12 Equivocal memory

What does the Ukrainian Orthodox church of the Moscow Patriarchate remember?

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Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of nation states out of its wreckage became a real challenge for the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), whose jurisdiction covered most of the Soviet republics. The break-up of former Soviet republics with Moscow undermined the legitimacy of then-existing church ties.

In Ukraine, where a large number of ROC parishes were located, there was the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). Following Ukraine's proclamation of independence, UOC-MP then-head, Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko) attempted to obtain autocephaly (independence) for his church, but failed.

During the post-Soviet period the UOC-MP repeatedly found itself under pressure from Ukrainian public opinion urging it to break ties with Russia, its former imperial center. This began right after Ukrainian independence, when a substantial part of its clergy left to create the Kyiv Patriarchate; and continued during the presidency of Victor Yushchenko (2005–2010), with his undertaking to unite major Orthodox churches in Ukraine into a national church. Finally, the UOC-MP has been facing difficulties in recent years with the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, especially in 2018–2019, when the Ukrainian state, together with many Ukrainian Orthodox leaders, managed to convince the Patriarch of Constantinople – *primus inter pares* of the Orthodox world – to grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

As these events suggest, the UOC-MP leaders have been forced to legitimize the very existence of their Church. I outline two main objectives the UOC-MP has been forced to address. First, the UOC-MP has needed to show that subordination to Moscow is historically justified and does not prevent the UOC-MP from being truly Ukrainian, which has often been questioned by rival Orthodox churches and part of the political elite. Second, the UOC-MP has needed to build a representation of itself that would take into account the different and contradictory historical memory of its believers.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that by drawing upon specific historical narratives, the UOC-MP has managed to shape a memory regime which

allowed it to complete both of the abovementioned objectives. In other words, the chapter analyzes the UOC-MP's official memory developments and the structure of historical narratives through which this church has represented itself.

Hence the main focus of this research has been on the discourse produced by the ecclesiastical authorities (the Kyiv Metropolitan, the Holy Synod, and the Synodal departments). The material for this research has been drawn from UOC-MP publications such as the official press (the *Tserkovna Pravoslavna Hazeta* (Church Orthodox Newspaper), the *Pravoslavny Visnyk* (Orthodox Bulletin) journal, and its official website), books, movies, lives of the saints, history textbooks for seminaries, as well as from open reports about the UOC-MP's editorial activities, decisions on canonization, etc.

To some extent, my research can be described in terms of the politics of memory. After all, it is about how Church leadership creates a cohesive narrative about its past, establishes its own pantheon of heroes (saints), and through these elements forms its own value system. However, considering the fact that my sources are exclusively open materials designed for clergymen and parishioners, it is necessary to make a reservation that this study is devoted to *the implementation* of the politics of memory. Given the lack of access to the internal documents of the UOC-MP, it is not possible to investigate the actual goals the ecclesiastical authorities were trying to pursue. The focus of this chapter is, therefore, on the analysis of public discourse.

Consequently, I approach the implementation of politics of memory/public discourse about the past with help of Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard's concept of a memory regime. They define it as "a set of cultural and institutional practices that are designed to publicly commemorate and/or remember a single event, a relatively clearly delineated and interrelated set of events, or a distinguishable past process" (Kubik & Bernhard, 2014, p. 11). Following Kubik and Bernhard (2014), a memory regime arises out of specific cultural constraints – a historically formed repertoire of cultural (mnemonic) forms and themes in a given time and space. It means here that the church has shaped its memory regime out of existing narratives. In simpler terms, the way churches see and interpret the past and the way they consider some individuals as traitors and the others as heroes is related to the existing set of beliefs, stereotypes, and views of different groups in society. This process is examined by Rogers Brubaker, who demonstrated how religion supplies myths, metaphors, and symbols that are central to the discursive or iconic representation of the nation and also the reverse process, when national narratives inflect religious discourse (Brubaker, 2011).

Finally, it is quite important to note the relationship between religious identity and national identity in Eastern Europe. As a study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2017) reports, they "are closely entwined . . . in former communist states, such as the Russian Federation and Poland. . . . Majorities say that being Orthodox or Catholic is important to being 'truly Russian' or 'truly Polish.'" Being Orthodox, thus, means associating oneself with a certain cultural, historical, and religious tradition, rather than just practicing a faith.

This chapter is divided into several parts. The first part is dedicated to the late-Soviet attempts of the Kyiv Metropolitan Filaret to assimilate within the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC the former Greek Catholic and autocephalous parishes, forcibly affiliated with the ROC during earlier Soviet times. These parishes were formally Russian Orthodox, but existed as a kind of separate church within the Ukrainian Exarchate and had strong Ukrainian nationalistic sentiments. For this reason, Filaret created a historical representation of the Exarchate that explained why Ukrainian churches should be subordinate to the patriarch in Moscow. It is important to start with this, since the narratives formed at that time became a basis for the historical imagination of UOC-MP. These narratives can be designated as the "History of Orthodoxy in Ukraine."

