

Chapter III. Understanding of reconciliation

3.1 The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: reconciliation as the spiritual regeneration of the person

3.1.1 John Paul II as the advocate of reconciliation in Ukraine

In 2011 Ukraine celebrated the 10th anniversary of the visit of Pope John Paul II that took place on June 23-27 in the capital of Ukraine Kyiv and in the city of Lviv, at that time the seat of the Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. This event evoked enormous interest throughout the country. Only in the liturgy in the Byzantine rite in Lviv participated one and a half million people. The Pope's visit was welcomed with a great enthusiasm and was described in the words of superlatives: "Among the great surprises of this visit we "came in touch" with heaven. In those days we once again came across an unfamiliar tranquility, noble dignity, ideals of life, and we remembered that we are naturally called to our created image and likeness of God."¹

Coming closer to our research it is important to remember that forgiveness was the great topic that Pope John Paul II put at the centre of the celebration of the Jubilee of 2000. On March 12, 2000 the Pope apologised for seven types of sins committed by the Roman Catholic Church. The apology before the Jews for the sufferings committed by Christians was another gesture.² A year before, in 1999, the Vatican issued a document under the title "Memory and Reconciliation. The Church and the Faults of the Past"³ and *Incarnationis Misterium*,⁴ the Bull of Indiction of

1 Michael Dymyd, "What Happens after the Bishop of Rome's Visit to Ukraine?" <http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/religion.and.society/papa.visit/ugcc/> (accessed January 9, 2014).

2 Anthony Bash, *Forgiveness and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 113. See a well-analysed account of the Sunday of the purification of memory and its theological meaning in Isabelle Aumont, *La "purification de la mémoire" selon Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Parole et silence, 2008), 15-52. See also a recent research on the official Catholic theology of repentance and the purification of memory around the Great Jubilee of 2000 in Claire Reggio, *Repentances catholiques: L'Église face à l'histoire (1990-2010)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013).

3 International Theological Commission, "Memory and Reconciliation. The Church and the Faults of the Past," http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/cong

the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. Both of them address the question of the forgiveness by a group or institution. In fact, John Paul II officially asked forgiveness in the name of the Church more than 30 times.⁵ The Pope addressed specific issues of forgiveness and reconciliation in the Ukrainian context in particular during his visit to the country.

One of the leading themes of this trip was the rapprochement between the traditional Christian Churches in Ukraine. The Orthodox reacted in different ways to that appeal; however moderate voices of hope were heard also from their side. For example, John Paul II was welcomed by the Head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate who hoped that the Pope would help the unrecognised Orthodox Churches in Ukraine to come out of international isolation.⁶

John Paul II mentioned ecumenical questions in several addresses. For instance, the Roman Pontiff called the Ukrainian Christians to the establishment of the full communion between them:

“Ecumenical dialogue must therefore be an indispensable priority for believers and for the Churches in Ukraine. The division of Christians into different confessions represents one of the greatest challenges of our time. We have a long way to go to reach full reconciliation and visible communion among Christ’s disciples.”⁷

Communion between Christians of different rites can be restored due to the memory of one baptism that eliminates obstacles caused by the diversity of traditions.⁸ The purification of the burdened memory and mutual forgiveness between Catholics and Orthodox is needed on the way to reconciliation:

regations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000307_memory-reconc-
itc_en.html (accessed February 1, 2014).

- 4 Ioannes Paulus II, “*Incarnationis Misterium*. Bull of Indiction of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000,” http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/docs/documents/hf_jp-ii_doc_30111998_bolla-jubilee_en.html (accessed February 1, 2014).
- 5 Aumont, La “purification de la mémoire”, 39.
- 6 “Filaret Thinks Pope Will Bring Ukraine Closer to the West,” <http://old.risu.org.ua/eng/news/article;1215> (accessed January 9, 2014).
- 7 “Meeting and Lunch with the Members of the Ukrainian Catholic Episcopate. Address of the Holy Father. Apostolic Nunciature, Kyiv. Sunday, 14 June 2001,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20010624_ucraina-meeting-episc_en.html (accessed December 5, 2012).
- 8 “Holy Mass Celebrated in Latin Rite. Homily of the Holy Father. Sunday, 24 June 2001. Kyiv, Chaika Airport,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20010624_ucraina_en.html (accessed December 5, 2012).

“Unfortunately, there have also been *sad times*, when the image of Christ’s love has been obscured: bowing before our one Lord, *let us recognise our faults*. As we ask forgiveness for the errors committed in both the distant and recent past, let us in turn offer forgiveness for the wrongs endured. The most fervent wish that rises from my heart is that the errors of times past will not be repeated in the future. May their memory not be a hindrance on the way to mutual knowledge, the source of brotherhood and cooperation.”⁹

The reconciliation between Christian denominations in Ukraine in communion is indispensable because “there is no authentic evangelisation without full fraternal communion.”¹⁰

In his pronouncements John Paul II also addressed the need of the Polish-Ukrainian rapprochement. In particular, in his homily during the Eucharist celebration on June 26, 2001, the Roman Pontiff called the Ukrainian and Polish people

“to build the communion which remains threatened by the memory of past experiences and by the prejudices stirred up by nationalism... It is time to leave behind the sorrowful past... May pardon given and received spread like a healing balm in every heart. May the purification of historical memories lead everyone to work for the triumph of what unites over what divides, in order to build together a future of mutual respect, fraternal cooperation and true solidarity.”¹¹

It was a favourable moment for that sort of plea because those words were pronounced during the liturgy in the Latin rite with the participation of the clergy of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and numerous faithful of both Ukrainian and Polish roots. In his letter to Liubomyr Husar and Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the Head of the Catholic Church of Poland, on July 8, 2003 John Paul II wrote: “Considering the past events in a new perspective and taking on the responsibility to build a better future for all, let the

9 “Arrival Ceremony. Address of the Holy Father. Kyiv International Airport. Saturday, 23 June 2001,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20010623_ukraina-arrival_en.html (accessed December 5, 2012). Italics preserved from the original text.

10 “Divine Liturgy in Byzantine (Greek-Catholic) Rite. Homily of the Holy Father. Kyiv, Chaika Airport. Monday, 25 June, 2001,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20010625_ukraina_en.html (accessed December 5, 2012).

11 “Eucharistic Celebration in the Latin Rite and Beatifications. Homily of the Holy Father. Tuesday, 26 June 2001, Lviv,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20010626_ukraina-beat_en.html (accessed December 5, 2012).

two nations look at each other with an eye for reconciliation.”¹² The words of the Polish Pope are in the epigraph to the joint message of the Catholic bishops of Poland and Ukraine on forgiveness and reconciliation on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Volyn massacre: “May through the purification of historical memory everybody becomes ready to put higher what unites and not what divides us.”¹³

Already this short account of the reconciliation discourse of John Paul II proves that the topic belonged to his main concerns. Practically in every official speech the Pope referred at least in a few words to the need of reconciliation between peoples and religious denominations in Ukraine. The Pope’s visit was a powerful thrust to the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to promote the theme of reconciliation. Intensive work on the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation began after John Paul II’s pilgrimage. This Pope is described as the Apostle of peace and reconciliation and his message should stimulate the reflection on the need and meaning of reconciliation in Ukraine.

This spiritual testament of reconciliation revealed itself in the course of the Polish-Ukrainian rapprochement. In the sermon during the liturgy on the occasion of the reconciliation act between the Polish and Ukrainian Catholic bishops, Liubomyr Husar reminded one that this event took place four years after the visit of John Paul II to Ukraine. The Pope’s appeal to live in unity, peace and love, was uttered at the same square where the bishops now declare their will to rapprochement that left a profound impact in the hearts of the people. In the light of this testament of the Pope, the bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and of the Roman Catholic Church of Poland accomplished the reconciliation act and called believers to follow it.¹⁴ Therefore, I find it justifiable to place the references to the reconciliation message of John Paul II among the distinctive features of Greek-Catholic theology.

12 “The Pope Calls for Volyn Reconciliation,” <https://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/pope-calls-for-volyn-reconciliation-16896.html> (accessed February 27, 2014).

13 No. 2019. Translation from the original source.

14 No. 368, 611.

3.1.2 The Greek-Catholic tradition of reconciliation

It seems important for the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to occasionally remind their faithful of the reconciliation initiatives that took place in the past. It concerns the Polish-Ukrainian relations as well as the initiatives of Cardinal Liubachivskyi aimed at the rapprochement between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Moscow Patriarchate. Additionally, Liubachivskyi strived to make his faithful acquainted with the true history of the ecumenical movement, in particular with the ideas and efforts of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi and Patriarch Yosyf Slipyi on the unity of the Church. The following analysis will focus on those references more in detail.

In particular, allusions to the history of mutual attempts at reconciliation draw attention in the texts dedicated to the reconciliation between the Ukrainian and Polish nation whether they were written by Liubomyr Husar, the Greek-Catholic Synod of Bishops, or in the joint documents of the Polish and Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy.¹⁵ In his sermon on the occasion of the Polish-Ukrainian pilgrimage to Zarvanytsia in August 2004, Liubomyr Husar revoked the history of the Polish-Ukrainian efforts to rapprochement. He reminded one of the fact that in 1987 in Rome the leaders of the Polish Catholics and of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics exchanged their declarations of forgiveness. Because of the political situation of that time the practical implementation of the reconciliation programme was impossible and, hence, this Church initiative remained practically unknown. In the spirit of the declarations of 1987, the contemporary Church leaders of Poland and Ukraine should feel obliged not to repeat the mistakes of the past and stand openly for reconciliation: “We cannot return the past but we want to forgive each other and reconcile.”¹⁶ In Husar’s opinion, this initiative should be embodied nowadays when the times became more favourable. Similarly, the mutual declarations of 1987

15 Also Cardinal Liubachivskyi mentioned the declarations of forgiveness that his Church exchanged with the Heads of the Polish Catholic Church Józef Glemp and Stefan Wyszyński in 1965 and 1987. See „Ansprache von Kardinal Myroslav Ivan Liubachivskyi am 6. November 1987 aus Anlass der 40-Jahr-Feier von „Kirche in Not/ Ostpriesterhilfe“ in Rom“, in *Die Ukrainische Katholische Kirche* (Königstein: Kirche in Not/Ostpriesterhilfe, 1990), 56.

