ukraine is therefore necessary for an understanding of politics more broadly.”<sup>170</sup>

The patriotic and nationalistic claims together with the appeals to create a single national Church appear in the rhetoric of that confession. Even now the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate is criticised for her inability to connect the national and universal Orthodox aspect in her social teaching.<sup>171</sup> As a consequence, this Church produces a kind of alternative to the Russian Church nationalism<sup>172</sup> with the mere difference that Moscow covers her practical nationalism by emphasising the universal character of Christianity in words only.

The most conservative branch of Ukrainian Orthodoxy – the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has first of all to clarify for itself what her very name means.<sup>173</sup> Despite attempts at Ukrainisation and self-identification in the new circumstances of the independent Ukrainian state, the Orthodox Church under Moscow jurisdiction still remains for many a living sign of the Russian presence in the country. Although it is the only canonically recognised denomination, its separatist and schismatic rhetoric and its fear of introducing changes can hardly contribute to becoming a Church capable of uniting all the Orthodox believers in the country.<sup>174</sup>

However, the position of the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate is not univocal. There are different ideological groups among the hierarchs of this Church.<sup>175</sup> The radical

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170 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 73-74.

171 Chornomorets, *Ideological wars*. Part I.

172 *Ibid.*

173 Turii, *Greek-Catholics*, 9.

174 Turij, *Das religiöse Leben, in Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 66.

175 Andrii Yurash, “Ukrainskaya missiya “pavnoapostolnogo” Kirilla: missiya nyevypolnima” {Ukrainian mission of “Equal of the Apostles” Kirill. Mission impossible}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/analytic/43952/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/analytic/43952/) (accessed January 13, 2014).

wing represented by the Metropolitan of Odesa and Izmail, Ahafanhel, sustains the close political, cultural, and religious ties with Russia. Consequently, this group refuses any discussions about the autocephalous status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. For the representatives of this milieu the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate is a merely political organisation that cannot be properly called a Church.<sup>176</sup> The opposition between two camps inside the Ukrainian Orthodox Church for assuming the leading position sharpened in the winter of 2012 when the Metropolitan Volodymyr was seriously ill.

At the same time, during the last years of the rule of Metropolitan Volodymyr official broader discourse of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has been evolving towards a deepening orientation towards the Ukrainian faithful. Myroslav Marynovych mentions that after the Orange Revolution several groupings became evident in the before unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church which represent a different ecclesial mentality. There are more and more indications that certain circles of that Church begin to think in Ukrainian categories, which means that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is not simply a voice of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine anymore; she has become the voice of Ukraine in the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>177</sup>

A number of cautious pro-Ukrainian pronouncements of the Head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the metropolitan Volodymyr Sabodan in recent years has substantiated this conclusion.<sup>178</sup> The metropolitan positions his Church as “the authentic Church of the Ukrainian people that treats with the due respect national history and traditions of our land, this land where we live and conduct our ministry and whose organic part we are.”<sup>179</sup> Volodymyr Sabodan speaks about the potential of his Church as a

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176 “Namisnyk Lavry: Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu nemaie” {The Vicar of the Monastery of the Caves. The Kyiv Patriarchate does not exist}, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2012/03/7/6960258/> (accessed January 10, 2014).

177 “Myroslav Marynovych: “Maidan – tse vyniatkovo ukrainska istoriia, shcho vzhe ne ye spilnoiu z Rosiieiu” {Myroslav Marynovych: “Maidan is an exclusively Ukrainian history that is not common to Russia anymore”}, in *Vybrane. T. 5, Peredmovy ta rensenzii. Vystupy y intervii* (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University, 2010), 399.

178 Chornomorets, Ideological wars. Part II.

179 Metropolitan Volodymyr, “Ukrainske Pravoslavia na rubezhi epokh. Vyklyky suchasnosti, tendentsii rozvytku” {Ukrainian Orthodoxy on the bounds of times. Present challenges, tendencies of development}, <http://orthodox.org.ua/http%3A/>

Ukrainian one to unite the culturally different east and west of the country.<sup>180</sup> Although two Ukraines are different, they are united by language, history and culture and what is most important by the Christian faith that originated in those lands from the baptism of the Great Prince Volodymyr in the 10th century. The identity of Ukraine is then built on the interplay between eastern and western civilisations represented by different regions of the country. Furthermore, according to the metropolitan Volodymyr, his Church does not want to intervene in the discussions concerning the civilisational choice of Ukraine because the Church as a Eucharistic community has a universal character<sup>181</sup> and it would provoke divisions among the faithful when a Church sustains a particular geopolitical choice of Ukraine.<sup>182</sup> Notwithstanding this position of neutrality, in 2013 the representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church also visited the European institutions in Brussels and signed the declaration of the European civilisational choice of Ukraine in November 2013. In that text the Heads of nine Churches of Ukraine express confidence that “the future of Ukraine is naturally predefined by our historical roots namely to be an independent state in a circle of free European peoples.”<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, the Church leaders “believe that this is not and cannot be viewed as an opposition of Ukraine to our historical neighbour – Russia.”<sup>184</sup> Hence, it seems that the metropolitan, more a man of prayer than an administrator<sup>185</sup> has adopted

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%252Forthodox.org.ua/uk/node/3165 (accessed January 10, 2014). Translation from the original source.

180 Metropolitan Volodymyr, *Ukrainian Orthodoxy; The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and present challenges*. See also Yevhenii Shelevii, “Ukrainske pravoslavia i suchasnyi stan natsionalnoi yednosti Ukrainy” {Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the present state of the national unity of Ukraine}, <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/11982-ukrayinske-pravoslavyya-i-suchasnij-stan-nacionalnoiy-yednosti-ukrayini.html> (accessed January 13, 2014).

181 “Ukrainska Pravoslavna Tserkva: siohodennia i perspektyvy” {Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Present times and perspectives}, [http://theology.in.ua/ua/index/resources/church\\_doc/uocmp\\_doc/34747/](http://theology.in.ua/ua/index/resources/church_doc/uocmp_doc/34747/) (accessed January 10, 2014).

182 Metropolitan Volodymyr, *Ukrainian Orthodoxy*.

183 “Address of the Churches and Religious Organisations to the Ukrainian People on the EU Integration of Ukraine,” [http://www.irf.in.ua/eng/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=385:1&catid=34:ua&Itemid=61](http://www.irf.in.ua/eng/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=385:1&catid=34:ua&Itemid=61) (accessed January 13, 2014).

184 *Ibid.*

185 Kateryna Shchotkina, “What Happens after Metropolitan Volodymyr?” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert\\_thought/authors\\_columns/kshchotkina\\_column/39142](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert_thought/authors_columns/kshchotkina_column/39142) (accessed January 22, 2014).

the politics of quietly stressing the Ukrainian character of his Church instead of the opposition to Moscow.<sup>186</sup> After the joint declaration on the European integration some analysts began to speculate about the appearance of new chances for a reunion between the three Orthodox denominations in Ukraine.<sup>187</sup> On the other hand, the support of the European vector of the Ukrainian development put the metropolitan Volodymyr in a difficult situation with the outset of the EuroMaidan because the differences between the groups in his Church deepened again.

Another issue concerns the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. As it was already stated, before the summer of 2010 there existed a compromise position concerning autocephaly, which can briefly be described as follows: autocephaly has to be proclaimed only in the canonical way and must serve the good of the Church; it has to be univocally supported by all the members of the Church; as long as there are considerable disagreements concerning autocephaly and it can bring about the disunity of the Church, the final decision concerning this issue has to be postponed. Such a position was a compromise and even though it did not satisfy everyone, it was accepted.

The religious fragmentation in Ukrainian Orthodoxy is believed to be a factor that precludes the national consolidation and the construction of a new Ukrainian identity.<sup>188</sup> The practical implication of that idea is that it is advantageous for Ukraine when one local Orthodox Church is established. That should “benefit Ukrainian politics, state building, and civil society by forming a broader consensus in society.”<sup>189</sup> As we will see later, this pre-occupation underlies the ecumenical initiatives of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

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186 Rap, *The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches*.

187 See, for example, Kateryna Shchotkina, “Patriarkh Kyrylo ta yevrointehratsiia: ataka chy vychikuvannia?” {Patriarch Kirill and European integration. Attack or waiting?}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, October 4-11, 2013.

188 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 72. There are more authors supporting that point of view, for instance, Myroslav Marynovych.

189 *Ibid.*

#### 1.4.1.2 The doctrine of the *Russkiy Mir*

The introduction of the doctrine of the *Russkiy Mir*<sup>190</sup> by the Moscow Patriarchate prompts both the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to reconsider their identities. The new doctrine was presented by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on November 3, 2009 at the Third Russian World Assembly<sup>191</sup> in Moscow. This speech is the rigid and logical continuation of the softer version of the *Russkiy Mir* offered in 2004 during the Seventh World Russian Council “Russia and the Orthodox World.”<sup>192</sup>

According to Patriarch Kirill, *Russkiy Mir* can be defined as “the common civilisational space founded on three pillars: Orthodoxy, Russian culture and especially the language and the common historical memory and connected with its common vision on the further social development.”<sup>193</sup> The *Russkiy Mir* unites present-day Russia, Ukraine, and Belorussia, and even Moldova. Concluding his presentation, Patriarch Kirill put it clearly:

“The independent states that exist on the territory of the historical Rus and are aware of their common civilisational heritage can continue building together the Rus World and interpret it as a mutual above-national project... This would mean that a state belongs to the *Russkiy Mir* when the Russian language is used there as the language of international communication, when the Russian culture is developed, the common historical memory and the common values for the development of society are preserved.”<sup>194</sup>

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190 I will use both terms “*Russkiy Mir*” and “Russian World” in the text. *Russkiy Mir* can be translated as Russian World or Rus World (invoking the common origins of Russian, Byelorussian, and Ukrainian people in the ancient state of Kyivan Rus). The notion “Russian World” will appear if it is found in the originally quoted text. In other cases “*Russkiy Mir*” will be used.

191 The forum traditionally coincides with the celebration on November 4 of the Day of the People’s Unity and is intended to provide a discussion platform for the issues of Russian language, history and culture.