The next part demonstrates how the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of rival Orthodox Churches in Ukraine in the 1990s caused those making this representation to pay more attention to the struggle between the "genuine Ukrainian Church" – namely the UOC-MP – and "nationalistic schismatics."

After that I will analyze the period of the gradual departure from Moscow attempted by Kyiv Metropolitan Volodymyr from 2007–2014. During this period, the idea of a long history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church appeared in the official discourse of the UOC-MP. Written without concepts that legitimized the leading role of Moscow, the history of a separate Ukrainian Church implicitly undermined unity with the Moscow Patriarchate. At the same time the UOC-MP leadership continued to employ historical narratives that, on the contrary, emphasized the "canonical unity of the Russian Church." Thus the UOC-MP constructed two opposing narratives, which I refer to as the "History of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church" and the "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'."

At the end of the chapter I will offer my explanation of the divided historical narratives of Ukrainians as a whole and why ecclesiastical authorities have simultaneously used narratives that contradicted each other. I argue that coexistence of these representations reflects the UOC-MP's attempts to appeal to its believers in different parts of the country and their distinctive historical narratives.

History of "Orthodoxy in Ukraine"

The modern memory regime of the UOC-MP draws heavily from how the Moscow Patriarchate, faced with national challenges in Soviet Ukraine after WWII, created a historical narrative about Ukrainian Orthodoxy as a unique, but unalienable part of the Russian Church. The need for the Ukrainian exarchate of the ROC to present itself as a Ukrainian Church arose back in the 1950s. At that time, the Moscow Patriarchate was attempting to integrate Greek Catholic parishes in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR (Shlikhta, 2015), as well as the remnants of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church that existed during the Nazi occupation. A second reason for emphasizing the Ukrainian nature of the UOC-MP was the existence of Orthodox churches independent from the Moscow Patriarch in the Ukrainian diaspora that needed

to be persuaded that there was a Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USSR with which they could reunite (Markus, 1989). One of the ways to do so was through the usage of historical narrative.

For these reasons the Exarch (Metropolitan of Kyiv) was allowed to start publishing a monthly Ukrainian-language magazine, *Pravoslavny Visnyk*, and an annual calendar in Ukrainian in the 1960s. These publications featured numerous articles devoted to local history: stories of monasteries located on the territory of Ukraine, of saints who lived there, about the first Ukrainian printed books, etc.

All these local-history episodes were built around the same discursive scheme. First, Ukrainians and Russians were represented as fraternal peoples who emerged from the "common cradle of baptism" of Prince Volodymyr the Great (Romanchuk, 1976, p. 19). Accordingly, any division of these peoples would be unnatural. The Greek Catholics are "anti-national," since they destroy the fraternal unity between Ukrainians and Russians (Zatovsky, 1988, pp. 21–22). Second, the period prior to the "reunification of Ukraine with Russia" in 1654 was depicted as a time of suffering. Orthodox Ukrainians had suffered under "national and religious oppression" of "Catholic Poland" (Marochkin, 1988, p. 23); this oppression reached its peak when Ukrainian Orthodox Christians were forced to unify with Papal Rome (Protsyuk, 1976, p. 21). Finally, the Orthodox people of Ukraine had always wanted to reunite with the fraternal people in Russia. And as soon as they reunited, the narrative suggests, the suffering changed to times of flourishing for the Church (Zatovsky, 1988).

Employing this approach, during the 1960s – 1980s the authors of the *Pravoslavny Visnyk* created a series of articles about the history of particular territorial units and holy places of the Ukrainian Exarchate. But the history of the Exarchate itself, or the history of some imagined Ukrainian Church, did not appear on its pages, since the construction of such a narrative would be impossible without the deconstruction of the narrative of a common history of the Moscow Patriarchate, which was clearly not in the interest of the Soviet state.

In addition, these episodes of local history created a strict hierarchy of the events and places of the past. There were more important events for the *Pravoslavny Visnyk* authors, such as the reunification of Ukraine with Russia; these topics appeared in every episode and shaped the storyline of national religious oppression. And there were also less important things – those that happened at the local level. This approach established discursive unity of the Russian Church under the leadership of Moscow.

Local-history narrative was redesigned during *perestroika* when the nationalist movement in Soviet Ukraine entailed a revival of the Greek Catholic and Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. Both of them, once absorbed by the ROC in the 1940s with the help of Soviet regime, represented themselves as truly national Ukrainian Churches as opposed to the one affiliated with Moscow (Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC). Under these conditions, in 1990, the Ukrainian Exarchate was renamed the "Ukrainian Orthodox Church." The ecclesiastical authorities of the church started looking for ways to explain why

they retained their unity with Moscow and how this did not prevent their Church from being truly Ukrainian. These explanations were usually built on the refutation of the "nationalistic schismatics," i.e., other Orthodox groups and Greek Catholics.