16 No. 362, 602. Translation from the original source.

are reminded of in the message of the Greek-Catholic bishops to the Polish and Ukrainian nations in May 2003.¹⁷

In their joint message on the occasion of the mutual forgiveness and reconciliation act “Reconciliation between Nations is Possible,” the Polish and Ukrainian Catholic bishops underscored this tradition more extensively.¹⁸ In particular, the bishops mentioned two meetings between the Ukrainian and Polish Catholic hierarchies that took place in Rome on May 22, 1945 and on October 8 and October 17, 1987. Jubilee celebrations of the baptism of the Kyivan Rus in Rome in 1988 and the later celebration by the Roman-Catholic and the Greek-Catholic hierarchs in Polish Czestochowa were among those first steps to mutual rapprochement. The next meetings took place after both countries became independent from the communist rule. The years 2000 and 2001 are of special importance. The Millennium festivities of 2000 drew the Catholics in Poland and Ukraine closer, and the pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II to Ukraine in 2001 gave a new impulse to the search for understanding between the two neighbouring countries.

In my opinion, this broad reference to the history of reconciliation attempts between Poland and Ukraine has a twofold meaning. First, in this way the authors of the text want to present the mutual forgiveness and reconciliation act of the year 2005 as a natural development in the relationships between the two states. This reconciliation act is not something that appeared all of the sudden, but it has its history and is a logical result of the sequence of events. Secondly, a careful reader notes that all the events of the mutual rapprochement that are mentioned in the text always have a reference to the Church, be it meetings between the Catholic hierarchies, the celebration of thousand years of Christianity in Ukraine, or the Pope’s pilgrimage to Ukraine. Even the commemoration of the Volyn tragedy of Poland in 2003 is depicted as being made possible due to the spiritual atmosphere of the Pope’s visit to Ukraine in 2001. As a matter of fact, the “Joint statement of Presidents of Poland and Ukraine on agreement and rapprochement” from 1997 is not mentioned in the text, perhaps partly because of its exclusively secular nature. The impact of the Orange Revolution on the reconciliation between Poland and Ukraine simply could not be neglected due to the successful mediating role of Poland and because of the engagement of the Churches in Ukraine in the peaceful de-

17 No. 162, 283.

18 No. 289, 481.

velopment of the revolution. One may conclude that the authors of the text wanted to emphasise the Church's contribution to the reconciliation between both countries and the importance of its spiritual dimension.

Husar's predecessor, Cardinal Liubachivskyi, equally showed respect for the Greek-Catholic tradition of reconciliation, especially regarding the rapprochement between the Russian and Ukrainian nations. He was not the first Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church who demonstrated a benevolent attitude towards Russians.¹⁹ Both his precursors, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi and Yosyf Slipyi, in their difficult circumstances expressed the desire for the peaceful mutual coexistence of the two nations. Sheptytskyi himself was imprisoned by the tsar for his efforts for the good of the Russian people,²⁰ and Slipyi declared readiness to recognise all the rights of the Russian Orthodox Church when she respects the rights of the Greek-Catholics.²¹ Consequently, following example of those famous forerunners, on the eve of the celebration of the millennium of the baptism of the Kyivan Rus, Liubachivskyi again addresses to the Russian people his willingness to forgive. Additionally, Liubachivskyi reminds one of the German-Polish and German-French reconciliation as examples for the Ukrainian-Russian rapprochement.

Commenting on paragraph 21 of the Balamand Agreement about the preparation of the full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Myroslav-Ivan Liubachivskyi maintains that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has already begun to make her contribution under the guidance of two forerunners of Liubachivskyi in the 20th century, Andrei Sheptytskyi and later Yosyf Slipyi. In particular, Cardinal Liubachivskyi claims that many of the practical postulates of the Balamand Agreement were mentioned in the ecumenical writings of Sheptytskyi. His thoughts were developed by Yosyf Slipyi who in communist-ruled Ukraine spoke about the need of unity between the Churches as a necessary means to oppose the Soviet regime and the best method of evangelisation.²² Having this deep understanding of the significance of the

19 No. 5000, 439.

20 It is unclear what Liubachivskyi means by the good of the Russian people. Perhaps the author refers to the efforts of Sheptytskyi to establish the Russian Greek-Catholic Church.

21 No. 5000, 439.

22 "Poslannia Patriarkha Yosyfa pro poiednannia u Khrysti (3.VI.1977)" {Pastoral letter of Patriarch Yosyf on uniting in Christ (3.VI.1977)}, in *Znaky chasu*, eds. Zynovii Antoniuk and Myroslav Marynovych (Kyiv: Sfera, 1999), 143-145.

Church unity and keeping the tradition of his predecessors, Cardinal Liubachivskyi in the name of the bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church promises to follow the practical rules of the Balamand Agreement listed in paragraphs 21-33, which should promote the peaceful Orthodox-Catholic dialogue and fraternal relations between the Churches.

The ideas of Myroslav-Ivan Liubachivskyi are later referred to by his successors at the head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. One is reminded occasionally of his gesture of asking forgiveness from the Moscow Patriarchate in 1987 and confirming his openness towards the Orthodox brothers.²³ For instance, the “Conception of the Ecumenical Position” tells the Moscow Patriarchate that still in 1987 the Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church at that time Cardinal Liubachivskyi expressed his will for reconciliation with the Russian people and the Church.

Myroslav-Ivan Liubachivskyi also contributed to the correction of the negative vision of ecumenism typical of his times. He was aware of the lack of knowledge that Ukrainian Christianity experienced at the early 1990s concerning the initiatives towards the unity between the Churches. Hence, he attempted to fill that gap by publishing an extensive pastoral letter “On the unity of the Holy Churches.” The text unfolds the history of the ecumenical movement of the 20th century, especially the relations between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The aim of Cardinal Liubachivskyi was to make Greek-Catholics acquainted with that history, and moreover, make them realise the role of their Church in the ecumenical movement. In particular, the author unfolds the meaning of the notion Sister-Churches, depicts the special attention of the Pope to the Orthodox Churches beginning from the 1980s, and extensively dwells upon the repercussions of the Balamand Agreement for the future activities of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Liubachivskyi considered it important to make his Church informed about the stance of the ecumenical movement and to encourage the faithful to work on the rapprochement between the Churches: “In the past we used to complain sometimes because we had an impression that in the ecumenical dialogue they “spoke about us” but “without us”... We cannot complain anymore because our presence is desirable and we are welcomed on all the levels.”²⁴ All that proves that the tradition of reconciliation is very much cherished by the leadership of the

23 See, for instance, No. 32, 59.

24 No. 5002, 161. Translation from the original source.

Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church who makes efforts to familiarise the faithful with it for the success of the initiatives of reconciliation.

3.1.3 The human heart – the locus of reconciliation

The heart as the core of the human person

Commenting on the paragraph on “War and peace” of the “Basis of the Social Concept” of the Russian Orthodox Church, Alexander Vasyutin expressed a thought that equally characterises the official documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church:

“...A sociopolitical strategy and an ecclesial document, any ecclesial document, are intended rather for individuals in order to facilitate for them their personal choice for good, than for social groups and decision-making bodies. Otherwise any concept would turn to be impersonal, totally ignoring the moral dimension of human life, whereas the Church is called on to address exactly this sphere of human existence and not any other sphere.”²⁵

Placing emphasis on the individual, appealing to the concrete person, the Greek-Catholic Church leadership addresses that domain of human existence where the Church establishes a particular expertise. This approach is especially evident when the Church names the human heart the locus of reconciliation and the source of changes in general.

Already *Catechism of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church* contains a section “The heart – the core of the human person.”²⁶ It is in the heart where all the feelings arise, it is a source of will and desires, there the person communicates with God and the conscience makes decisions about good and evil, the heart is the spring force of the human’s being.²⁷ Evil inclinations and passions may transform the human heart into “a source of

25 Alexander Vasyutin, “Understanding the Concept of Just Peace in the Contemporary Teaching of the Russian Orthodox Church,” in *Just Peace: Orthodox Perspectives*, eds. Semegnish Asfaw, Alexios Chehadeh, and Marian Gh. Simion (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2012), 270.

26 Synod of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, *Katekhyzm Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy “Khrystos – nasha Paskha”* {Catechism of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church “Christ is our Passover”} (Lviv: Svichado, 2011), 234. Translation from the original source.

27 Ibid., 234-235.

iniquity and injustice which stains all the dimensions of life: personal, family, social, cultural, economic, and political.”²⁸

There are just a few addresses of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church where the topic of reconciliation is approached from the theoretical side. Most of them were issued on the occasion of the Days of Purification and Reconciliation, initiated by Liubomyr Husar and admitted in the city of Lviv in 2000 and 2001. The teaching in those pronouncements can be applied to practically any case of reconciliation. The core message consists in the idea that reconciliation happens in the heart of a person and is connected to the transformation of the whole person. Let us substantiate that conclusion by several references to the texts.

The address on the Reconciliation Day in 2001 of Cardinal Husar begins with the reflections on the terrorist attacks in the USA of September 11, 2001. He claims that hatred is the source of what happened. The first question to be asked is whether one bears animosity towards others in the heart. The way to reconciliation begins from the heart of every particular individual, “the first step happens in my own heart.”²⁹ In that context reconciliation means purification and forgiveness as it is the only correct answer to the challenges of the contemporary world.

While accentuating that reconciliation begins in the heart, Husar can be reproached with the omission of the relationality of reconciliation. It seems that the other is not necessary for reconciliation as it takes place in the heart of a person; it does not presuppose the rebuilding of the relationships that necessarily belongs to the essence of the process. Indeed, Liubomyr Husar notes:

“When we speak about reconciliation, we usually (and that is correct) think about two or several people that have to reconcile. However, the way to reconciliation has as its prerequisite making order in one’s own heart. When unwillingness, malice, hatred to other person (or persons) rule in my heart, it is even not possible to speak about a possibility of reconciliation with them; the first step has to happen in one’s own heart.”³⁰

This impression of the confinement of reconciliation to the internal work of the spirit, which has not a lot to do with the people around, is corrected in Husar’s sermon during the liturgy on the occasion of the beginning of the Jubilee Year on December 25, 1999. The author maintains here that

28 No. 2020. Translation from the original source.

29 No. 118, 221.

30 Ibid. Translation from the original source.

the reconciliation between people means openness to each other, the ability to look in each other's eyes after having forgiven the neighbour.³¹ This openness to the other is one of the features of reconciliation that has already happened, a fruit of reconciliation. Consequently, Liubomyr Husar indeed points here at the relationality of reconciliation. It is always directed to the reshaping of the relations with the other. And nevertheless, the beginning of that process happens deep inside of the human heart.