192 See the speech Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, “Rossiya i pravoslavnyy mir” {Russia and the Orthodox world}, *Tsyerkov i vryemya* 1 (2004): 5-16.

193 Rap, The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches. See also the speech Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus Kirill, “Russkiy Mir – puti ukryeplyeniya i razvitiya” {Russkiy Mir – the ways of reinforcement and development}, *Tsyerkov i vryemya* 4 (2009): 5-16.

194 Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus Kirill, *Russkiy Mir*, 14. Translation from the original source.

The adjective “Russkiy” is quite dubious since it can refer to both the old Slav state Kyivan Rus and the present great Russia. Thus, it seems that with his new doctrine Patriarch Kirill addresses the geopolitical issues and current state ambitions of Russia. However, the task of bringing about the all-Slavs unity does not correspond to the Church’s pastoral mission.

Reacting to the new teaching of the Russian Orthodox Church, a number of Ukrainian religious observers claimed that Ukraine’s participation in this above-national project would endanger its existence as an independent state.<sup>195</sup> The doctrine of the *Russkiy Mir* which is to be deciphered in the context of the post-colonial Russian discourse<sup>196</sup> was described as “a mixture of Russian utopism and anti-western attitudes, nationalism and imperialism.”<sup>197</sup> For many the idea of *Russkiy Mir* is “a complex political technology of the Kremlin aiming at establishing control over the post-communist space not only through administrative-political influence but also with the help of social-psychological and spiritual-cultural speculations.”<sup>198</sup>

The idea of the *Russkiy Mir* oscillates between two extreme poles: the vision from the tsarist times according to which Ukrainians are not a separate nation and the more moderate position that calls to maintain the close ties between the Slavic people of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.<sup>199</sup> The most recent practical manifestation of this attitude were the efforts of Russia to preclude the signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union that was supposed to take place in November 2013. Such an agreement would indicate the drift of Ukraine away from the common civilisational space. Instead Moscow wanted to have Ukraine integrated into the Customs Union which automatically means the preser-

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195 See, for example, Hryhorii Druzenko, “Heopolityka vid Patriarkha: tsarstvo nebesne vs Russkiy Svit” {The geopolitics of the Patriarch. The heavenly kingdom vs Russkiy Mir}, *Relihiina panorama* 6 (2010): 47.

196 Nazar Zatorsky, „Die „Russische Welt“ aus ukrainischer Perspektive“, *Religion und Gesellschaft in Ost und West* 2 (2012): 23.

197 Chornomorets, Ideological wars. Part I. Translation from the original source.

198 Yevhen Sereda, “Shcho take “ruskii mir” naspravdi i yak vin rozkoluie Ukrainu. Pryklady ostannikh podii” {What is in fact “Russkiy Mir” and how it divides Ukraine. On the examples of recent events}, [http://zaxid.net/home/showSingleNews.do?shho\\_take\\_ruskiy\\_mir\\_naspravdi\\_i\\_yak\\_vin\\_rozkolyuye\\_ukrayinu\\_pri\\_kladi\\_ostannih\\_podiy&objectId=1247741](http://zaxid.net/home/showSingleNews.do?shho_take_ruskiy_mir_naspravdi_i_yak_vin_rozkolyuye_ukrayinu_pri_kladi_ostannih_podiy&objectId=1247741) (accessed January 9, 2014). Translation from the original source.

199 Katja Richters, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church. Politics, Culture and Greater Russia* (n. p.: Routledge, 2012), 102-103.

vation of Ukraine within the Russian economic, political, and civilisational bounds. Kateryna Shchotkina argues that when Ukraine would decisively step on the road of European integration, the separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church into an autocephalous ecclesial body would be only a matter of time.<sup>200</sup> This poses a danger to the encompassing idea of the common civilisational space of *Russkiy Mir*.

In case of the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow would lose its declared direct succession to the Kyivan Rus and would have to content itself with the own origins from the middle of the 15th century or even from 1589 when the Moscow Patriarchate got canonical recognition, which denotes it as a relatively young Church.<sup>201</sup> Such considerations mean that “with the help of the idea of the *Russkiy Mir* the Moscow Patriarchate reflects the contemporary neo-tsarist agenda of the Russian government and at the same time pursues its own interests to become the most powerful player in the Orthodox world.”<sup>202</sup>

The discourse of the *Russkiy Mir* brings new developments regarding autocephaly. Viktor Yelenskyi, renowned Ukrainian religious expert, argues that granting autocephaly is not postponed but completely excluded. Ukraine as part of the common civilisational project of the *Russkiy Mir* should not have an independent Church. On the contrary, it has to integrate and consolidate even more with the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>203</sup> Such a position represents the views of a certain part of believers, however, it completely excludes alternative opinions. Instead of an although weak but still existing compromise with those who strived for autocephaly, the division line is getting even deeper because the aspirations of the other part of the faithful are neglected.

At the same time, there are also positive visions of the present politics of excluding the issue of the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the agenda of the Moscow Patriarchate. For instance, Viktor

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200 Kateryna Shchotkina, “Chas frikiv” {The time of freaks}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert\\_thought/authors\\_columns/kshchotkina\\_column/55164/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/authors_columns/kshchotkina_column/55164/) (accessed February 12, 2014).

201 Richters, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*, 101.

202 Rap, *The Conflict between Traditional Christian Churches*.

203 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Patriarkh dav ukrainskomu suspilstvu odyń z naipotuzhnyshykh intehtratsiinykh posyliv za vsiu istoriiu nezalezhnoi Ukrainy” {The Patriarch gave Ukrainian society one of the most powerful reintegration impulses in all the history of independent Ukraine}, interview by Taras Antoshevskyi, *Relihiina panorama* 6 (2010): 51.

Yelenskyi believes that the doctrine of the *Russkiy Mir* which is endorsed by Patriarch Kirill during his many visits to Ukraine can consolidate the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine and promote the cooperation between them, “not only between these who put Ukrainian patriotism in the first place but also between those who remember that Orthodoxy is primary Christianity and not a philosophy of civilisational rivalry, who like Church history, Byzantine studies and theology.”<sup>204</sup> The negative sides of the *Russkiy Mir* and the refusal of Moscow to speak about the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church may contribute to her internal revival.

Despite its significance for the Moscow Patriarchate, the idea of the *Russkiy Mir* does not evoke great sympathies in Ukraine and is not widely known either. According to the public opinion poll released by the Razumkov Centre in March 2013, only 18.7% of Ukrainians know something about the *Russkiy Mir* doctrine where “in the west, the doctrine is associated with the restoration of the Russian Empire and in the south with the unification of brotherly peoples.”<sup>205</sup> Interestingly enough, the notion *Russkiy Mir* is better known in western Ukraine (36.3%) where the majority of the faithful are Greek-Catholics than in traditionally Orthodox eastern regions (12.9%).<sup>206</sup> Public, political, and media interest in the visits of Patriarch Kirill where he promotes the doctrine of the *Russkiy Mir* has considerably diminished between 2009 and 2011.<sup>207</sup> Political background is often ascribed to pastoral visits of the Moscow Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine. The concept of *Russkiy Mir* legitimises “the neo-imperialist politics of the Kremlin”<sup>208</sup> or in the words of Sviatoslav Shevchuk it is “a barren flower of Russian ideology, which has nothing to do with the

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204 Ibid, 52. Translation from the original source.

205 “Over 80% of Ukrainians Do not Know about the Doctrine of the Russian World,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/community/social\\_questioning/52142](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/community/social_questioning/52142) (accessed January 15, 2014).

206 “The Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: ‘Russian World’ Has Nothing to Do with the Church,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/community/religion\\_and\\_policy/53748](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/community/religion_and_policy/53748) (accessed January 17, 2014).

207 During the pastoral visit of Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in the summer of 2011, the President of Ukraine as well as leading politicians were absent during the official events, media coverage and the presence of ordinary faithful were critically low. Just consider the fact that at the same time as Patriarch Kirill served the liturgy at the Monastery of the Caves in the presence of 2,000-3,000 faithful, Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate organised the way of the cross attended by 10,000-20,000 people (according to different information sources). (Yurash, Ukrainian mission).

208 Arjakovsky, I Can no Longer Remain Silent.

church or history... This pseudo-scientific platform is now being reanimated as the imperialistic idea of the renewal of the Soviet Union.”<sup>209</sup> Concerning the visit of patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in July 2012, political scientist Oleksii Haran has claimed that “the efforts of the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church to establish *Russkiy Mir* in Ukraine are equal to the attempts of Putin to entangle Ukraine into the Customs Union.”<sup>210</sup> Also for Patriarch Filaret *Russkiy Mir* “is the idea and propaganda of the new imperium. Ukrainians reject this propaganda because we have already lived in an imperium and we want to live in freedom.”<sup>211</sup> The spiritual unity between Ukraine and Russia is repeatedly emphasised by the Patriarch Kirill, for instance in his letter to the Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko in August 2009. In this document, the Moscow Patriarch reminds him of the common struggle against Nazism, the most awful evil of the 20th century, Christian faith, speaks about the family of the Slavic states united by faith, culture, and history, where Ukraine belongs and where she together with Russia has the noble task of helping Europe to overcome its spiritual, economic, and moral crisis.<sup>212</sup> That text shows that the Moscow Patriarch pursues the unity of both countries and builds it on the common civilisational attributes of Ukraine and Russia. This interpretation of the doctrine may be too extreme, however it certainly makes many conscious Ukrainian Orthodox reconsider their allegiance to the Ukrainian Orthodox

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209 “Patriarch Sviatoslav: ‘Russian World’ Is Barren Flower of Soviet Ideology,” [http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all\\_news/community/religion\\_and\\_policy/51378](http://risu.org.ua/en/index/all_news/community/religion_and_policy/51378) (accessed January 16, 2014).

210 Yevheniia Kovalenko, “Namahannia hlavy Rosiiskoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy ystanoveryty v Ukraini “Russkii mir” rivnotsinni sprobam Putina vtiahnuty Ukrainu v Mytnyi soiuz” {The efforts of the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church to establish *Russkiy Mir* in Ukraine are equal to the attempts of Putin to entangle Ukraine into the Customs Union}, <http://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/2113/116/75289/> (accessed January 14, 2014). Translation from the original source.