Where the changes are born

Having analysed Husar's pronouncements on the Reconciliation Day's celebration, one notices that his steps to reconciliation are inspired by the canonical discipline of the sacrament of penance. It is easily retraceable when one considers the core elements of that sacrament. According to the *Catechism of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church*, a legitimate sacrament of penance presumes five components: examination of the conscience, contrition (sorrow for having offended God), resolution to amend (avoid the sin in the future), confession of the sins to the priest, and doing penance.³² The sacrament of penance signifies the reconciliation with God and the Church and its important condition is the reconciliation with the fellow men.³³

The comparison of some elements of the sacrament of penance with Husar's vision of reconciliation brings interesting results. The purification of memory as an attempt to learn the truth about the evil committed corresponds to the examination of the conscience. A decision not to repeat the past offences is nothing else than the decision to amend. Additionally, the emphasis on a personal reconciliation with God and the neighbour only reinforces the similarities. It is not accidental that Husar invites his audience to crown reconciliation with the holy sacraments of penance and communion.³⁴ Therefore, he depicts reconciliation as a personal and private act that has first of all the task to rebuild the relationship with God and only after that with the neighbour. The teaching of Husar on reconciliation can be more precisely described as a personal spiritual transformation and

31 No. 332, 554.

32 Synod of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, *Catechism*, 150-151.

33 *Ibid.*, 151.

34 No. 118, 222.

only after that as a tool of the rebuilding of the relations on the societal level.

Liubomyr Husar often refers to that conclusion in his texts on concrete cases of reconciliation. For instance, he is of the opinion that the Church unity cannot be reached through political manoeuvres, negotiations, or compromises. The way to a genuine and lasting Church unity consists in the purification of the heart from sin and prejudices, releasing oneself from hatred and pride, changing the attitude towards the fellow men.³⁵ The split between the Churches is an opportunity to work towards unity, to come closer to one's neighbour and through him to Christ.³⁶ Striving for unity is a way to show love to God and fellow Christians. Husar claims that during the Soviet persecutions people could well reveal their internal disposition towards God and other people. Nowadays, in peaceful times, a person proves his/her love by searching for rapprochement.³⁷ The years of working on memorandums or developing different initiatives aiming at the unity between the Churches have not been successful. Cardinal Husar is convinced that interdenominational conflicts are nourished by hatred that reigns in the hearts of people. In that case there is no connection with Christ and no peace.³⁸ Therefore, Church unity will be reached after a deep internal change of every human being because the whole person is needed for unity.³⁹ It means: "We stand ourselves in the way of unity until we have not overcome the unwillingness in our hearts towards the neighbours."⁴⁰ The core of this change is to see in another person an equal human being.⁴¹ Prayer, fasting, or charity are often ostentatious sings of Christians practices which do not always touch upon the internal disposition of the person and it is precisely this one that has to be transformed.

This spiritual and deeply personal way of dealing with worldly affairs is a peculiarity of Husar's thought. Concrete persons and not projects are in his focus of attention. The human being is an engine of the changes in the world around us; therefore, it is there, in the human heart, that the order has to be established before any project of the transformation of reality can succeed. The legitimate question arises whether this personal conver-

35 No. 98, 182.

36 No. 83, 153.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 154.

39 Ibid., 153.

40 Ibid., 154. Translation from the original source.

41 Ibid.

sion is sufficient for a sustainable change of the attitude of institutions. I will scrutinise Husar's approach further in paragraph 4.3 where I deal with the challenges of justice in transformation.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the independence of Ukraine, on December 1, 2011, the Heads of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate issued a joint message. In that text the Church leaders dwell upon the reasons for the crisis in the contemporary Ukrainian state and society and on their inability to introduce and realise reforms necessary for the development of the country. In the opinion of the authors, the fostering of the economic development will not help to overcome the present societal crisis on all the levels of Ukrainian society. Again we notice an approach focused on the individual because the main ground for the current poor state of affairs is the crisis of the human person herself:

"The human being is first of all a spiritual being. His outer successes or defeats are the results of a good or wrong spiritual life. The same holds for the whole society. Therefore, let us not look for the guilty ones outside – the main reason for the troubles is hidden in us, in the spiritual crisis that cankers our society."⁴²

Consequently, the Church leaders plead to introduce the state reforms on the basis of justice, love, and solidarity. This message prompted 11 famous Ukrainian intellectuals and public figures to ground the Initiative 1st December that envisions its mission of the formation of the active civic position of Ukrainian citizens on the basis of spiritual values proclaimed in the original message of the Ukrainian Churches.⁴³

It is important to keep in mind, while reading this book, that the quite unilateral focus on the individual dimension penetrates and defines the understanding of forgiveness, justice, the way of making changes, and fi-

42 "Zvernennia tradytsiinykh Ukrainskykh Tserkov do virnykh ta do vsikh liudei dobroï voli z nahody dvadtsiatyllit' referendumu na pidtverdzhennia Aktu proholoshennia nezalezhnosti Ukrainy" {Message of the traditional Ukrainian Churches to the faithful and all people of good will on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the referendum for the confirmation of the Act of the proclamation of independence of Ukraine}, <http://www.ugcc.org.ua/2077.0.html> (accessed February 27, 2014). Translation from the original source.

43 See the programme document of the initiative issued on December 1, 2012: The 1st December Initiative, "Ukrainian Charter of the Free Person," <http://1-12.org.ua/ukrainian-charter-of-the-free-person> (accessed May 3, 2014).

nally the very essence of the whole message of reconciliation in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

3.1.4 Reconciliation with the help of God

The leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church claims that reconciliation cannot happen all of a sudden because it is a long process, whether it is about the reconciliation between nations or the interreligious rapprochement. The word “process” is used deliberately because not many people are ready to say all at once “I forgive and ask for forgiveness.” For example, according to the Greek-Catholic documents, the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation is a process that needs sufficient time and a comprehensive strategy that has to be developed by the state authorities, Churches, and religious organisations.⁴⁴ Being aware of the practical difficulties of rapprochement, what do the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church suggest? Where to look for hope that our good intentions will be embodied? The answer is easy and is strongly grounded in faith: God’s help is the key factor of success.

Cardinal Husar himself constantly endeavours to put an end to the doubts about whether radical forgiveness and reconciliation are possible. He agrees that they are especially difficult for the people who themselves fell victims to injustices: “It is easy to talk about all that, but how can one accomplish such an act after the centuries of hostility?”⁴⁵ The answer is that one needs God’s help on the way to reconciliation. To those who hesitate, Cardinal Husar addresses the following words: “Do not rely only upon yourself thinking that you can accomplish everything by yourself. Rely upon God because the faith unites us with Him.”⁴⁶ The way to reconciliation leads through fasting and prayer because through prayer one entrusts the self to God and through fasting one expresses the hope in God.⁴⁷ Cardinal Husar doesn’t present any concrete programme of how to overcome the painful inheritance of the past but he calls to purely spiritual Christian means. Numerous official pronouncements of Husar are concluded by ap-

44 No. 162, 284.

45 No. 362, 602. Translation from the original source.

46 Ibid. Translation from the original source.

47 Ibid.

peals to the help of God, His Holy Mother and all the saints to help on the road to reconciliation.

In Husar's opinion, every Christian gets from Christ the power to long for forgiveness, for instance, through participation in the sacraments:

“Having witnessed God's coming to us and having experienced His presence among us, His visiting our hearts under the signs of bread and wine, we will be able to do an act of God's love, thanksgiving to God – the readiness to forgive and to be forgiven. All this will not only become possible but also self-evident if we open our hearts to Jesus who came to us.”⁴⁸

Christ's presence in His gift of Himself in the Holy Eucharist reveals the love of God to his people and makes them ready to forgive and be forgiven. One just has to open one's heart towards Christ.

In order to underline the importance of the reliance upon God for the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation, the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church quote the Gospel story of Jesus at the lake of Gennesaret⁴⁹ when he ordered Peter to go fishing again after this disciple has caught nothing during the whole night. At first, Peter does not believe the words of Jesus but then he does obey and indeed gets his nets full of fish. This story should help overcome the skepticism that often arises when the issue of reconciliation is addressed. It seems to be too difficult, too overwhelming, and simply practically impossible. But one should always recall the words of the Gospel that “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Lk 18,27).

Leaving reconciliation entirely in the hands of God with trust in His power to make even the most uncertain projects come true also characterises the theology of forgiveness of Cardinal Liubachivskiy. In his declaration of pardon to the Moscow Patriarchate, the author shows the benefits of reconciliation and its embeddedness in the tradition of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Ultimately, he entrusts that endeavour in the hands of God. Liubachivskiy strongly believed that only when people have God in their hearts, will they be able to find power to forgive; neither political, diplomatic, nor scientific methods or a sheer force will make such a step possible.⁵⁰ It is a prayerful, obedient, and humble attitude that I assume to be typical of the Eastern Christian tradition. Often we do not find in those texts concrete plans, strategies or demands from the oppo-

48 No. 368, 611. Translation from the original source.

49 See Lk 5,1-6.

50 No. 5000, 439.

nent. This declaration of Liubachivskyi rather proclaims the openness to receive the other.

All the graces in the life of individual Christians or in the entire Church are to be considered as God's blessing. Even the elevation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to the patriarchal status will happen under the action of the Holy Spirit. In this way Husar answered to those faithful who felt confused because of the non-recognition of the patriarchate of their Church by the Vatican until now. Husar comforts and encourages the Greek-Catholic faithful that the elevation of the Church to the patriarchal dignity will happen in due time when this gift ripens in the heart of the people. Liubomyr Husar calls for humbleness as it is not about the personal consent or discord of the Pope but it is a matter of God's blessing.⁵¹

In the letter to the Heads of the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine from February 14, 2006, Husar wrote that while commemorating the Lviv Pseudo-Synod as a wrong method of bringing the unity of Christianity, the Churches have to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit who alone can inspire the creative search of unity in diversity.⁵² This is the responsibility of the Churches before God and Ukraine. The unity between Churches is a difficult task and cannot be achieved without the grace of God. But before the Churches arrive at the agreement about the institutional form of reunion, they have to concentrate on what is possible now, that is on the formation of the spirit of peace and accord.⁵³ No particular institutional form of unity is presented in this text but the author expresses his belief that with the help of God it will be reached in the future.

Hence, we may draw the conclusion that the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church constantly expresses its trust in the help of God on the way to national or inter-Church reconciliation. One may wonder whether this means the lack of concrete projects of rapprochement. I am rather inclined to believe that it is the expression of the eastern character of that Church with its emphasis on prayer and spirituality rather than on human constructs.

51 No. 2000 (No. 3001, 152).

52 No. 216, 360.

53 Ibid.

3.1.5 Reconciliation as a Christian obligation

The next peculiarity of the Greek-Catholic texts on reconciliation is the discourse on duty. Reconciliation as a Christian obligation is best expressed in the documents on the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation and on the unity of the Churches in Ukraine. Church unity as the will of God in his commandment “May all be one,” reconciliation as a Christian duty and a logical step of the commandment of love are profoundly elaborated in the teaching of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The following examples prove that the Church leadership adopts a radical approach to reconciliation.

Husar justifies his commitment to the ideal of forgiveness by reference to God’s commandment of love. Loving God and the neighbour will bring prosperity to the people: “In the foundation of people’s flourishing can be laid only those bricks which are baked in the fire of love to God and fellow man.”⁵⁴

The distinctive element of the mutual reconciliation and forgiveness act of the Polish and Ukrainian Catholic bishops consists in the understanding of reconciliation as a Christian duty. It is a radical meaning that derives from the Christian character of both nations. Reconciliation as the fulfilment of the spiritual testament of the new beatified martyrs of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church reinforces the radical vision of rapprochement which finally becomes an act of prayer of forgiveness and reconciliation. The fundamental text that portrays reconciliation as the obligation of the Polish and Ukrainian peoples is the document “Reconciliation between nations is possible.” Historical or political circumstances, Church rites, or even nationality vanish before the claim “Let us remember first and foremost that we are God’s children.”⁵⁵ The duty of unity as an offering to God is connected to the Gospel citation about the obligation to reconcile with one’s enemy before one brings the altar donation.⁵⁶ Additionally, this duty to reconciliation derives from “the eternal perspective of human destiny”⁵⁷ which is again connected to the common Christian background of

54 No. 139, 251. Translation from the original source.

55 No. 3002; No. 289, 482.

56 „If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your opponent there and then come back and present your offering” (Mt 5,23-24).

57 No. 3002; No. 289, 482.

the Polish and Ukrainian peoples. In that sense the message of the mutual forgiveness and reconciliation act is composed in the spirit of the radical rapprochement of Liubomyr Husar.

For a theological substantiation of the duty of Poles and Ukrainians to reconcile Liubomyr Husar refers to the notion of the Mystical Body of Christ. In his sermon during the liturgy on the occasion of the reconciliation act between the Greek-Catholic and Roman Catholic bishops, Husar claims that the principal reason for such a celebration is the presence of Christ among his people gathered for the Divine Liturgy. This theological beginning of the sermon is not accidental. Cardinal Husar maintains that the liturgical gathering in the name of Christ is the manifestation of God's love towards his people making community in one body and one Church.⁵⁸ The obligation and possibility of reconciliation flow from that liturgical nature of unity between the Polish and Ukrainian peoples. Remarkably, in the same sermon Husar extends the duty of forgiveness from the Polish to other neighbouring nations of Ukraine so that in this part of the world peace and harmony could flourish.⁵⁹ The most complicated case is without doubt that of Russia where only a few steps were made towards overcoming the heavily burdened common history. Unlike Liubachivskyi, in his official pronouncements Husar has never openly spoken of the Ukrainian-Russian reconciliation. However, in that sermon he indirectly points at it.

In a sermon on the occasion of the opening of the Jubilee Year, Cardinal Husar explained that the meaning of reconciliation signifies a true accord and harmony between people, when they forgive with a pure heart and become open for the other.⁶⁰ The key prerequisite to reconciliation is the awareness of God's love to the people. This element is often omitted in common piety where God is first of all portrayed as a just judge. Husar corrects such an image of God and emphasises that only when people realise that God is love would they acquire courage to reconcile with Him and subsequently with the fellow people.⁶¹ Additionally, the realisation that God loves everybody means that one cannot hate the fellow man because he/she is also loved and accepted by God.

58 No. 368, 610.

59 Ibid., 611.

60 No. 332, 554.

61 Ibid.

The unity of Churches in Ukraine as an obligation is articulated in a similar way. In his lecture “Reconciliation as a gift from God and a source of new life,” Liubomyr Husar speaks about the unity of Christian Churches in Ukraine as the will of God, believing that it will contribute to peace and the well-being of the country.⁶² In “Conception of the Ecumenical Position,” the Greek-Catholic hierarchy recognises that the relations of its Church with Orthodox denominations are marked by both historical and modern conflicts, but the Gospel imperative of love and reconciliation should be a stimulus to strive for the improvement of the situation.⁶³ The very title of the message of Liubomyr Husar on the occasion of the transfer of his seat to Kyiv “The Unique People of God” points at the imperative of the unity of the branches of ancient Kyivan Christianity.

In his call for the reconciliation between the Ukrainian Churches of the Kyivan tradition, Sviatoslav Shevchuk speaks of the responsibility before God and the own people. The search for reconciliation is the fulfilment of God’s commandment “May all be one” that has to be embodied through prayer, the openness to dialogue, and the readiness to forgiveness and reconciliation.⁶⁴ In that excerpt Shevchuk does not mention the commandment of love but nevertheless portrays the unity of the Churches as the will and order of God that his faithful have to follow.

3.1.6 Reconciliation as a spiritual testament and legacy of martyrs

In the thought of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, which understands herself as a martyr Church,⁶⁵ the duty of reconciliation between the Churches and nations is depicted as the spiritual testament of the martyrs of the 20th century. In the letter on the occasion of the reconciliation act between the Polish and Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy, the bishops write

62 No. 92, 172.

63 No. 5003, 60 (No. 4000, 128).

64 No. 2010.

65 No. 2020; “Welcome Speech of His Beatitude Sviatoslav (Shevchuk), the Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, for the Participants of the Symposium Devoted to the 390th Anniversary of the Death of Saint Josaphat ‘What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Today? The Experience of the Martyrdom of Eastern Churches,” http://news.ugcc.org.ua/en/articles/welcome_speech_of_his_beatitude_sviatoslav_shevchuk_the_head_of_the_ugcc_for_the_participants_of_the_symposium_devoted_to_the_390th_anniversary_of_st_josaphat_the_death_68155.html (accessed February 10, 2014).

that martyrs proved their faith by shedding blood for Christ and thus encouraging contemporaries “to love our friends and enemies and call: “Make peace with one another!”⁶⁶ The reference to the martyrs of the communist repressions reminds one of John Paul II’s proclamation of the 28 beatific martyrs of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church during his visit to Ukraine in 2001.⁶⁷ The common martyrdom of Poles and Ukrainians under the communist rule should contribute to the rapprochement between their countries.

Her martyrdom under the communists is so highly estimated that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church speaks about *the gift of martyrdom*. Even the meaning of the liquidation of the Church in 1946 is interpreted as such. The Church leadership teaches that *the martyrdom for the unity of all*, demonstrated to the world, is the most precious contribution of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to ecumenism.

In their address on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Lviv Pseudo-Synod, the Greek-Catholic bishops unfold the meaning of martyrdom more in detail. This letter is an all-encompassing attempt to provide a profound answer about the meaning of the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church for her future nowadays. In the introductory part of the document, its authors remind one of “the gift of martyrdom for the unity of all”⁶⁸ as the fate of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the 20th century. This tragic way began already in the 19th century with the liquidation of the union with Rome on right-bank Ukraine and Belorussia (1839) and later in Kholmshcynyna and Pidliashshia (1875). Hence, the Lviv Synod in 1946 was the continuation of the tradition of the destruction of the Greek-Catholic Church, this time in the territories of eastern Galicia. The aim of the current letter is to stimulate reflections, discussions, scholarly investigations, and theological discourse on those both tragic and heroic events which should eventually contribute to the healing of the wounds of history and to a successful Christian witnessing in the future.⁶⁹

The very survival of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church happened thanks to the readiness of her faithful for martyrdom. What does that high-

66 No. 3002; No. 289, 482.

67 The list and short biographies of those beatified by John Paul II can be consulted on the website created to cover the Pope’s visit to Ukraine: “Biographies of Those to Be Beatified by the Holy Father while He Is in Ukraine,” <http://papalvisit.org.ua/eng/martyrsbio.php> (accessed May 6, 2014).

68 No. 219, 365.

69 Ibid., 366.

ly-praised term mean? According to the texts, it can be interpreted in two ways – as martyrdom for the unity with the Holy See and martyrdom for the unity of the Churches in Ukraine. The two components are interconnected in the ecumenical position of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The communion with Rome is part of the identity of the Kyivan Church from where the traditional Ukrainian Churches originate. Only the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church preserved that communion, and therefore she has the task to restore this essential feature of the Kyivan Church in the re-united local Ukrainian Church. For that Ukrainian Greek-Catholics paid the price of martyrdom and this is perhaps the biggest gift that they offered to the ecumenical Church.⁷⁰

Greek-Catholic bishops call to search the solution to the division of the Kyivan Church in the past, namely in the example of the martyrs for the faith. The deep belief and hope that God will not abandon a person even in the most difficult life circumstances grants courage to live, suffer, and even die with Christ.⁷¹ Being in such a close unity with God amounted into martyrdom for the unity of the Churches which is the key for the search for solutions in the present situation. Naturally, the pursuit of the unity with God does not have to end up in martyrdom. Recognising one's faults and forgiving those who committed evil against us⁷² is the form of martyrdom accessible to ordinary people. The teaching on martyrdom in the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* confers a similar understanding of it as the mirror of truth and morality. Martyrdom is “an *outstanding sign of the holiness of the Church*.”⁷³ “By their eloquent and attractive example of a life completely transfigured by the splendour of moral truth, the martyrs and, in general, all the Church's Saints, light up every period of history by reawakening its moral sense.”⁷⁴ Thus the common martyrdom of the Ukrainian Churches puts a moral demand to each of them to re-evaluate their relations in the light of the message of truth delivered by the martyrs. In that sense the common martyrdom of the Churches carries the imperative of unity.

70 Ibid.

71 No. 219, 372 (No. 3003, 155).

72 No. 219, 372 (No. 3003, 156).

73 Ioannes Paulus II, “*Veritatis Splendor*,” http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor_en.html (accessed March 3, 2014). Italics preserved from the original text.

74 Ibid.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church speaks not only of the martyrs to the faith. Sviatoslav Shevchuk calls the faithful of his Church to remember especially “the sacrifice of the martyrs of the “Heavenly Legion” – those that gave their lives for the victory of good over evil and of truth over injustice.”⁷⁵ “Heavenly Legion” or “Heavenly Hundred” is a name given to those more than 100 persons who were killed by snipers during the protests against the Ukrainian government on the EuroMaidan. The sacrifice of those martyrs makes Ukrainians responsible “for our own household, our village or city, and for our country – remembering that every citizen must not demand from oneself any less than he/she would demand from others.”⁷⁶ The moral testament of the “Heavenly Legion” is similar to that of the Church martyrs in *Veritatis Splendor*.