211 “Slovo Sviatiishoho Patriarkha Kyivskoho i vsiei Rusy-Ukrainy Filareta pislia Bozhestvennoi liturhii z nahody 16-i richnytsi yoho intronizatsii (23 zhovtnia 2011 roku)” {Sermon of His Holiness Filaret, Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine after the Holy liturgy on the occasion of the 16th anniversary of his enthronisation (October 23, 2011)}, <http://www.cerkva.info/uk/propovidi/1921-slovo-introniz-16.html> (accessed January 11, 2014). Translation from the original source.

212 “Svyatyeyshiy Patriarkh Kirill napravil poslaniye Pryezidyentu Ukrainy V.A. Yushchenko” {His Holiness Patriarch Kirill sent a letter to the President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko}, <https://mospat.ru/ru/2009/08/11/news4494/> (accessed January 23, 2014).

Church. The loyalty of the Ukrainians with a strong national identity to their state is not compatible with their loyalty to the Church that questions the existence of an independent Ukraine.

#### 1.4.1.3 Identity and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

The antagonism in the Catholic milieu, that is between the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, does not reach such a high level of tension and can be rightly defined as a strategic competition between the two local Churches of different rites. Nevertheless, this rivalry has already lasted for centuries and is inseparably connected with the legacy of Polish-Ukrainian historical tensions and mutual accusations of nationalism.<sup>213</sup> This competition is aggravated by the change of the historical roles of Catholic Churches after the Second Vatican Council with its renewal of ecclesiology as well as by specific demographical processes in Ukraine and the changes that happened after the country gained independence.

As the largest banned Church in the world and the largest structure of resistance to the Communist regime that survived the underground, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church does not have problems with her civil and national identification.<sup>214</sup> However, emerging as the result of the Orthodox entering in union with the Roman See, sometimes Greek-Catholics encounter the problem of not being accepted by others. Greek-Catholics are now and again regarded as a historical mistake and an obstacle to the success of world ecumenism. Additionally, there is the opinion that over-emphasising civil and political matters by part of the clergy and believers undermined to some extent the trust that this Church enjoyed after her coming out of the underground in 1989.<sup>215</sup> The reasons for that could be the subject of a separate interesting discussion. There are different visions of the identity of Greek-Catholics between the veterans of the underground and the new converts as well as between the diaspora branch of the Church and the one existing on Ukrainian territory. There are also other internal problematic tensions, for instance concerning the possibilities of reconciliation among the Christians in Ukraine, the balance between the

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213 Turij, Das religiöse Leben, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 78.

214 Turii, Greek-Catholics, 10.

215 Ibid.

eastern tradition and belonging to the Catholic Church, or the self-image of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church as a local Church in the universal Catholic community, the dispute between the return to the purely eastern tradition and the adherence to the “westernisation” of the Church.<sup>216</sup> As we will see later, even the transfer of the Metropolitan seat to Kyiv was not univocally greeted by different circles of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

#### 1.4.2 Identity, nationalism, Churches

The above-mentioned identity problem of Ukrainian Churches allows the conclusion that present-day conflicts exist more inside particular confessions than between them. The antagonism between canonical and non-canonical Orthodox believers is in fact a rivalry between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian identities. The Orthodox cannot reconcile themselves to the mere fact of the existence of parallel Orthodox structures. Contrary to mainly property tensions with Greek-Catholics primarily located in the west of the country, an inter-Orthodox conflict can evolve into an all-Ukrainian one. The conflict potential of inter-Orthodox disagreements in Ukraine is aggravated by the involvement of political and state factors both inside and outside the country. Additionally, this conflict, when intentionally guided, can evolve into the inter-ethnic (between Ukrainians and the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine) and interstate conflicts (with Russia for which the defence of Russians abroad is one of the priorities of external politics and the instrument to spread its influence to the former Soviet territories).<sup>217</sup> Even though an inter-ethnic conflict is rather quite unrealistic because of the high level of tolerance among Ukrainians, the interstate tensions indeed have grounds as the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict shows.

No wonder then that those internal identification problems in particular Churches hinder them in entering into a fruitful dialogue and elaborating an inclusive vision of the union. While engaging into a dialogue, the dialogue partner must have a strong own identity in order to be able to

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216 Turij, *Das religiöse Leben*, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 69-70.

217 Oleh Turii, “Tradytiini Tserkvy v nezalezhnii Ukraini: problema identychnosti” {The traditional Churches in independent Ukraine. The problem of identity}, *Yi* 22 (2001): 130.

acknowledge compromises from the other side. Without knowing who they are, individual Churches will long to impose their point of view while neglecting other opinions which Miroslav Volf described as a lack of the “double vision.” That hinders all-Christian reconciliation in Ukraine. Dialogue, genuine listening to the partner while being aware of one’s identity are essential initial steps on the road to reconciliation.

The importance of the identity of the interconfessional conflict derives even from the mere sociological fact that the number of those who declared their adherence to the Orthodox or Catholic denomination exceeds the number of those who identified themselves as Christians. This is a typical development for many post-Communist countries including Ukraine. In the opinion of Yelenskyi, it signifies that for many people not religiosity itself with its higher ideals plays a significant role but belonging to a particular group that can also be identified with a religious denomination.<sup>218</sup> People who during the communist times did not doubt their identity as Soviet people have suddenly lost it and felt the need to acquire a new one. Religion seemed to be an attractive option as persecuted by the previous regime, promising and solid at the same time. This does not mean that those people became deeply religious. Referring again to the sociological data, it is interesting to note that when in Russia in 1991 only 6% of faithful attended mass once a month or more regularly, in 1997 this figure remained practically the same – 7%.<sup>219</sup> The Ukrainian one is not much better: according to the data from 2013, 17% of believers attend religious services once per week, and 18% – once per month.<sup>220</sup> It means that religion became not so much a matter of deep personal spiritual revival as more of a personal and later political identification.

The case of Ukraine shows that religion can be a powerful factor for national, political, and cultural mobilisation.<sup>221</sup> According to Viktor Yelensky, “We can speak about the presence of a quite definite correlation between a declaration of belonging to this or that church and political preference and political behavior.”<sup>222</sup> The regions with the highest national con-

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218 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Relihia pislia komunizmu – napriamky zmin” {Religion after communism – vectors of changes}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, August 19-September 1, 2000.

219 Ibid.

220 Razumkov Centre, Religiosity of Ukrainians, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2013), 28.

221 Yelensky, *Orthodoxy and Post-Communist Changes*, 552.

222 Ibid.

sciousness and the highest Ukrainian language proficiency equally boast the biggest number of believers.<sup>223</sup> The obvious reason for this close connection between religion and national identity in Ukraine is the century-long absence of statehood. That means that belonging to the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church automatically distinguished a Ukrainian from the western regions of the country from a Catholic Pole or an Orthodox Russian. That fact explains the huge resistant potential of that Church against the communist regime. Grzegorz Babinski proves that it is not language, economic status, or culture, but mainly religion that influenced the construction of identity in the Polish-Ukrainian borderland.<sup>224</sup>

The close link between religion and identity in Ukraine makes me think about civil religion, a term generally used to describe that linkage introduced first by the French philosopher Rousseau and popularised by the American sociologist Robert Bellah. This author opines that civil religion is the best form of any religion contrary to the religion of the priest, the religion of man, and the religion of the citizen.<sup>225</sup> The religion of the priest, among which there are also traditional Churches, including those in Ukraine that we discuss, is harmful to society. It puts the citizen in a situation of double loyalty, both to the state and to the Church, which brings about conflicts and thus we cannot speak of loyal citizens in that case.<sup>226</sup> If we consider, for example, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, we will clearly observe her double loyalty to the Holy See and the country Ukraine and the assertions of both can differ. Civil religion is fundamentally about the functionalistic use of religion as a means by the sovereign of creating “sentiments of sociability, without which it is impossible to be either a good citizen or a faithful subject.”<sup>227</sup> In his criticism of the theory of Rousseau, Jose Casanova affirms that such civil religion is normatively undesirable.<sup>228</sup> Casanova shares a similar opinion with Robert Bellah who also criticises the functionalism regarding religion on the grounds that it

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223 D’Anieri, Kravchuk, and Kuzio, *Politics and Society*, 71.

224 Grzegorz Babinski, “Borderland Identity, Religious ad National Identification in the Polish-Ukrainian Borderland,” in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babinski (Krakow: Nomos, 1997), 93-111.

225 Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 59.

226 Ibid.

227 Ibid., 60.

228 Ibid.

cannot only be an integrative but also a critical factor and that the primary loyalty of the religious community is to God and only then to the state.<sup>229</sup> In the light of those theories, we may question the attempts of some politicians in Ukraine to use the Church for their political games. In the long-term perspective this would be harmful.

There are some hints to think that, because religion plays an important role in the collective identity of Ukrainians, at least of the Ukrainians from the west, we encounter religious nationalism. When the nationalistic movement and its particular leaders rely on the assistance of religious leaders or institutions to promote its cause<sup>230</sup> we may speak of religious nationalism. For people from the west of the country, to be Ukrainian means to be Greek-Catholic which was understandable in the situation when people without their own state had to express their otherness from Polish Catholics or Russian Orthodox. Thus religion got an important place in the nation-building process. Why exactly do religion and language turn out to be the strongest identification points for western Ukrainians? Recently there have been voices in Ukraine that disperse the idea that when the Ukrainian Churches unite, these will create the basis for an all-national unity, a common bond between people. The struggle for the creation of a united Orthodox Church in Ukraine can also be regarded as a sign of religious nationalism. Ukrainian Orthodox who want to have an independent Church are accused of religious nationalism by the Moscow Patriarchate. However, it is a discussible question to which extent we may speak of religious nationalism in Ukraine, since the Church is separated from the state and does not exercise a strong influence on political matters. On the one hand, politicians try to associate themselves with the Church to get support from the population. But at the same time politicians do not really support religious claims for politics. Abortion has not been banned, even though from time to time the Churches speak up for it<sup>231</sup> and the majority of the politicians associate themselves with the Church.

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229 Robert Bellah *et al.*, *The Good Society* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992), 181-182.

230 Philip Barker, *Religious Nationalism in Modern Europe* (n.p: Routledge, 2008), 13.

231 The last joint call of the Catholic and Greek-Catholic hierarchy of Ukraine to the authorities to legally forbid abortion was issued on February 9, 2012: “Zvernennia katolytskoho yepyskopaty Ukrainy: Synodu Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy ta Konferentsii Rymo-Katolytskoi Tserkvy v Ukraini (pro zaboronu abortiv)” {Message of the Catholic hierarchy of Ukraine: the Synod of the

## 1.5 Ukrainian post-atheism

### 1.5.1 Typical features of Ukrainian post-atheism

The Church boasts the highest level of trust among the social institutions in Ukraine. This fact proves to be truthful in all the surveys conducted from the very proclamation of independent Ukraine. It is especially striking in comparison with the constantly falling level of trust in the other political and social institutions. For example, according to the public opinion poll at the end of the year 2008 the Church is the only public institution that enjoys the positive balance of trust – complete trust index – 26%, complete distrust index – 11%.<sup>232</sup> In general, the dynamics of the trust in the Church in the years 2000-2013 is positive. Even though the number of those who trust the Church completely has dropped from 30.6% in December 2000 to 22.6% in December 2013, there are more people who claim that they rather trust the Church – 33.8% in 2000 and 41.9% in 2013.<sup>233</sup> Obviously, the balance of absolute trust is not as high as it could have been expected, however, one can explain it by the social mission that the Church has to carry out. Keeping in mind the falling level of spirituality and morals, the commercialisation of human relations, corruption, violence, criminality and cynicism, it is no wonder that the respondents demonstrated a relatively low figure of trust in their answers.

In spite of the comparatively high positive balance of trust, it is important to note that people answering the questions of surveys have a different understanding of what the Church means. This is explained by the peculiarities of the religious situation in the country. Ukraine belongs to typically post-atheistic and post-communistic countries and shares the common characteristics of such societies. Serhii Zdiuruk developed a three-feature model that describes Ukraine as a post-communist country in

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Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Conference of the Roman-Catholic Church in Ukraine (on the prohibition of abortions), <http://www.ugcc.org.ua/2230.0.html> (accessed February 19, 2014).

232 Liudmyla Shanhina, “U kraini – novyi rik abo Youllupukki, abo ne za stolom khai bude skazano” {In the country comes the New Year or Youllupukki or Let us not tell it at the table}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, December 27, 2008-January 16, 2009.

233 Razumkov Centre, “Sotsiolohichne opytuvannia: Chy doviriavete Vy tserkvi?” {Sociological poll. Do you trust the Church?}, [http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll\\_id=83](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=83) (accessed February 14, 2014).

regard to religious life. The first of them is religion-outside-Church.<sup>234</sup> That means that practicing Christians preserved their belonging to the Church while the newly converted in search of the sense of life turned their sights mostly to traditional Protestant denominations. The second feature of Ukrainian post-atheism is the fashion for the Church.<sup>235</sup> This fashion is embodied in church attendance only during the big religious feasts, mainly Christmas and Easter. As for 2010, Ukrainians attended Church services 1-2 times per year on average and 7.9% of them never appear in church.<sup>236</sup> Furthermore, the fashion for a Church is closely connected with ideology. Unchurched people pay great attention to which Church they will go to for Christmas. While choosing a particular Church they select an ideology associated with this Church and in this way also identity, a political and social circle. This is especially evident in the case of politicians. Their support of this or that Church demonstrates their social position and speaks for itself.

Relations of Church and state and the closeness of Churches and politics is the last typical feature of post-communist societies.<sup>237</sup> By attending Church services, politicians declare both their ideological orientation and unity with the people. This is especially evident during the services on the occasion of big feasts when on television the services of the traditional Churches are demonstrated with special emphasis on state officials attending those celebrations.

## 1.5.2 Church and state in Ukraine

### 1.5.2.1 Legal basis

The foundation of the Church-state relations in Ukraine is defined by article 25 of the Ukrainian Constitution which postulates that

“Everyone shall have right to freedom of beliefs and religion. This right shall include the freedom to profess any religion or profess no religion, to freely practice

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234 Zdioruk, Socio-religious relations, 303.

235 Ibid., 304.

236 Razumkov Centre, “Sotsiologichne opytuvannia: Yak chasto Vy vidviduiete tserkovni sluzhby chy zibrannia?” {Sociological poll. How often do you attend Church services and meetings?}, [http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll\\_id=302](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=302) (accessed April 7, 2014).

237 Zdioruk, Socio-religious relations, 304.

religious rites and ceremonial rituals, alone or collectively, and to pursue religious activities... The Church and religious organisations in Ukraine shall be separated from the State, and school shall be separated from the Church. No religion shall be recognised by the State as mandatory.”<sup>238</sup>

Additional practical provisions of the Church-state relations are outlined by the “Law of Ukraine on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations.”<sup>239</sup> The State Committee on Nationalities and Religions is responsible for the coordination of the relations between religious organisations and the state authorities. The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations<sup>240</sup> is a consulting and recommending body that unites representatives of 18 organisations.

At the same time, despite the official separation of state and Church, occasionally intrusions of both of them happen into the domain of each other, which are not allowed by the law.<sup>241</sup> The practical implementation of the above-mentioned laws as well as their shortcomings show certain irregularities which I would like to illustrate more in detail now.

### 1.5.2.2 Intrusion of the state

Political reasons play an important role in the balance of power among the Ukrainian Churches. For instance, the election of Viktor Yanukovich as President of Ukraine in 2010 brought about the favouring of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Metropolitan Volodymyr

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238 “Constitution of Ukraine,” art. 35, <http://www.president.gov.ua/en/content/constitution.html> (accessed February 14, 2014).

239 “Zakon Ukrainy pro svobodu sovisti ta relihiini orhanizatsii” {The Law of Ukraine on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations}, <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/987-12?test=4/UMfPEGznhrRp.ZisDPcS6HI4Sws80msh8le6> (accessed February 14, 2014). See also a detailed article about the legal provisions of the Church-state relations in Ukraine: Lesia Kovalenko, “Church and State in Ukraine,” in *Law and Religion in Post-Communist Europe*, eds. Silvio Ferrari, W. Cole Durham, and Elizabeth A. Sewell (Leuven-Paris-Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2003), 355-382.

240 Official website of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations: <http://vrciro.org.ua/>.

241 Myroslava Rap, „Einige rechtliche Aspekte der Beziehung zwischen Staat und Kirche in der Ukraine und ihre praktische Umsetzung“. Paper presented at the summer university “Auctoritas und Potestas in West und Ost”, organized by the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, Fribourg University, Switzerland, Istanbul/Halki, September, 2013.

(Sabodan) of that Church blessed the newly elected President during a prayer that took place a few days before his official inauguration on February 25, 2010. Subsequently, Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church arrived in Ukraine for the inauguration ceremony and also granted a blessing to Viktor Yanukovych which became part of the official festivities of the takeover of the Presidential post. Many religious commentators interpreted that fact as the empowerment of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.<sup>242</sup> Until that the newly elected President was blessed by the Heads of all the main denominations in the country. Thus, one observed the preference of the canonical Russian-oriented part of Ukrainian Orthodoxy.

The state has powerful tools to influence the positions of Ukrainian Churches. According to Zdioruk, among the tools are the absence of the unity among Churches and the question of the restitution of Church property.<sup>243</sup> While choosing to whom to return the former property expropriated by the Soviet authorities, to grant a ground for the construction of new sacral buildings, or to help with the registration of the religious community can be a powerful means of influencing a particular Church.<sup>244</sup> There is the declaration of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, from June 11, 1999 to promote the overcoming of the consequences of totalitarian politics regarding the Church<sup>245</sup>, however it did not resolve the issue. There is no law in Ukraine that regulates the restitution of Church property by establishing the binding legal criteria, and thus, “The state and local authorities continue to utilise optional restitution as a means of gaining religious organisations’ allegiance or direct support and to in fact discriminate against wrong religious denominations.”<sup>246</sup> For a particular Church the price of such property is very high because while politically supporting one part of society, the Church is opposing the other. Indeed, a

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242 Myroslav Marynovych, “Pro shcho syhnalizuie nam inavhuratsiia Prezydenta Yanukovycha?” {What does the inauguration of President Yanukovych signalise to us?}, <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/blog/34595/> (accessed February 17, 2014).

243 Zdioruk, Socio-religious relations, 305.

244 Turij, Das religiöse Leben, in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe*, 48.

245 “Zaiava Prezydenta Ukrainy {pro moralno-politychnu reabilitatsiiu Tserkov, shcho postrazhdaly vid totalitarnoho rezhymu}” {Message of the President of Ukraine {on the moral-political rehabilitation of the Churches which suffered under the totalitarian regime}, *Liudyna i svit* 6 (1999): 23-28.

246 Gennadiy Druzenko, “Religion and the Secular State in Ukraine,” 731, <http://iclr.org/content/blurp/files/Ukraine.1.pdf> (accessed February 14, 2014).

Church “can get a building for her “favours” and the next day no one would want to enter this Church.”<sup>247</sup>

The interference of politics in the ecclesial affairs is equally evident in a very sensible issue of the settlement of the Orthodox fragmentation in Ukraine.<sup>248</sup> Elsewhere above I have already discussed the role of politics in the emergence and the support of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate by the first President of independent Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk (1991-1994). The second President, Leonid Kuchma (1994-2005), was not particularly active on the religious field, however he also met the Ecumenical Patriarch in 2000 in Istanbul in order to discuss the possibilities of the creation of the united Orthodox Church and sent a telegram to the Moscow Patriarch concerning the autonomous status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Most active in the domain of reuniting the Orthodox was the third Ukrainian President, Viktor Yushchenko (2005-2010), who considered one local Orthodox Church as the basis for the Ukrainian national identity and spirituality. However, all his efforts were also in vain.