Except for the Greek-Catholic sacrifices for the unity of Churches, the Church leadership also speaks about the joint martyrdom of all the traditional Christian Churches in Ukraine under the Soviet regime. In addition to their common origins in the ancient Kyivan Church, this time of suffering is another feature that brings the Churches together.⁷⁷ Therefore, the joint history of the traditional Churches in Ukraine did not end in the distant past after the creation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church or after the incorporation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church into the Moscow Patriarchate, but continued in the 20th century that united the Churches in suffering for Christ. And thus the Ukrainian Churches should not regard their past only as a series of conflicts but they can embark on the way to reconciliation on the basis of that joint experience of martyrdom.⁷⁸ According to the words of Sviatoslav Shevchuk, the unity of the Churches of the Kyivan tradition would be the embodiment of the evangelical ideal of the Church unity that the martyrs of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church for centuries had laid their lives for.⁷⁹

Keeping that in mind helps understand the statement of Mykhailo Dymyd that the Pope’s proclamation of new 28 beatified martyrs of the

75 No. 2026.

76 Ibid.

77 No. 216, 359.

78 Andriy Mykhaleiko, „Kommentar,“ in *Einheit: Auftrag und Erbe. Anthologie von Texten der Ukrainischen Griechisch-Katholischen Kirche zu Fragen der Kircheneinheit mit Kommentar*, trans. and eds. Andriy Mykhaleiko, Oleksandr Petrynko, and Andreas-A. Thiermeyer (Lviv: Ukrainian Catholic University Press, 2012), 258.

79 No. 2010.

Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church can be acknowledged as a sign of Christian unity in Ukraine:

“An important step towards the unity of the Churches established by Saint Vladimir was the beatification of the Christian martyrs who belong to the Greek Catholic Church, both Russian and Ukrainian, amongst them, professors Andrew Yischak, Nicholas Konrad and the Archpriest Leonid Fiodorov. These saints now in heaven are creating one community of Kyivan-Rus together with their brothers and sisters of the Russian Orthodox Church. They all died under the same atheistic regime, for the one Christ of the Gospels!”⁸⁰

In that regard Didier Rance spoke about the “ecumenism of martyrs” that obliges the Churches to commemorate jointly their martyrs even those who are not considered as such by the Christians of another denomination, for instance, as it is the case for Saint Yosafat Kuntsevych of Polotsk for the Orthodox.⁸¹ Consequently, the theology of the reconciliation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is also a theology of martyrdom. Martyrdom is possible because of the special unity of a person with God, which prepares oneself to self-sacrifice. The way to the unity with God begins with the act of repentance and forgiveness. When people make efforts to come closer to God, they would come closer to other Christians because they have to forgive injustices committed against them. Shortly, the readiness to repent and forgive the other is a way to imitate martyrs nowadays.

3.2 Robert Schreiter: reconciliation as a healing

Robert Schreiter explicitly mentions Ukraine when he writes about the contexts of reconciliation in today’s world in his book *Reconciliation. Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order* published in 1992. Schreiter points at the difficulties of the reconciliation between Orthodox and Greek-Catholics coming out of the underground.⁸² Nowadays, the period of the interconfessional struggle on the level of parishes has passed. History has proved that the faithful of both confessions found ways to co-exist peacefully after a few years of struggle for the sacral buildings or for

80 Dymyd, “What Happens after the Bishop of Rome’s Visit to Ukraine?”

81 See the article of Didier Rance, “The Forgiveness of Martyrs. The Seeds of Unity,” *Logos. A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 47, nos. 1-2 (2006): 229-235.

82 Robert Schreiter, *Reconciliation. Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 13.

the confessional belonging of a parish. However, the way to the renewal of the united Kyivan Church is still long. In what follows I will articulate Schreiter's discourse on reconciliation and confront it with Greek-Catholic theology.

3.2.1 Horizontal and vertical dimensions of reconciliation

Robert Schreiter unfolds the meaning of reconciliation through the themes of truth-telling, justice, memory, healing, and forgiveness. In the teaching of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church similar elements are elaborated. However, comparing both theologies, one discovers certain differences or, to be more precise, specifications in the case of Schreiter. For instance, he clearly distinguishes between the horizontal and vertical dimensions of reconciliation, a difference that is somehow blurred in the discourse of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The vertical dimension refers to the reconciliation of a sinner with God while the horizontal reconciliation denotes the rapprochement between individuals, societies, or groups within societies.⁸³ In the messages on the occasion of the Reconciliation Day in Lviv, Husar emphasised the need for repentance and personal reconciliation with God that should in turn promote the reconciliation in society and prevent the violent past from happening again. However, Husar does not elaborate on how both elements are connected. In this regard, Robert Schreiter is of great help. Explaining the biblical foundation of horizontal reconciliation on the basis of 2 Cor 5,17-20 and Eph 2,12-20, Schreiter notes that the narrative of the new creation by God through Christ and the overcoming of the division between Gentiles and Jewish Christians are images of reconciliation on the human level.⁸⁴ They point at the interconnectedness of people through their relationships with God.

In the documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church it is difficult to draw the link between the reconciliation of an individual with God and social reconciliation. Robert Schreiter digs deeper into that question and offers an answer. Personal reconciliation is about the restoration of damaged humanity, whilst the social one aims at the reconstruction of a juster

83 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 369.

84 *Ibid.*, 369-370.

and safer society.⁸⁵ Both types of reconciliation have a different goal. However, social reconciliation would best be realised by individuals whose humanity and moral feeling of justice and good are restored. Reconciliation on the national or social level has to be interiorised, personally embedded, and lived through in order to be successful. Reconciliation in society starts from the reconciliation with God: “The faithful regard reconciliation as both a gift and a task. Reconciliation in society is based on reconciliation between a person and God, between himself and others.”⁸⁶

Schreiter unfolds the meaning of the concept of reconciliation in three dimensions: a source, a process, and a vision or goal. Reconciliation as a source is very close to the vision of Husar which means that reconciliation is manifested in the work of God who draws back the alienated humanity through the redeeming death of Jesus Christ. Christians experience that work of God through the sacraments of baptism, reconciliation, and the Eucharist. During the celebration of the Days of Purification and Reconciliation in Lviv, Liubomyr Husar emphasised this meaning by calling the faithful to participate in the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist. Both Schreiter and Husar are of the opinion that reconciliation as overcoming the offences against God will contribute to the cause of social reconciliation.⁸⁷ However, Schreiter resonates with my criticism of the attitude of Husar that the link between personal reconciliation with God and social reconciliation is not sufficiently elaborated in the Church tradition.⁸⁸ The sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist do not suffice in order to establish social justice. Schreiter articulates this meaningfully: “It is as if the Church’s principal contribution to talking about reconciliation lies in the cleansing of individual human hearts. It would appear to be a vision that, once human hearts are cleansed the rest of the problems of the world will take care of themselves. But our experience seems to speak other-

85 Robert Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation. Spirituality and Strategies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 65.

86 Lesia Kovalenko, “Those Who Forget the Past are Condemned to Repeat It,” *Den*, September 25, 2007, <http://www.day.kiev.ua/en/article/day-after-day/those-who-forget-past-are-condemned-repeat-it> (accessed January 9, 2014).

87 Robert Schreiter, “Justice and Reconciliation” (Paper Presented at the Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network General Assembly (AEFJN) - Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Commission (JPIC) of the Union of Superiors General and International Union of Superiors General (USIG) Rome, November 30, 2009), <http://www.aefjn.org/index.php/news-reader/items/justice-and-peace-conference-by-robert-schreiter-cpps.html> (accessed June 17, 2013).

88 Ibid.

wise.”⁸⁹ Therefore, the correct way to understand reconciliation with God is that through participation in the sacraments we build up a communion with God that inspires to see the happenings in the world through ethical lenses and work more efficaciously on social reconciliation.⁹⁰ The leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church should help her faithful grasp the connection between their personal spirituality and social changes that are expected in the process of reconciliation.

Both Robert Schreiter and Cardinal Husar emphasise that reconciliation is an ongoing *process*. Schreiter considers reconciliation as an overarching concept where a process and a goal have to be distinguished. However, both elements are equally important when one does not want to end up in despair: “While reconciliation must be seen as a goal or horizon for a different kind of world, it is equally important to concentrate on it as a process with distinctive tasks and steps to be taken.”⁹¹

The points above have to be kept in mind when considering reconciliation as a goal: we have to remind ourselves that “God is the author and the endpoint of reconciliation,” that “we must celebrate the small victories along the way,” and we must “attend especially to what is happening with the next generation.”⁹² All those elements are about maintaining hope in the commitment to reconciliation. In the words of Schreiter, it is about “discerning the traces of God in our midst. Discovering them reminds us not only of the nearness of God in places where God can seem completely absent; it also reminds us that perhaps the most important things happening are not done by us, but are part of a larger reality in which we participate.”⁹³ That is more relevant for the process of reconciliation between the traditional Christian Churches in Ukraine or between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church: without hope people tend to give up their efforts. Robert Schreiter claims, moreover, that it is God who takes the initiative of reconciliation; we discover reconciliation rather than achieve it by our efforts.⁹⁴ This confidence in God’s grace runs as a red thread through all the official pronouncements of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Schreiter considers the eastern metaphor of healing very suitable for the essence of the process of reconciliation. That pre-

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.

91 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 367.

92 Schreiter, *Justice and Reconciliation*.

93 Ibid.

94 Schreiter, *Reconciliation. Mission and Ministry*, 44.

supposes an attitude of waiting because “healing takes its own time. It requires that the patient attends to matters of health.”⁹⁵ Hope helps us to sustain in the most difficult, seemingly helpless moments. Reconciliation is about “entering a *mysterion*.”⁹⁶

3.2.2 Practical theology of reconciliation

Before proceeding with the components of reconciliation, Robert Schreiter wants to make clear that he develops a practical theology of reconciliation. The principles of his practical theology emerged from the interaction of the experience of reconciliation with the available resources of Christian tradition, were proved in practice, and have analogues within the larger discourse on reconciliation.⁹⁷ Schreiter elucidates the implications of each principle on the dynamics of reconciliation, thus making his five principles indeed very applicable.

Principle 1. “God is the author of reconciliation”

Schreiter’s principal postulation is “Reconciliation is the work of God, who invites and completes in us reconciliation through Christ.”⁹⁸ This most important principle says that the reconciliation is ultimately a gift of God who is working through us. Schreiter calls for humbleness and hope when the desired reconciliation does not happen according to our plans because hope “is a reminder that peace and reconciliation are not things we create, but are gifts from God we learn to recognise and make our own.”⁹⁹

This is also a concern of Cardinal Husar. Additionally, Husar (and Schreiter, even though not so eloquent) calls for prayer for reconciliation, placing in this way the whole endeavour in God’s hands. According to Schreiter, contemplative prayer teaches us “to wait on God in silence...

95 Ibid., 71.

96 Ibid., 58.

97 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 366-367.

98 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 14.