In that regard, it is worth mentioning the serious tension in inter-Orthodox relations which arose in July 2008 when Ukraine celebrated the 1020th anniversary of the Christianisation of Kyivan Rus, the medieval state of the eastern Slavs with the capital in Kyiv. It is an important feast not only in Ukraine, and its essence is the baptism of the whole country in 988 by the decision of the ruler Volodymyr the Great who according to the legend among different denominations chose the Orthodoxy of the Constantinople Patriarchate to become the state religion. At the invitation of the President of the country Viktor Yushchenko the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew took part in the celebrations. This provoked discussions and fears concerning the possible changes of the status of the two canonically unrecognised Orthodox Churches. Among the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate there were suspicions that during the celebration ceremonies the Ecumenical Patriarch would announce the joining of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church to his jurisdiction. However, this did not happen. The celebrations attracted a lot of attention in Ukraine and abroad and emphasised once more the problem of the disunity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, but at the

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247 Zdioruk, Socio-religious relations, 306. Translation from the original source.

248 Druzenko, Religion and the Secular State, 728-730.

end the existing balance of powers was preserved and the issue of the reconciliation between different denominations of Ukrainian Orthodox did not advance.<sup>249</sup> It was proved that the efforts to bring about the unity of Orthodoxy by means of power and political pressure cannot succeed. Thus, one of the most important projects of the former President Viktor Yushchenko in the sphere of the spiritual revival of the country was not realised.

The evil of the intrusion of political forces in Church life was steadily repeated by the number of the highest Church officials. At the beginning of 2009, the Head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate Patriarch Volodymyr in his interview explicitly substantiated his negative attitude on the issue:

“As long as the question of the status of the Ukrainian Church will be discussed in a political dimension as an additional mechanism of the independence or political unity, there will be no consensus concerning that status... They have to realise the obvious thing that the Church cannot and should not be an instrument of political or ideological influence. Her nature is different.”<sup>250</sup>

That position differs from the one of the Head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate who is always calling upon the state authorities to solve the problem of Orthodox rivalry in Ukraine. This point leads us to the next element of discussion, that is to say the cooperative attitude of Ukrainian Churches regarding politics.

### 1.5.2.3 Cooperative attitude of the Churches

From a practical point of view, the cooperative attitude of certain Churches is understandable: “For the reason of the low level of religious consciousness, the weakness of laity movements and the civil society as a whole, it is almost impossible for Church hierarchy and ordinary priests to refuse “mutually beneficial compromises.”<sup>251</sup> The other expert in reli-

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249 P. M. Bondarchuk *et al.*, eds., *Relihiina polityka v Ukraini u 1960-1980 rokakh i suchasna praktyka mizhkonfesiinykh vidnosyn* {Religious politics in Ukraine in the 1960s-1980s and the contemporary practice of interconfessional relations} (Kyiv, 2010), 143.

250 Mytropolyt Volodymyr, “Povernutysia u vertykalne polozhennia” {Back into the vertical position}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, December 27, 2008-January 16, 2009. Translation from the original source.

251 Zdiouruk, Socio-religious relations, 306. Translation from the original source.

gious developments in Ukraine, Kateryna Shchotkina, draws our attention to the fact that the reason why a Church often fails to resist the arbitrary acts of state authorities is the weakness that Churches share with “little Ukrainians”, namely the psychology of survival.<sup>252</sup> In practice it means that it is sometimes more important for Churches to get a new sacral building or a permission to build one rather than by the refusal to do so to show that a Church will not fulfil the desires of local officials. There may never be a second request because it is easier to refer to another Church in the neighbourhood. We can anticipate such situations, not only on the level of the religious community of a local village or town, but also on the higher level of hierarchs and whole Churches. As a consequence, so argues Shchotkina, Churches that pretended to be centres of spiritual revival, state-building, and ideology are getting tired of playing these unusual roles for them.<sup>253</sup> The reason is not that such roles are not proper to Churches but that the state in post-communist societies is still treating Churches as one of its departments, which presumes direct interference and benefits trading. State authorities have such apparent tools for influencing property or the right to allow or forbid religious denominations to access particular state institutions. In many cases the agreements about the pastoral care in military units, prisons, and other institutions terminate with the rotation of the superior authorities with which a particular Church has signed a corresponding arrangement.<sup>254</sup>

The experience of some election campaigns show that, there were successful attempts to gain the people’s votes by direct appeals to the believers by the priests during liturgies or private conversations with parishioners or by including the representatives of the clergy to the election lists. Regarding the local elections of 2010, Kateryna Shchotkina maintains that in the course of that year Ukrainian society was coming back to the transitory methods of interconfessional rivalry, which appeared to be to a great extent already overcome. Instead of managing to influence believers by the evangelical message and proper example, certain Churches again directly engage in politics and sustain ideological claims of certain political

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252 Kateryna Shchotkina, “Operatsia “Kooperatsiia”: mizh svobodoiu ta mainom” {Operation “Cooperation.” Between freedom and property}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, May 24-30, 2003.

253 Ibid.

254 Rap, Einige rechtliche Aspekte.

parties.<sup>255</sup> For example, the Metropolitan of Cherkasy and Kaniv Sofronii, who belongs to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, was included into the main list of candidates for the local elections of the pro-state Party of Regions. The leading position according to the highest number of clergy involved in the elections struggle is the southern Ukrainian city Odesa. Interestingly, all those candidates belong to the Orthodox Church under Moscow jurisdiction. Agafangel Savvin, the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, in 1990-1994 was a deputy in the Ukrainian Parliament and then for years the deputy in the regional council of Odesa.<sup>256</sup> As a matter of fact, it should be mentioned that also some bishops of that Church refused to play a part in the political struggle and forbade the priests from their eparchies from doing so. A similar situation, though not to the same degree, existed with regard to the clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate. They also participated in the local elections of 2010 but supported other political powers, “democratic” in their own words and radical nationalistic ones. Of course, it is not for the first time that this Church endorses right-wing parties in the political spectrum of Ukraine, however, the mere fact of the increasing involvement of the Orthodox clergy into politics reveals perturbing tendencies. As Shchotkina continues, in Ukraine it is still bad practice to solve religious problems by political means.<sup>257</sup>

It seems, however, that recently we have more and more been facing contradicting developments. Some Churches on behalf of the highest hierarchs do not express the direct support of any political party or politician, proposing instead only the criteria according to which believers should make their choices. In his article “Thoughts in the Time before Elections” (to the local regional councils in 2010) the Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church Cardinal Liubomyr Husar argues that participation in elections is the responsibility of every citizen. Voters are obliged to get to know candidates and their programmes and on the basis of that to make a choice dictated by their consciences.<sup>258</sup> This appeal of the Head of the Church was very well received as a wise and respectful position giving an

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255 Kateryna Shchotkina, “Bratiii u spyskakh” {Brothers on the lists}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, October 16-22, 2010.

256 Druzenko, Religion and the Secular State, 731.

257 Shchotkina, Brothers on the lists.

258 Liubomyr Husar, “Rozdumy u peredyborchyi chas” {Thoughts in the time before elections}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, October 9-15, 2010.

answer to the current sentiments in society. People felt disappointed after the Presidential elections in January 2010 and the coming to power of political forces that were gradually suppressing the achievements of the Orange Revolution of 2005 including the recent changes to the Constitution of the State in October 2010, which gives the fullness of power in the hands of the President. Liubomyr Husar is concerned about the growing social apathy, the level of which was traditionally high in Ukrainian society, and shares his thoughts and gives guidelines and spiritual support to his flock before the elections for the local regional councils, held on October 31, 2010. With such an approach the functions pertinent to the Church are not distorted and the Church can exercise her positive influence on the development of a mature democracy in society.

This tendency became even stronger during the EuroMaidan in the winter of 2013-2014. During those pro-European and later anti-Presidential and anti-governmental demonstrations resulting from the refusal of the Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union in November 2013 and the subsequent use of power against the peaceful protesters, also the Ukrainian Orthodox Church showed a more reasonable stance and appealed for the ceasefire and negotiations between authorities and the opposition. Even though there were the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the highest rank who expressed their support to the Presidential course of action,<sup>259</sup> the official stance of this Church differs radically from that during the Orange Revolution in 2004-2005 when this Church offered an open support to the Presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovich, even after it became evident that he falsified the elections.<sup>260</sup>

Interestingly enough, in 2007 the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate condemned the tendency to engage into the political struggle. The bishops, gathered at the Synod held on December 21, 2007, discussed the problems of the internal life of the Church and condemned

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259 The most famous of them is the Metropolitan Pavlo Lebed, the vicar of the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves. Yekatyerina Shchetykina, "Amvon na nyeytralnoy polosye" {Ambo on the neutral lane}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, January 24, 2014.

260 See a study about the stance of Ukrainian Churches during the political crisis caused by the falsified Presidential elections of 2004 and the subsequent Orange Revolution: Igor Gordyi, *Ukrainische Kirchen und die Orange Revolution. Haltung der ukrainischen Kirchen in den gesellschaftspolitischen Prozessen in der Ukraine im Jahr 2004* (Südwestdeutscher Verlag für Hochschulschriften, 2009).

so-called “political Orthodoxy:”<sup>261</sup> “On the bitter experience of the last years we learned that politics divides us... We emphasise that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is beyond politics. Our Church gives its followers the freedom to support any political views but we cannot allow the political slogans to penetrate into the Church milieu.”<sup>262</sup>

This decision was impelled among other things by the accusations of this Church of political engagement during the famous Presidential elections at the end of 2004, followed by the Orange Revolution. That practice was reconsidered by the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and openly condemned on the highest level. Commenting upon the decisions of the Synod of Bishops Serhii Hovorun, the Head of the Department of the External Relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, stated that political Orthodoxy indicates the support of certain political views or programmes on the basis of religious claims. In fact, religious views are used to support the given system of political visions, and the religious component is subordinated to the political one.<sup>263</sup> Hovorun continues that the Synod made it clear that the Church is interested in such relations with political leaders, which are based on the law and not on personal sympathies. That is an important statement because it situates the Church-state relations in Ukraine in legal frames, thus bringing about stability and invariability concerning any political power at a given historical moment.<sup>264</sup>

The instrumental use of religion denies the very essence of it and can cause the discreditation of religion. Church officials knowing the real situation should be careful and not let the Church be merely used by politicians as a means of gaining people’s support or votes before elections. The Church runs the risk of losing her authority among believers as a result of the unconditional support of certain political powers. The already mentioned Zdioruk was certainly right maintaining that “in real life because of the internal weakness, disunity, and the absence of clear laws, discipline and the proper culture of the implementation of law, Churches engage into

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261 Petro Zuiev, “Politychne pravoslavia vidokremly vid Tserkvy” {“Political Orthodoxy” detached from the Church}, *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, January 12-18, 2008.

262 “Zvernennia Soboru Yepyskopiv Ukrainskoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvy do yii virnykh chad” {The address of the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to her faithful}, <http://www.zaistinu.ru/articles/?aid=1736> (accessed February 18, 2014). Translation from the original source.

263 Zuiev, Political Orthodoxy.

264 Ibid.

the cooperation and even competition for the support of state authorities.”<sup>265</sup> Therefore, the change in the attitude of the Churches to politics that becomes evident nowadays is only to be greeted because indeed benefits trading and manipulation happened all too often in the Ukrainian Church-politics sphere.

#### 1.5.2.4 The idea of a national (state) Church in Ukraine

In the course of the existence of an independent Ukraine the idea of the creation of a national unified Ukrainian Church has time and again come to the surface of political and social life in the country. In her broader meaning a national Church signifies “absolutisation of the role of the Church in the creation of the Ukrainian nation (as an ethnic community) and the Ukrainian state (as a state of the titular nation).”<sup>266</sup> The idea behind this is that the unified Church will underwrite harmony in society. Except for this radical position there are far more moderate and realistic ones. For example, according to the diaspora historian Myroslav Labunka, the creation of a national Church is a bizarre and fantastic idea, which would stimulate religious indifference rather than spiritual and national unity.<sup>267</sup> The proper answer in his opinion can be a just one – tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation between different Churches.

There were attempts to review the established model of the Church-state relations in Ukraine and to secure a special place for the traditional denominations on the grounds that they played a particular role in the formation of Christianity and culture; that they were weakened by the communist regime and need help in order to be able to resist the pressure of foreign missions which may cause the loss of Ukrainian authenticity; that religions enjoy the high level of confidence among the population and therefore, those Churches that support the establishment of the Ukrainian state should be sustained in contrast to denominations with the spiritual centres abroad.<sup>268</sup>

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265 Zdioruk, Socio-religious relations, 305. Translation from the original source.

266 “Tserkva i suspilstvo v Ukraini: problemy vzaiemovidnosyn” {Church and society in Ukraine. Problems of mutual relations}, *Natsionalna bezpeka i oborona* 10 (2000): 34. Translation from the original source.

267 Myroslav Labunka, “My vsi – ukraintsi...” {We are all Ukrainians...}, *Liudyna i svit* 3 (1992): 5-6.

268 Yelensky, Ukraine. Church and State, in *Church-State Relations*, 149-150.

In the 1990s there were several attempts from the side of the authorities of the country to establish the Orthodox Church as a state Church. This idea is connected to the popular view at that time that there should be an independent Church in the independent state. This trend is especially evident in the state-Church politics conducted by the first President of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk, in particular his practical support for the Metropolitan Filaret in his struggle to gain autocephaly for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. After the defeat of this idea, the politics of the President's administration did not change. It comes back again to the stage after the death of Patriarch Mstyslav of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate in 1993. The government conducted a strong campaign for the unification of the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches under the Patriarch of Kyiv.<sup>269</sup> Although the state was again defeated in its attempts to unite the Orthodox, it only proves the fact that the idea of the creation of a de facto state religion was still alive.

The situation changed after the elections in 1994, when the rival leftist candidate Leonid Kuchma was elected to the office of President. Backed by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate during the election campaign, he as President introduced the new policy of non-interference in the inter-Orthodox and inter-Church conflict. The decisive change came after the events of the so-called “Black Tuesday” held on July 18, 1995 when the police beatings of participants at the funeral of Patriarch Volodymyr (Romaniuk) of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate took place.<sup>270</sup>

It was revealed at first in the President's patronage over the project to give the burial site of Patriarch Volodymyr a proper appearance and a gravestone. For the first time in the history of independent Ukraine the way of reconciliation, non-interference, and dialogue with the leading confessions was favoured.<sup>271</sup> Patriarch Filaret also changed his confrontational tone with the state authorities in the spirit of civil peace and religious tolerance.<sup>272</sup> Furthermore, in 1996 the Ukrainian Constitution was

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269 Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation*, 141.

270 Shortly, the conflict burst out because of the desire of the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate to bury their deceased Patriarch Volodymyr on the grounds of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, thus claiming the right of this Church to retain this great symbol of Kyiv Christianity.

271 Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation*, 182.

272 *Ibid.*

adopted that outlined the separation of state and Church and the prohibition to establish any confession as a state religion.

The important point to be made from this illustration is that though at the beginning of the existence of Ukraine as an independent state there was an explicit desire of the state to favour and back one confession, later on this policy underwent a change. Since 1996 we cannot talk anymore about any attempts to proclaim “the leading faith” in the country. It became even possible for Pope John Paul II to visit Ukraine in June 2001 regardless of the protests of the Moscow Patriarchate. Even though Leonid Kuchma’s successor, President Viktor Yushchenko, made efforts to unite the Orthodox confessions in Ukraine, he never talked about favouring Orthodoxy at the expense of other denominations. Even President Viktor Yanukovich, despite his explicit backing of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, did not have on his agenda the project of elevating this confession to the rank of national religion. Therefore, we may claim that the idea of a national religion is completely abandoned among the highest Ukrainian political circles. It is definitely a positive development because it sets the stage for a possible reconciliation among the conflicting confessions.

In addition to the theoretical and historical analyses, it is also interesting to discuss the results of the public opinion poll concerning the question.<sup>273</sup> In spite of the cautious estimations of the scholars, opinion polls

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273 It is important to draw a clarification concerning the statistics of the support for the state Church in Ukraine. For instance, according to the survey of Razumkov Centre, while in 2002 17.4% of respondents were positive about the creation of the local unified Church in Ukraine, in 2007 this figure reaches 20.7%. At the same time, the number of the opponents to the idea remained almost the same – 21.7% in 2002 and 22.6% in 2007. Significantly the number of those, who do not know what a local unified Church means, diminished from 49.7% to 39.6%. See the results of the survey Razumkov Centre, “Sotsiologichne opytuvannya: Chy vvezhaiete Vy neobhidnym stvorennia yedynoi pomisnoi ukrainskoï tserkvy?” {Sociological poll. Do you consider it necessary to create the united local Ukrainian Church?}, [http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll\\_id=445](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=445) (accessed February 18, 2014). However, it seems important for us to note that there often exists confusion between a national Church in Ukraine and the creation of the local unified Church. Those are two different notions. The former means that a particular Church becomes a state Church. The latter refers to the establishment of the unity between the three Orthodox Churches. However, this does not mean that such a unified Church would be a state Church. It seems plausible that in the public opinion those two notions sometimes mean the same, namely the creation

show quite a different picture – many Ukrainians used to support the idea of a unified national Church. However, in comparison with the 1990s the number of supporters of the national state Church drastically dropped: when in 1991 32.5% and in 1998 41.8% of respondents sustained the idea,<sup>274</sup> in 2000 and 2013 correspondingly only 20% and 9% expressed the positive opinion.<sup>275</sup>

Serhii Zdioruk argues that one should avoid the temptation to misuse the term national Church. According to his definition, the notion of a national Church includes certain parameters that allow one to speak of the identification of a Church as national. Those parameters are historical, geographical, ethno-cultural, political and demographical. On the basis of those Zdioruk suggests the following definition of a national Church: this is a Church of any confession which functions at any given historical period on the basis of her tradition and on the given territory, having acquired her ethno-confessional specificities, this Church promotes the ethnic culture, the self-conscious and state-oriented mentality of a particular nation and is widely spread among the population of a certain region.<sup>276</sup> The author emphasises many times that a national Church does not mean “the only” one for the whole nation and cannot be a sort of nation state religion.<sup>277</sup> Therefore, a nation can have several necessary religious confessions or Churches that would contribute to its protection and advance.

Although the idea of a national Church found some support according to the public opinion polls, its propaganda is forbidden due to the freedom of conscience principle, and chances for it to be truly implemented in the real Ukrainian circumstances are vague. On the contrary, we witness precisely the contradictory situation among Ukrainian believers. Oleksii Onyshchenko prophetically claimed back in 1991 that the real perspective of Ukraine is not the creation of a unified religion, but the growth of religious pluralism and a pluralist society.<sup>278</sup> Obviously, in the course of its

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of one national Orthodox Church and granting it the legal status of a state religion.

274 Adapted from Kolodnyi, A history of religion, 421.

275 Razumkov Centre, Religiosity of Ukrainians, in *Relihiia i vlada v Ukraini* (2013), 33.

276 See Serhii Zdioruk, *Ethnokonfesiina sytuatsiia v Ukraini ta mizhtserkovni konfliktky* {Ethno-confessional situation in Ukraine and inter-Church conflicts} (Kyiv, 1993), 9-32.

277 Ibid., 12.

278 Quoted in Kolodnyi, A History of religion, 424.

history, Ukraine encountered the eastern and western Christian traditions and these are so organically built in the life of the nation that we cannot imagine the situation that any of them would be eliminated from the spiritual sphere of the country. Various modern religious traditions that are constantly spreading their influence should not be forgotten since they do not want to lose their impact on the spiritual domain.

Taken together, those findings suggest that the creation of a national Church would be impossible and not desirable. Additionally, there is a theological reason as an obstacle to a national Church, namely the Catholic vision of the universality of the Church. Ukraine is a country that, apart from the Orthodox, has a great number of Catholics, Muslims, Protestants, Jews, and other religious believers. The establishment of a national Church would contradict the implementation of the principle of religious freedom and the building of a tolerant civil state.