99 Robert Schreiter, “Grassroots Artisans of Peace. A Theological Afterword,” in *Artisans of Peace. Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities*, eds. Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 300.

and enhances our capacity to listen and to discern small, barely noticeable movements in the process of healing.”¹⁰⁰ Prayer grants hope and optimism. In every pronouncement of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church on the topic the authors call for prayer and assure that reconciliation can be reached with God’s help. Reconciliation is a grace.

Principle 2. “God begins with victims”

The second principle claims that God begins his reconciling work with the victim.¹⁰¹ At first glance, it may sound paradoxically, but Schreiter gives a plausible experience-based explanation. As the practice shows, often the perpetrators are not ready to show their remorse or even to recognise their guiltiness. It is the victim that by granting forgiveness restores humanity to the perpetrator. The reconciliation on a national basis must follow the logical process of repentance-forgiveness-reconciliation.¹⁰² On a more personal level, however, the process is all the way around: the victim often offers forgiveness and that leads to the repentance of the wrongdoer and reconciliation. By forgiving and showing that the perpetrator failed as a human being, the victim could prompt the wrongdoer to change his attitude from resentment to remorse. This scenario may sound unrealistic and often turns to be like that in practice, but we cannot forget that the German-Polish reconciliation was initiated by the initiative of the Polish side who was clearly the victim of the Nazi deeds during World War II. It seems that it was in that spirit that the leaders of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church asked forgiveness from the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian people in 1989 and similarly from the Polish people in 1987.

Principle 3. “God makes of the victim and the wrongdoer a ‘new creation’”

The third principle of the practical theology of reconciliation of Schreiter says that in the course of reconciliation both victim and wrongdoer are

100 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 371.

101 *Ibid.*, 371.

102 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 64.

made by God into a new creation.¹⁰³ This statement means that in the process of reconciliation both sides are not coming back to the previous status quo but build a new reality of their co-existence. The element of grace and surprise is implied by Schreiter as this new reality, which comes unexpectedly for both parties and for those working for reconciliation.

The awareness of this moment of surprise is most present in the documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church on the reconciliation between the Churches. Even in the pronouncements which describe the project of the future united Kyivan Patriarchate, the Greek-Catholic Church leadership does not forget to mention that it is only a project and the ultimate reality is in the hands of God. The Churches should make efforts to prepare reconciliation, they should pray for it, and what is very important, they should be ready to accept the vision of reconciliation that will once emerge. One should be open to a future in such a difficult endeavour as reconciliation which is for Christians “evidence of God’s graced action in the world.”¹⁰⁴

Principle 4. Place the suffering of the victim in the story of the suffering of Christ

According to the fourth principle, Christians should place their story of suffering in the narrative of the suffering and death of Christ: “...The process of reconciliation that creates the new humanity is to be found in the story of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁵ Robert Schreiter indirectly turns here to the problem of evil and looks for a reality that surpasses the suffering of every concrete person. For Christians it is logically the narrative of the suffering and death of Christ. The fourth element touches upon overcoming the destructive memories of the past and transforming them into redemptive ones. The way of change leading through the sufferings of Christ amounts into “a transformation that takes us to a new and unexpected place in ways we only partially understand.”¹⁰⁶ This emphasis on the mystery and grace of reconciliation points at the unpredictable reality of that phenomenon that leaves space for imag-

103 Ibid., 17.

104 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 373.

105 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 18.

106 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 374.

ination. In that regard Robert Schreiter stays very close to John Paul Lederach with his moral imagination in the matters of peace. Incidentally, Schreiter occasionally refers to the ideas of Lederach and shows a particular appreciation of his model.

Applying this fourth principle of Schreiter to the theology of the reconciliation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, we notice that there are almost no references to the redeeming sufferings and death of Christ in the official documents. It is an eastern Church that focuses in her theology on the events of the Resurrection rather than on those of Good Friday. However, also suffering as an image of reconciliation finds place in the theology of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, in particular in the texts on the Holodomor that should become a symbol and an imperative of unity for Ukrainians. The sufferings of martyrs for faith that the Ukrainian history of the 20th century can boast of in abundance and the sufferings of the victims of the Holodomor convey the idea of the moral regeneration of society.

In the theology of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church forgiving the neighbour is explained as a duty of a Christian. This claim is substantiated by evoking the prayer (“And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us”), turning to the Gospel imperative of love to one’s neighbour, or pointing at the commandment “May all be one.” We do not find the emphasis on the duty of forgiveness or reconciliation in the theology of Robert Schreiter. It is a more comprehensive approach. Both Schreiter and Husar are convinced of the benefits of reconciliation, however, the latter renders it as necessity, a duty, while the former looks for ways to envision the seeds of a better future in the experience of suffered wrongs. Schreiter draws an analogy with the suffering and death of Christ which lead to resurrection. The approach of Schreiter seems to be more victim-oriented and takes seriously what they went through. Husar seems to be more future-oriented, he leaves the experience of the past aside, and tries to convince the faithful that whatever may have happened, now is the time to forgive and reconcile. At the same time, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church also appreciates suffering by referring to the legacy of martyrs. Suffering and death become ways of the moral regeneration of society; they deliver a lesson and are hence worth remembering. The victims, whether Ukrainians as victims of Russians or Poles, the soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgency Army against those of the Soviet Red Army, or the Greek-Catholic faithful who had to endure the destruction of their Church, must perceive that it is through their suffering that the grace of reconciliation will be poured upon them. Sufferings and deaths are not

forgotten – this motive is paid attention to in the theology of reconciliation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

Principle 5. Eschatological completion of reconciliation

Robert Schreiter considers the ultimate reconciliation as a cosmic event. The daily work for reconciliation shows that it will always remain uncompleted; we can hardly control that process.¹⁰⁷ Complete reconciliation will happen at the end of times when all things will be reconciled in Christ: "...the process of reconciliation will be fulfilled only with the complete consummation of the world by God in Christ."¹⁰⁸ Until then, hope streams from "discerning the hand of God gently changing things."¹⁰⁹ Hence, the key terms of the fifth principle are hope, God as the source of reconciliation, and patience. In this way, principle number 5 is directly connected with principle number 1, thus reiterating the main idea of Schreiter that the spring of reconciliation lies outside people, it starts from God, is effectuated by the work of God through victims, bears in the sufferings and death of Christ, and will be ultimately completed in the eschatological cosmic event. Miroslav Volf arrived at a similar idea elaborating on the slipping of the burdened memory into oblivion at the end of times.

This latter feature would be a favourable completion to the theology of reconciliation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The Church leadership greatly emphasises that reconciliation can be achieved only with the help of God, however it does not pay so much attention to its eschatological dimension. It seems that the current Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church endeavours full rapprochement in uncertain worldly conditions. Reminding one of the eschatological character of reconciliation could be a plausible answer to the sceptics.

107 Ibid., 374-375.

108 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 19.

109 Schreiter, *A Practical Theology*, 375.

3.2.3 “Reconciliation is more a spirituality than a strategy”¹¹⁰

In the view of Robert Schreiter it is inappropriate to reduce reconciliation to a technical rationality, “a skill that can be taught to deal with a problem that can be managed.”¹¹¹ Instead, Schreiter conceives reconciliation as “a stance assumed before a broken world rather than a tool to repair the world.”¹¹² This corresponds to the approach of the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, especially that of Liubomyr Husar. Schreiter is aware that the strategies grounded on Western technical rationality cannot be successfully applied in the entire world. The difficulties of planting Western democracy in the Ukrainian soil have proved that idea. The same holds for different understandings of reconciliation by the western and eastern Church. The latter has developed metaphors of healing and medicine rather than legal metaphors which is typical of the western Church.¹¹³ Remember, that all the traditional Ukrainian Churches speak about the wound of division on the Church body and about the necessity of healing. Prayer or liturgy stays closer to the Ukrainian faithful than a concrete step-by-step programme of rapprochement.

Robert Schreiter does not only suggest a strong theological basis for his theory of reconciliation, he also deals with the very practical issues of the whole process. Reconciliation is spirituality; however, it is also a strategy. Only in a combination of both elements the reconciliation endeavour has a chance to move forward. Schreiter is against the purely technical approach to reconciliation. As we have seen above, for this Catholic author rapprochement flows from the personal cultivation of a relationship with God which expresses itself “in spiritual practices that create space for truth, for justice, for healing, and for new possibilities.”¹¹⁴ By maintaining the relationship with God people learn to build relationships with fellow human beings and extend their reconciling attitude to the world.

The Church is a valuable actor in the reconciliation process because of her ministry of reconciliation. Through her spiritual practices the Church creates communities of memory providing space “to explore and untangle a painful past, and the cultivation of truth-telling to overcome the lies of injustice and wrongdoing. They lead also to creating communities of hope,

110 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 16.

111 Schreiter, *Reconciliation. Mission and Ministry*, 26.

112 Ibid.

113 Ibid., 49.

114 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 16.

where a new future might be imagined and celebrated.”¹¹⁵ That was among other things the highly appreciated mission of the chaplains of different confessions on the EuroMaidan who offered spiritual support to the demonstrators for almost 3 months.¹¹⁶ The liturgical reconciliation between Poles and Ukrainians in 2005 or the celebration of the Days of Reconciliation and Purification in 2000 and 2001, which were initiated and organised by the Church, are other examples of those spiritual strategies in the service of reconciliation. The yearly common prayers on the graves of Polish and Ukrainian soldiers in Lviv on November 1 contributed to the creation of communities of memory and hope. In those cases the spirituality of reconciliation prompted the search for alternatives to the ruling narratives of the dominative power in order to transform the situation.¹¹⁷ When the state authorities were trying to settle a conflict concerning allowing or not the Poles to open a cemetery for their diseased soldiers, Liubomyr Husar suggested an alternative – a joint prayer at the graves. Official dialogues, petitions, but also those short prayers changed the attitude to the Polish graves, soothed the minds, and finally led to reconciliation. And so, reconciliation is about providing alternative ways of thinking.

As the title of his book shows, for Schreiter reconciliation demands both spirituality and strategy. Reconciliation entails a certain spiritual orientation, it is a way of living, and hence, it would be wrong to confine it to a kind of technical rationality.¹¹⁸ Probably this attention to spirituality is the biggest similarity between Schreiter’s vision of reconciliation and that of the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Liubomyr Husar reminds one of God’s love, calls for prayer for reconciliation, considers the success of reconciliation activities to be entirely in God’s hands, describes reconciliation as a spiritual testament of martyrs and as a Christian obligation, and finally, points at the human heart as the precise locus of reconciliation. Already this short enumeration proves that Liubomyr Husar appeals more to spirituality that develops a plan of reconciliation activities.