Our conclusions in this subchapter support the idea that the fragmentation among Ukrainian religions indeed reflects the broader fragmentation on the level of society and the regional diversity that precludes the establishment of a political consensus. Therefore, in the 1990s there was evidently a tendency among certain political elites including the first President of Ukraine to strive for the creation of a national Church. However, this policy was abandoned later due to the appreciation of the religious diversity of Ukraine and the understanding that the establishment of a national Church would not foster the unity in the country, but would instead cause new divisions. Religious pluralism was reflected in the Ukrainian Constitution and since then the question of a national Church in Ukraine has been out of political consideration. Although the Ukrainian authorities continue to support the unification of the three branches of Orthodoxy into one autocephalous Church, they have abandoned any claims about the Orthodoxy to become a state religion. That signifies that, despite the merits or weaknesses of religious pluralism in Ukraine, this is established as the official state policy and is out of discussion.

## 1.6 The role of the media in the interconfessional conflicts

It is also important to reflect at this place the influence of the media, primarily of the press, on the promotion of interconfessional tolerance. Obviously, it is to a great extent the media that inform the people's picture of religious life, inter-Church, and inter-confessional relations. In this subchapter I will consider the main messages present in the leading confes-

sional editions concerning the issue of tolerance towards other religions communities.

In Ukraine we have the declaration of the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. In practice it also means the free existence and functioning of secular and religious editions. Churches and religious communities similarly have access to radio and television and are more and more present on the Internet.

Turning now to the figures, the statistics of the periodicals published by the leading Ukrainian Churches in 2014 is the following: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate – 109, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate – 35, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church – 6, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church – 28, and the Roman-Catholic Church – 9 periodicals.<sup>279</sup> I do not aim here to analyse completely the content of those periodicals. I will only describe the main tendencies that hamper the advance of religious tolerance and reconciliation in Ukraine. Liudmyla Fylypovych and Anatolii Kolodnyi identified several of the following trends.<sup>280</sup> First of all, traditional Churches often endeavour to confine the freedom of conscience only with regard to their own activities. There were several attempts to demand from the state the restriction of the spread in the country of new religious movements and even Protestant communities and, consequently, their periodicals. Additionally, large numbers of articles are characterised by critical and biased information about the history, doctrine, rites, the way of life and activities of other confessions and Churches. Finally, we often witness the explicit longing for presenting the own confession as the only truthful one with the subsequent criticism of other denominations. Consequently, one encounters a lack of understanding and practical implementation of the principle of the freedom of conscience in the Ukrainian context.

Another problem is the lack of journalists specialised in the field of religious studies and able to treat religious issues professionally.<sup>281</sup> This absence of experts is particularly acute among the secular editions. The con-

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279 The State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions, Networks of Churches.

280 Anatolii Kolodnyi and Liudmyla Fylypovych, eds., *Tolerantnist v sferi mizhkonfesiinykh vidnosyn. Relihiieznavchyi analiz* {Tolerance in the sphere of interconfessional relations. Analysis in religious studies} (Kyiv, 2004), 98-99.

281 Myroslaw Marynowytsch, *Ökumenische Prozesse in der Ukraine* (Lwiv: Sonderdruck. Institut für Religion und Gesellschaft an der Ukrainischen Griechisch-Katholischen Theologischen Akademie, 1999), 28.

tent analysis of their publications proves that religious issues are treated narrowly and are aimed to draw attention to some sensation. Often in their inputs on the events of religious life journalists spread partial false information that points to the demand of the qualitative media critics of Ukraine.<sup>282</sup> Religion mostly becomes a matter of publication before the main religious feasts, in connection with the visit of an important Church official or concerning some scandalous events in the life of a particular Church or community. Presented without the context, such events are communicated as typical of the religious group and contribute to the creation among readers of negative images and prejudices. Under those conditions it is no wonder that the secular periodicals sometimes significantly contribute to the escalation of the tension between different Churches.

The freedom of conscience presupposes tolerance in the interconfessional relations, which belongs to the factor of social understanding and reconciliation. The question arises logically, whether the contemporary Ukrainian religious and secular press contributes to that tolerance. Above I mentioned problems with secular periodicals. It would be interesting to scrutinise how tolerant the religious press is in comparison with the secular editions. A similar study was presented by Liudmyla Fylypovych and Anatolii Kolodnyi,<sup>283</sup> in which the authors examine the main publications of different traditional Ukrainian Churches for the first half of the year 2004. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that religious periodicals can also fuel interconfessional conflicts and foster intolerance. Even though those results are a bit outdated, I rely upon them because according to recent surveys the situation with the Ukrainian religious periodicals has not really changed. The new trends in the confessional media concern the growing figure of Internet editions. However, I am more interested in the content of the articles than merely in different technological devices. Therefore, as an example I would like to examine the publications of Orthodox Churches that covered the visit of the Patriarch of Moscow Kirill to Ukraine in July 2010. This was a prominent event in the religious and political life of the country in the year 2010 and obviously drew great attention of the media.

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282 Taras Antoshevskyyi, “Deshcho pro vyklyky pered Tserkvoiu v epokhu informatsiinykh tekhnolohii” {Something on the challenges of the Churches in the time of informational technologies}, *Patriarkhat* 6 (2010): 6-7.

283 Kolodnyi and Fylypovych, *Tolerance*, 97-111.

This study will be confined only to the official editions of Orthodox denominations in Ukraine. At the beginning, it is plausible to claim that also many nonconfessional editions are often not neutral in describing the events of Church life. For instance, in the introduction to the special theme of the visit of Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in “Relihiina panorama” (“Religious Panorama”), the editor-in-chief, Anatolii Kolodnyi, the head of the Association of religious experts, comments in a negative way about the Patriarch. He denotes him as a threat to an independent Ukraine and its national-oriented Churches, calls non-Ukrainians those who support the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, and speaks of the attempts to resuscitate the Soviet Union with the help of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>284</sup> The author uses words like *naizd* (invasion) or names Kirill *mordvyn* (Mordovian), which refers to the Mongols and Tatars invasions in Ukraine in the 13th-14th centuries. Interestingly enough, “Religious Panorama” enjoys the explicit support of Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.

Turning now to the official newspapers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, I can summarise that in general they were written in an elevated praising tone without any deeper evaluation or any traces of criticism concerning the visit of the Moscow Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine. The official “Lyetopis pravoslaviya” (“Chronicle of Orthodoxy”) presents a detailed account of the Patriarchal visit, publishes excerpts of his speeches, and gives the list of his meetings with different state officials and visits to educational establishments. The titles of the articles are neutral, for instance, “The Most Holy Patriarch Kirill in Odesa,” “The Most Holy Patriarch Kirill in Dnipropetrovsk” or again “The Most Holy Patriarch Kirill in Kyiv”<sup>285</sup> are typical titles. The lack of a reasonable evaluation of the messages of Patriarch Kirill is perhaps the biggest weakness of the official publications of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Understandably, the official editions of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate have a totally different style. They highly criticise the politics of the Moscow Patriarchate concerning Ukraine and express this directly, not caring too much about the words used. In order to determine that, I have analysed several editions of the “Holos pravoslavia” (“The Voice of Orthodoxy”) in 2010, one of the several official publica-

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284 Anatolii Kolodnyi, “Shcho ne mozhe Putin, te tvoryt Kyrylo” {What Putin cannot do Kirill is doing}, *Relihiina panorama* 6 (2010): 41-42.

285 See *Lyetopis pravoslaviya*, July 2010.

tions of the Kyiv Patriarchate. The general trend after the visit of Patriarch Kirill in 2010 is the growth of the confrontation between the Orthodox of Kyiv and the Moscow Patriarchate. What is interesting is that the main vector of the struggle is directed against the Moscow Patriarchate itself and not against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which is under the jurisdiction of this Patriarchate. That tendency is expressed in the official Church media. For example, in his appeal to the media Patriarch Filaret speaks of the aggravation of the conflicts related to the campaign that the Moscow Patriarchate is waging among the clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate to make them change their allegiance and join Moscow. Patriarch Filaret calls this “the realisation of the Moscow plan for the destruction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate” and the violation of the rights of the faithful.<sup>286</sup> In an interview connected with the visit of the Head of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, Patriarch Filaret states that the visit of Patriarch Kirill is a purely political action, namely the expansion of the *Russkiy Mir* doctrine that serves the state policy of Russia. That is the justification of the necessity of the independent Orthodox Church in Ukraine.<sup>287</sup> In addition to the statements of Patriarch Filaret, there are articles of other authors, which are written in a similar militant spirit. For example, Serhii Yarmoliuk in his article speaks of the websites of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate that are full of materials about the *rozkolnyky* who support Filaret.<sup>288</sup> In the opinion of the author those remind one of the news from battlefields. Thus, this Church is more a political organisation than a Church that has to preach love towards the neighbours. Evidently, the style and the very titles of the articles are confrontational.

I have obtained rather striking results after the reading of the official editions of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. In “Uspenska vezha” (“The Uspenska Tower”) the visit of Patriarch Kirill was not men-

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286 “Pro plan znyshchennia Kyivskoho Patriarkhatu. Zaiava Patriarkha Kyivskoho i Vsiiei Rusy-Ukrainy Filareta dlia zasobiv masovoi informatsii” {About the plan of the destruction of the Kyiv Patriarchate. Statement of the Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine Filaret to the media}, *Holos pravoslavia*, January 15, 2011. Translation from the original source.

287 Patriarch Filaret, “Vidstoiuuchy ukrainske pravoslavia” {Defending Ukrainian Orthodoxy}, interview, *Holos pravoslavia*, July 15, 2010.

288 Serhii Yarmoliuk, “Kontseptsiia “Ruskoho Mira” Patriarkha Kirila yak osnovna perepona rozvytku pravoslavnoho khrystianstva v Ukraini” {Concept of the “Russkiy Mir” of Patriarch Kirill as the main obstacle for the development of the Orthodox Christianity in Ukraine}, *Holos pravoslavia*, September 15, 2010.

tioned at all. In another edition “Nasha vira” (“Our Faith”) there appeared only one article concerning the event. In this commentary the author, a famous Ukrainian dissident Yevhen Sverstiuk, denounces the politics of Patriarch Kirill towards Ukraine in the context of the visit of the Head of the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>289</sup> The article preserves, however, a tolerant style.