115 Ibid.

116 Olha Nedavnia, “Tserkovno-relihiinyi faktor Yevromaidanu v otsinkakh yoho uchasnykiv ta pryhylnykyv” {The Church-religious factor of the EuroMaidan in the estimation of its participants and sympathisers}, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of Religions/55245/ (accessed March 3, 2014).

117 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 29.

118 Ibid., vi.

Because reconciliation is a spirituality, it comes in moments of grace. No one knows when redemptive narratives will be born out of the story of injustices. Therefore, there is so much hope in the documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church on the reconciliation with the Orthodox denominations in Ukraine and on the revival of the united Kyivan Church. Especially in those pronouncements we encounter the elements of hope most often: “When we read carefully proposals of His Beatitude Liubomyr, we realise that they are more spiritual and Evangelical. It is difficult to place them in certain juridical frames.”¹¹⁹ The moment of grace is not there yet but in Schreiter’s words, the Churches must await with hope when “a new meaning is found, and a pathway appears, leading out of the deep tangles of memories, emotions, and stories of death.”¹²⁰

3.2.4 Reconciliation as a metanoia

How does reconciliation touch upon common Ukrainians? Is that necessary at all from their point of view? Do they not have more acute tasks than, for example, thinking about historical hostilities between Poles and Ukrainians? Perhaps the most important contribution of Schreiter to the discourse on reconciliation in the Ukrainian context is that this author explains why reconciliation is needed at all. Often the documents on reconciliation seem to be superfluous in the perspective of common people who are dealing with more urgent problems of daily existence. Often while reading the Church pronouncements on reconciliation one gets the impression that those texts are produced in vain, that the questions of social justice, economic development are much more important for the Ukrainian society in transition. To speak about reconciliation seems to be a waste of time and of the Church resources. Opinion polls on the state of knowledge about the Volyn tragedy have shown that 31% of Poles do not even know that this event has taken place and 47% of those who heard something do

119 Andrii Mykhaleiko, “Blazhennishyi Liubomyr Husar pro yednist khrystyianskykh Tserkov v Ukraini” {His Beatitude Liubomyr Husar on the unity of Christian Churches in Ukraine}, webinar, n.d., http://theology.in.ua/article_print.php?id=40901&name=interchurch_relations&_lang=ua& (accessed February 27, 2014). Translation from the original source.

120 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 46.

not know who were victims and who perpetrators.¹²¹ I suppose that in Ukraine the situation is similar. To what end then all those papers on forgiveness, repentance, truth, and healing of memories?

Robert Schreiter helps find the answer. Reconciliation is needed for the restoration of the moral order in society which in its turn will influence the dynamics of transition. Schreiter postulates that it is very important to define who needs reconciliation, what it should look like, and which fruits it should bring. Perhaps this element demands better elucidation in the official pronouncements of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The evil of the past must be revealed and the wrongdoers have to be named, which helps establish a correct ethical platform for society: "Seeking the truth establishes a pattern of truthfulness upon which a new society can be built."¹²² Additionally, truth is so important in reconciliation because in many cases no justice whatsoever can be done anymore.¹²³ Social reconciliation is about the purification of the collective consciousness of the nation when "groups or peoples at enmity with one another review their own history and in a leap of faith redefine their path into the future."¹²⁴ Gregory Baum maintained that on the threshold of the new period of its existence society needs *metanoia*, "confession, a change of mind and heart."¹²⁵ This must be emphasised in order to explain to the people the aim of the reconciliation discourse of the Church.

3.3 Miroslav Volf: Reconciliation as embrace

According to Volf, forgiveness does not mean reconciliation itself; it is a state between enmity and friendship, between exclusion and embrace.¹²⁶ Forgiveness is only a crucial stage on the way to "the embrace of former enemies in a community of love."¹²⁷ The reconciliation described by this

121 "Tretyna poliakiv nichoho ne znaie pro Volynsku trahediiu" {A third of Poles knows nothing about the Volyn tragedy}, <http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2013/07/8/129412/> (accessed February 27, 2014).

122 Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 119.

123 Ibid., 120.

124 Gregory Baum, "A Theological Afterword," in *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches*, eds. Gregory Baum and Harold Wells (Geneva: WCC, 1997), 189.

125 Ibid.

126 Volf, *The End of Memory*, 188.

127 Ibid., 189.

metaphor refers to shaping one's identity in relation to the other. Volf's theology of embrace is primarily built upon the Bible story of the prodigal son and its social significance. The father giving himself to his son and the father receiving the son back to the family are two key features of the story that unfolds the reconstitution of identities after the restoration of the relationship.¹²⁸ Embrace signifies to Volf the openness to the other, desire to include the other in one's own word, and the freedom to let the other follow his or her way. Embrace has to do with changing the identity of those who ask and accept it.

The notion of embrace is dialectically connected to that of exclusion. In today's world with its struggle of identities, exclusion takes place not only on the economic or political level, but only on the symbolic one. Exclusion can acquire different forms in exclusive practices, emotions and language and it happens through abandoning, dominating, assimilating or even eliminating.¹²⁹ Exclusion is interpreted by Volf in a unique manner as a sin and is further situated in the greater framework of the universality of sin. No one can consider oneself free from sin. Projected on the relations between people, the universality of sin means that there are no absolute victims or perpetrators.¹³⁰ Caught in the system of exclusion, "people behave according to its perverted logic."¹³¹ Each side, whether the perpetrator or victim, can open up the arms, which alludes to Schreier's claims that reconciliation often begins from the suffered part.

The metaphor of embrace unfolds in four steps. First, embrace begins by *opening the arms*. This gesture means a desire to welcome the other, to create space for letting the other approach; it is an invitation to come, and even a small knock on the heart of the other. In sum, "The desire to enter the space of the other has been signalled by the very same act by which the self has opened itself up for the other to come in."¹³²

128 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (1996), 156.

129 Miroslav Volf, "From Exclusion to Embrace," *Concilium* 2 (1999): 95.

130 Volf elaborated on that issue of identity and otherness in the example of the ethnic cleansing between Croats and Serbs. For instance, he mentions that even in his native town there were Croatians destroying the houses or shops of the emigrated Serbs, hence in the conflict environment the strict line between victims and perpetrators blurs. (See Miroslav Volf, "Exclusion and Embrace. Theological Reflections in the Wake of Ethnic Cleansing," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 2 (1992): 242).

131 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (1996), 87.

132 *Ibid.*, 142.

The next element of the drama of embrace is *waiting*. This simple step also demonstrates a profound meaning essential for the correct understanding of the phenomenology of reconciliation. Waiting points at the fact that two sides are needed for embrace. It begins when one side opens up the arms and invites the other. In the process of waiting, the inviting side gives the opponent time to reflect upon the willingness or unwillingness to enter into contact. Waiting means the absence of compulsion. Reconciliation always remains a free act. Waiting reveals also the risky side of the embrace: it is not possible to determine what the answer of the opponent will be and there is no guarantee for success. Volf describes that with a beautiful quotation from Lewis Smedes, “Embrace is grace, and “Grace is gamble, always.”¹³³ Reconciliation cannot be forced, it is a grace.

The third act of the drama of embrace is *closing the arms*. This signifies the embrace itself, the most intimate element of the whole movement. Again, it points at the reciprocity of embrace-reconciliation. Additionally, embrace means only a soft touch; employing power to assimilate or destroy the identity of the other is forbidden, neither does it presuppose the dissolution of the boundaries of the own self.¹³⁴ The identities of both sides are preserved.

Finally, the act of embrace is completed by *opening the arms again*. I have mentioned above that a genuine embrace presupposes the preservation of the own identity. Exactly this happens, when changed by the encounter with the other in the moment of embrace, two parties open the arms in order to depart in the expectation of the next embrace. Thus, embrace is not a single act, it is a constant movement back and forth, a circular movement when “the actions and reactions of the self and the other condition each other and give the movement both meaning and energy.”¹³⁵

This meaningful metaphor of embrace should be worth appearing in the Church documents on national unity or the all-Ukrainian reconciliation. It tells something about identity and how one can be enriched through the encounter with the other precisely due to different cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. According to the Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Hrytsak, the so often claimed clear-cut division in Ukraine does not exist in reality and there are enough resources to establish national consensus. Not the history and language play the leading role in bringing about national unity.

133 Ibid., 147.

134 Ibid., 143.

135 Ibid., 145.

Hrytsak believes that the common values and common daily way of life with its similar problems bear a potential to consolidate Ukrainians.¹³⁶

Embrace reminds one of the enrichment that the encounter with the other gives, thus making the difference a blessing rather than a curse. Its multiplicity of cultures is a great benefit of Ukraine which is occasionally underlined in the Greek-Catholic documents. Differences should not cause division but, in Volf's words, "As a metaphor, embrace implies that the self and the other belong together in their mutual alterity."¹³⁷

Finally, the Easter Matins contain a much known verse that literally employs the metaphor of embrace:

"This is the day of resurrection.
Let us be illuminated by the feast.
Let us embrace each other.
Let us call "Brothers" even those that hate us,
And forgive all by the resurrection."¹³⁸

Remarkably, this quotation has never been mentioned in the official Greek-Catholic pronouncements on reconciliation.¹³⁹ Present in the tradition as part of the Eastern Matins, this interesting idea is all too much unarticulated in the theology of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. The reference to that verse enlightened by Volf's explanation of embrace would be an eloquent tool to convey the meaning of reconciliation to the faithful.

136 "Skhid i Zakhid yednaie spilne pochuttia strakhu ta prahnennia bezpeky, – Yaroslav Hrytsak" {West and East are united by the common feeling of fear and desire of safety – Yaroslav Hrytsak}, http://www.ugcc.org.ua/news_single.0.html?&tx_ttnews%5btt_news%5d=5040&cHash=8908b1b60afeba0f6d034e9245e33e55 (accessed January 21, 2014).

137 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (1996), 146.

138 Quoted in *ibid.*, 130.

139 This verse was used by Liubomyr Husar in his interview to Radio Svoboda on the topic of the unity of Churches in Ukraine. The Cardinal spoke about the long-lasting unwillingness to work for unity, the lack of the spirit of sacrifice, the predominance of one's own interests. In that context he mentioned the Canon of Easter Matins as an imperative to follow (Liubomyr Husar, "Khrystianstvo v Ukraini. Chy mozhlyva yednist?" {Christianity in Ukraine. Is unity possible?}, interview by Inna Kuznetsova, *Credo-ua.org*, <http://www.credo-ua.org/2011/07/48418> (accessed January 13, 2014)).