What follows from this short analysis of the official press is that the intolerant style of writing is often pertinent to the Churches when they speak of their mutual conflicts. It concerns especially the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches of the Moscow and the Kyiv Patriarchates. The strife that exists between the Churches is embodied in the newspaper pages and is, thus, transferred to the readers and faithful, together with the low quality of the secular publications on religious matters, which creates a miserable picture of the elucidation of Church-related events in Ukraine.

It is, therefore, plausible to affirm that “there is still not enough space in the Ukrainian information field to propagate ecumenism or at least all-national reconciliation”<sup>290</sup> due to “insufficient religious and theological formation of Ukrainian journalists, as well as considerable non-professionalism of the monitoring of religious processes in Ukraine.”<sup>291</sup> As a result the information flow in the Ukrainian media about religious affairs is often either non-objective or incomplete. On this basis Churches can easily propagate their discriminative ideas with regard to other confessions – the level of religious journalism, recently with few exceptions, was not sufficient in order to oppose attempts of manipulation.<sup>292</sup>

## Conclusion

In this part of the monograph I analysed inter-Church conflicts in Ukraine. They have origins in the historical and cultural peculiarities of transitional

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289 Yevhen Sverstiuk, “Misioner v Odeskii operi” {A missionary in the Odessa Opera}, *Nasha vira*, August 2010.

290 Marynovych, *An Ecumenist Analyses*, 7.

291 *Ibid.*

292 In 2012, the first Ukrainian manual for Church press services and journalists was published that gives practical advice for the successful communication with the secular mass media: Svitlana Babynska, Yulia Zavadaska, Mariana Karapinka, and Olena Kulyhina, *Tserkva i media: sim krokiv do porozuminnia* {The Church and media. Seven steps to understanding} (Ezdra, 2012).

society. Unlike other post-socialist countries, there is no dominant Church in Ukraine. Society is highly pluralistic. Despite all the difficulties connected to that, scholars consider pluralism as a positive development for the establishment of democracy in the country.<sup>293</sup>

The four Churches of the Kyivan tradition were engaged into the inter-confessional rivalry in the early 1990s striving to establish their position in society, develop their structures, and gain followers.<sup>294</sup> The most violent fighting for the sacral buildings reached the highest point in 1993 after which the intensity of the conflict began to drop due to the construction of new sacral buildings and giving over of the Church property expropriated by the Soviet regime.<sup>295</sup>

It does not, however, mean that nowadays Ukraine can boast inter-confessional peace. I would describe the situation as a struggle to ensure the leading position in Ukrainian Christianity and to define who will become the basic Church for a future unity. Additionally, by gaining insight into the conditions and circumstances of the functioning of the traditional Churches in an independent Ukraine, it is plausible to affirm that the main causes of conflicts at their initial stage were the emergence of non-canonical Churches, the struggle for the redistribution of the Church property and the practice to use the state authorities to gain influence over a particular territory. Today the most contentious issues in addition to the problem of the non-canonical status of some of the Churches are the different visions of the future of Ukraine, the support of certain geopolitical

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293 Jose Casanova studied the influence of religious pluralism in Ukraine for the establishment of civil society and concluded that the absence of religious unity “may turn out to be a blessing in disguise, in so far as it may be conducive to the formation of a culturally pluralistic, religiously tolerant, and democratic Ukraine” (Jose Casanova, “Ethno-Linguistic and Religious Pluralism and Democratic Construction in Ukraine,” in *Post-Soviet Political Order. Conflict and State Building*, eds. Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder (London: Routledge, 1998), 96). Interestingly enough, Casanova even believes that the unlikely unification of Catholic and Orthodox denominations in Ukraine is beneficial to the Ukrainian-Russian relations because “the emergence of a single Ukrainian national Church confronting the imperial claims of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine could only serve to exacerbate Ukrainian-Russian conflicts and to jeopardise not only democratic politics in Ukraine but even national independence.” (Ibid., 97).

294 Oleh Kyseliov, “Ekumenichna sytuatsia v Ukraini u konteksti Tsentralnoi ta Skhidnoi Yevropy” {The ecumenical situation in Ukraine in the context of Central and Eastern Europe}, [http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies\\_of\\_religions/12060/](http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of_religions/12060/) (accessed February 18, 2014).

295 Ibid.

orientations of the country, the language used in the Church services, the ambitions of particular representatives of the highest Church leadership, and finally the mutual intrusion of Church and politics into each other's affairs. The recent months of the EuroMaidan movement for the European choice of Ukraine and political reform of the country have drawn the Churches closer in protecting human dignity.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the existing system of values and identities was dismissed and individuals as well as newly established Churches were striving to find their new characters. This is also one of the causes of interconfessional conflicts in Ukraine. David Little perceived it correctly that tensions between the Churches at the beginning of the 1990s were not “generated by religious or confessional differences. The conflict at the bottom is about “patriotism and national self-identity,” about “what it means to be Ukrainian.”<sup>296</sup> Embodying the regional differences (East-West identity struggle) Churches can contribute to the hampering of the stability of society. Additionally, Church-state as well as inter-Church relations are pretty politicised. Belonging to a particular Church signifies the political orientation of a person in the same way as the identity of a Church is revealed by her support for particular political parties or politicians during elections times. This contributes to the polarisation in society. Furthermore, the Churches often identify themselves with particular political powers, become vulnerable to criticism of supporting the policies that do not always contribute to the democratisation of Ukraine. The backing by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Presidential candidate who falsified the results of the elections in 2004 is just one example of that trend.

The national character of the Churches is also revealed through their understanding of the responsibility for the future of the country. However, the way they see this future is different and often provoked conflicts as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church rather sticks to the ideal of the *Russkiy Mir* and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church sustains the western orientation of Ukraine. We cannot exclude religion from participating in the debates about the development of the country. Such debates are rather desirable. At the same time, religious statements about nation building should not be used for the manipulation of certain political groupings in order to pursue their aims. It seems that this idea becomes clearer to the traditional Christian Churches in Ukraine. Especially the recent events of the EuroMaidan

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296 Little, Ukraine, 74.

showed that from supporting political groupings the Churches turned to the promotion of the key values of civil society – the rule of law, justice, and human dignity.

As a means of impeding among other things the spread of non-traditional religious movements, the idea of a unified national Church was suggested. That is a Church that brings together major Christian denominations in Ukraine, which sustain the distinctly Ukrainian national idea in the country. In that way, the proponents of that idea aimed at the spiritual unity of the country and the strengthening of the national-oriented wing of Ukrainian Christianity. It is only positive that this idea was abandoned in practice because in such an ethnically and linguistically diverse country as Ukraine, a national Church would not gain considerable support. In that regard the situation with the Church is the religious side of the debate about the essence of the Ukrainian nation, namely whether it is ethnical or civil.

Existing interconfessional tensions in Ukraine have negative consequences in the psychological sphere, in public consciousness.<sup>297</sup> Obvious examples are negative stereotypes of *uniates* (followers of the Ukrainian Greek-catholic Church), *rozkolnyky* – those who broke the unity of the Church (believers of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate), *moskali* – an ethnic slur that derives from the name Moscow and consequently suits those favouring the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. Such stereotypes of the believers of the other Church can get stuck in the public consciousness longer than even political ones. The situation when followers of the other confessions are perceived not as fellow Christians but as unrepented sinners excludes a tolerant attitude towards them.

Furthermore, the methods of the inter-Church struggle that one witnesses, the ways of polemic, and the provocative messages of certain religious leaders can play a destabilising role for the actual believers and those who are sympathetic to the Church. It prompts people to leave the Church or even worse to become cynic and frustrated by religious messages. Understandably, all this does not allow one to speak of the spiritual unity of Ukrainians and raises doubts concerning the possible reaching of this unity in an observable future.<sup>298</sup>

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297 Kolodnyi, History of religion, 330.

298 Ibid.

As it follows from the analysis of the religious context of Ukraine, the religious situation in the country is a reflection of the social-political condition. The connection of different Churches in different periods with certain political powers in pursuing common goals also contributed to the failure by the former of their authority among believers. It was also proved above that the division among Ukrainian Churches runs along ethno-cultural lines and connected to it socio-political rather than purely religious lines. It means that the attitude towards Ukrainian statehood, language, national consolidation and so on is more important than purely religious salvific messages. Therefore, while looking for possible ways of reconciliation among the Churches and the consolidation of society, the question of the role of the ethno-cultural identity must be considered in the generation of conflict. The reconciliation of clashing identities is reflected in the works of Myroslav Volf and it will be considered later in this book.

Because the religiosity of Ukraine is rather perfunctory, it is important that the Churches do more on the pastoral and educational levels to deliver their message. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has such a potential in that regard as we have seen in the results of public opinion surveys and the statistical data. Pluralism demands the ability to transform in a creative way the varieties of views and beliefs into a source of enrichment instead of conflict.<sup>299</sup> The future of the interconfessional relations in Ukraine will depend on whether the Churches manage to develop that capability.

Finalising this analysis, some questions arise. How significant is the influence of traditional Ukrainian Churches on the development of the democratic attitudes in the country, the idea sustained by Casanova? Do the Churches have enough power to generate changes in the hearts and minds of the people? Are reconciliation and national unity something that Churches can contribute to if they have not been able so far to solve conflicts between them? Finally, how do the Churches understand reconciliation in Ukrainian society and in what regard do they speak of it? Those research questions will be treated in the following parts of this volume.

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299 Viktor Yelenskyi, “Tsentralno-Skhidna Yevropa: relihiini zminy ta relihiinyi pluializm” {Central-Eastern Europe. Religious changes and religious pluralism}, [http://old.risu.org.ua/ukr/study/research\\_conference/pluralism/](http://old.risu.org.ua/ukr/study/research_conference/pluralism/) (accessed February 19, 2014).