3.4 John Paul Lederach: reconciliation as the restoration of the fabric of community

In his works John Paul Lederach demonstrates the passage from conflict resolution through conflict management to conflict transformation.¹⁴⁰ The very approach of Lederach to dealing with conflicts has to be understood in the light of this change of perspectives. Conflict resolution views the conflict as something negative and destructive that should be avoided. On the contrary, the conflict transformation upholds the ongoing nature of the conflict, its positive understanding as a reality that already contains potential and chances for the conflicting parties to realise their interests, move on and grow.¹⁴¹ conflict becomes as a motor of change.¹⁴² The central claim here is the “proactive bias toward seeing conflict as a potential catalyst for growth.”¹⁴³ I will focus here on this more fundamental vision of the conflict in the works of Lederach that gives incentives for both the understanding of what reconciliation is and how it should be fostered.

What does John Paul Lederach, our last reference author, teach us about reconciliation? First, like Robert Schreiter, Lederach opines that the pursuing of constructive social change or reconciliation¹⁴⁴ should not be reduced to the search for the appropriate technique. Reconciliation is not about the third party developing a strategy that can be successfully implemented by conflicting sides. Lederach emphasises that it is impossible to create a pattern of peace-building applicable to all the situations of con-

140 Why conflict transformation is the most appropriate term to approach conflicts is brilliantly substantiated in John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003).

141 John Paul Lederach, “Defining Conflict Transformation,” <http://www.restorativejustice.org/10fulltext/lederach> (accessed April 14, 2014).

142 Lederach, *The Little Book*, 5.

143 Lederach, *Defining Conflict*.

144 I am in favour of putting a sign of equality between those two terms, constructive social change and reconciliation, drawing upon the definition of the former by Lederach himself: “Constructive change. The pursuit of shifting relationships from those defined by fear, mutual recrimination, and violence towards those characterised by love, mutual respect, and proactive engagement. Constructive social change seeks to move the flow of the interaction in human conflict from cycles of destructive relational patterns towards cycles of relational dignity and respectful engagement” (John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination. The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 181). Relational dignity and respectful engagement are excellent indications of the ongoing reconciliation.

flict. Every conflict is unique and therefore, a unique solution is to be elaborated. Colin Knox and Padraic Quirk corroborate that conclusion by proving that there is no single model of conflict-resolution for the apparently similar situations of the ethno-national struggles in Northern Ireland, Israel, and South Africa.¹⁴⁵ Rather, Lederach is very clear that the process of reconciliation should be owned by the protagonists of the conflict themselves. Based on his practical experience, the author speaks about five qualities of the process of reconciliation from the point of view of the mediator.

First, reconciliation is centred on relationship which means that its aim is simply to “engage the sides of the conflict with each other as humans-in-relationship.”¹⁴⁶ This process, called social healing “*represents the capacity of communities and their respective individuals to survive, locate voice and resiliently innovate spaces of interaction and nurture meaningful conversation and purposeful action in the midst and aftermath of escalated and structural conflicts.*”¹⁴⁷ Thus, shortly, it is about developing the capacity to live and act together. One of the major practical implications of this is that reconciliation is about the building of trust which consequently means that the best protagonists of reconciliation are not external mediators but conflicting parties themselves. Since reconciliation is about building direct relationships with the opponent, people who enjoy the trust of the contesting sides are the best mediators. According to that logic, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is a proper voice that calls for reconciliation because it constitutes a part of the Ukrainian society and feels the lines of division in her own body. The high degree of trust in the Church declared by Ukrainian citizens also speaks in her favour as a protagonist of reconciliation. Myroslav-Ivan Liubachivskyi maintained that those who follow the path of reconciliation will not be helped by politics, diplomacy or an external force: “It is only when we have God in our hearts, that we will find the strength for mutual forgiveness.”¹⁴⁸ The Church can help a lot

145 See Colin Knox and Padraic Quirk, *Peace-Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa. Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 196-197.

146 John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: Unites States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 26.

147 Lederach and Lederach, *When Blood*, 208. Italics preserved from the original text.

148 «C’est seulement quand nous aurons Dieu dans notre cœur que nous trouverons la force pour le pardon mutuel.» (No. 5000, 439).

with her preaching of humble virtues of forgiveness and love which would be a better inspiration for reconciliation than any external force.

Reconciliation is about the encounter between the people who have faced conflicts with each other; in that way reconciliation makes it possible for the people who interpret the past in different ways to come together. The acknowledgement of the past belongs to the core elements of a successful reconciliation: “Reconciliation must find ways to address the past without getting locked into a vicious circle of mutual exclusiveness inherent in the past.”¹⁴⁹ In reconciliation past, present and future meet to bring to life a new reality: “Reconciliation-as-encounter suggests that space for the acknowledgement of the past and envisioning of the future is a necessary ingredient for reframing the present.”¹⁵⁰

Second, “reconciliation is both a place, as in destination, and a journey. It provides a horizon, within sight yet beyond reach.”¹⁵¹ The mediators of the conflict should understand themselves as companions, those standing alongside the people on their journey to reconciliation. Hence, reconciliation is not brought from above but is a process, often measured by decades, that is created by the parties themselves. The mediators have to help “to seek innovative ways to create a time, and a place, within various levels of the affected population, to address, integrate, and embrace the painful past and the necessary shared future as a means of dealing with the present.”¹⁵²

Third, reconciliation demands the stance of humility which Lederach brings in connection with the truth and truth-telling. Humility is the opposite of arrogance which pretends to be in possession of the whole truth. Instead, humility refuses to give definite answers. It rather suggests “a need to learn and accompany the building of process that is both rooted and responsive to the context and people.”¹⁵³ In other words, “Humility requires the sharing of one’s self and ideas, but not the imposition of them.”¹⁵⁴ Here John Paul Lederach points at his idea of moral imagination when he

149 Lederach, *Building Peace*, 26.

150 *Ibid.*, 27.

151 John Paul Lederach, “Five Qualities of Practice in Support of the Reconciliation Process,” in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation. Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation*, eds. Raymond Helmick and Rodney Petersen (n.p: Templeton, 2001), 197.

152 Lederach, *Building Peace*, 35.

153 Lederach, *Five Qualities*, 199.

154 *Ibid.*

mentions that among other things “humility suggests a lifelong commitment to learning and an ever-regenerated spirit of creativity.”¹⁵⁵

Fourth, Lederach defines reconciliation in terms of the restoration of the fabric of community where the building of trust plays a great role. The restoration of the community fabric includes reconciliation on the interpersonal and community level which can be achieved through truth, justice, and mercy. Lederach defines truth as the element that refers to the past, justice shapes the present, and mercy (love) and peace tell something about the future coexistence. Truth defines the past inasmuch as it is about what and how to remember in the conflicting situation.¹⁵⁶ Justice deals with the present because it aims at the establishing a basis on which the relations get a chance to be reconstructed. Love and peace constitute a horizon of the transformed future coexistence. Concerning memory in the process of the restoration of the fabric of community, Lederach postulated: “The challenge of reconciliation is not how to create the place where one can “forgive and forget.” It is about the far more challenging adventure into the space where individuals and whole communities can remember and change.”¹⁵⁷

Finally, Lederach describes reconciliation with the biblical metaphor of the desert. It points both at the timing and the challenges of reconciliation. Commenting upon timing, Lederach realistically prefers to talk about reconciliation as a process that lasts for decades or longer than months or years.¹⁵⁸ Concerning the essence this thinker maintains that the metaphor of the desert underlines the experience of wandering, waiting, and looking for the right way.¹⁵⁹

How does Lederach inform the reconciliation discourse of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church? First, he explains the essence of reconciliation: it is about building trust and restoring the fabric of society which remains essentially divided after the communist times. It is a vital problem for generally very individualistic and passive Ukrainians. The all-Ukrainian reconciliation, the discussions about the national unity are directed to the establishment of trust. The reconciliation between the Churches demands building trust between them as well. Here the inter-

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid., 200.

157 Ibid., 201.

158 Ibid., 202.

159 Ibid.

Church programs of cooperation can contribute to the dialogue which first happens around the very concrete practical issues and then, when certain trust is there, helps settle the principal differences.

Reconciliation demands humility which points at the need of listening to the other. When the Church presents her truth as the only one eligible, she excludes other Churches from the dialogue. When the Moscow Patriarchate considers the creation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to be a historical mistake, it makes the fruitful dialogue impossible from the very beginning. Listening to the truth of the other is important since it reveals something about the identity of the other. Interestingly enough, Lederach underlines the reality of memory in reconciliation by claiming that reconciliation is about remembering and changing. He is an absolute opponent of forgetting. For him social amnesia hinders social changes even though some kind of it might be justified by political pragmatism. Since Lederach pays so much attention to the reality of relationships where identity matters, he denies social forgetting because it weakens communities by depriving them of the true identities and genuine relationships.¹⁶⁰

Applying Lederach's concept of claiming would help define the aim of the Ukrainian-Ukrainian reconciliation. Claiming emphasises that "meaningful conversation creates the space for choice and responsibility."¹⁶¹ The image of claiming "fosters a sense of *place* and the rebuilding of *belonging* capable of generating shared *purpose*."¹⁶² Thus social healing is about "building mutual respect in a shared space while still living with conflicting narratives of memory and hope, and that this can translate into choice and responsibility for and by individuals and collectives on behalf of their own and a wider common good."¹⁶³ Social healing in the Ukrainian context means reaching such a state of cooperation between the people of different memories and identities that makes it possible for them to work together for a commonly defined purpose and this purpose should long for the good of everybody and of the whole community. Instead of emphasising the differences between the eastern and western parts of their country, Ukrainians must define the common practical aim, the joint project of the transformation of the country that surpasses regional differences. The Eu-

160 Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*, 62.

161 Lederach and Lederach, *When Blood*, 212.

162 *Ibid.*, 213. Italics preserved from the original text.

163 *Ibid.*

roMaidan managed to bring together people from all over Ukraine to stand not so much for the European idea as for human dignity against the criminal state.¹⁶⁴ In the process of the painful transition that is slowly getting underway this core idea of the protesters has to be delivered to the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine which would sew the social fabric in the country. Leaving identity differences aside, the country can unite around the common purpose and plan of making Ukraine a truly democratic country, thus working together for the common good. At the present stage of its development Ukraine urgently needs social cohesion around a meaningful goal which bears the promise of leaving behind the problem of real or exaggerated clashing identities.

I have unfolded here Lederach's understanding of reconciliation. In chapter VI of the book I will return to Lederach in order to define the practical ramifications of his idea of moral imagination for promoting reconciliation and social changes in Ukraine. His thoughts on the elements of imagination, the critical yeast that sustains changes, the positive sides of every conflict as already containing its solution, etc., will be helpful for suggesting practical ways of how the Church can contribute to social transformation.

164 Tanja Maljartschuk, „Der Tod sitzt auf dem goldenen Thron“, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 21, 2014.