In 1991, then-Kyiv-Metropolitan Filaret wrote an article titled "On the issue of the Kyiv Metropolis' history" (Filaret, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c). However, its content was dedicated to schisms within the Kyiv Metropolis rather than to the Metropolis itself. The article consists of several structural blocks, each focused on one or another schism which happened to "Orthodoxy in Ukraine." To demonstrate the untenable nature of the schisms, Filaret used the same discursive approaches as before. Among them he placed an emphasis on the fact that Ukrainians and Russians have a common history and a common church, suggesting that all the schisms occurred for political reasons during times of national-religious oppression and political crises, as he called them.

But besides this, Filaret's narrative questioned the very idea that the "schismatics" could create a Ukrainian Orthodox Church since, after all, this church had already existed for many years. Filaret argued that in 1918 the eparchies of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine were named the "Ukrainian Church" by the Local Council of the ROC (Filaret, 1991a). This church received autonomy from Saint Patriarch Tikhon in 1921, "and it was exactly the path of Saint Tikhon that the Patriarch Alexy [II of Moscow] decided to take" when giving the UOC-MP "independence and self-governance" in 1990. "Radical clergy" were not satisfied either by the decision in 1918, or in 1990, and therefore split "the unity of Ukrainian Church" (Filaret, 1991c).

Throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s the narrative of Filaret's article was used by the UOC-MP in various publications and films dedicated to church history. An excellent example is the film *Anatomy of a Schism* (*Anatomiya raskola*) produced by the Synodal department for information and the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra in 2002 (Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2012d). The film explains that "when Ukraine was under the oppression of Poland" a reunion with Papal Rome was signed in 1596 and people were driven to the Uniate Church "by sticks and clubs." The "Orthodox Cossacks" revolted against these actions. Cossacks triumphed over the Polish Catholic king and united with Russia because of its Orthodoxy. With the Orthodox eparchies "left under Poland, the outrage continued." Eventually during World War II, the Uniate Church actively collaborated with the Nazis and therefore was banned and dissolved.

With regard to the autocephalous movement, the film stresses that the Autocephalous Church in Ukraine was created with the support of the Soviet authorities in 1921, who did so to split and destroy the Orthodox Church. Then during WWII, like the Uniate Church, the Autocephalous Church continued its existence in the territories occupied by the Nazis (which hints at the alleged cooperation between autocephalists and Nazis). The way the state established the Uniate Church and the Autocephalous Church is directly associated in the film with the events of the 1990s, when Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk

in concert with Metropolitan Filaret, "obedient to the authorities," established the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate. The emphasis on the collaboration between Nazis and "nationalist-minded clergy and intelligentsia" appealed to the Soviet associative link between nationalism and Nazism still widespread at the time.

It is important to note that both Filaret's article and the film focus on "Orthodox Ukrainian people" or "Orthodox Cossacks," but not "the Ukrainian Church" itself as the key actors in the events that happened prior to 1990. However, in the 1990s, a new actor appeared – the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

History of "the Ukrainian church"

The anti-schismatic narrative about struggling Ukrainian Orthodoxy employed during the 1990s gradually transformed into another one – less aggressive and more pro-Ukrainian – in the second half of the 2000s. This shift was by and large connected with the evolving views of the Kyiv Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), head of the UOC-MP. Strengthening his own position in the UOC-MP by the end of the 1990s, Metropolitan Volodymyr aimed at making his Church (1) truly Ukrainian and (2) truly autonomous (Shlikhta, 2016). He emphasized in every possible way that the Ukrainian Church under his leadership was independent and the decisions of the ROC were merely advisory in nature (Yelensky, 2013). During the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko, the Metropolitan even attempted to start a dialogue with other Orthodox churches in Ukraine (Kirill, 2009), which from the perspective of Moscow were "nationalistic schismatics." These actions could not help but influence the historical narratives voiced by the Church.

In 2008, the UOC-MP celebrated the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus'. This jubilee was presented as a definite milestone, commemorating the religious revival in the twenty years since 1988. Addressing the flock on the eve of the celebrations, Metropolitan Volodymyr stressed that the Baptism of Rus' in 988 "gave birth to Ukraine as we know it" and "since that time **the Ukrainian Orthodox Church** has always been with its people" (Volodymyr, 2007, p. 19, emphasis added). Thus, he introduced into the discourse the new idea of a specifically Ukrainian Church, which was said to have existed since the tenth century. In the following years this church would appear in popular UOC-MP literature under two different names: the "Ukrainian Church" and the "Kyiv Church." Allegedly, it was born during the reign of Prince Volodymyr in the tenth century and continuously functioned up to the present day.

In the autumn of 2009, Metropolitan Volodymyr gave a speech laying out his vision of a "specific path of Ukrainian Orthodoxy" (Yelensky, 2013). According to him, Kyiv was a bridge between East and West. As an example of how this bridge worked, he recalled Kyiv Metropolitan Petro Mohyla's times in the seventeenth century, when the "Kyiv theological tradition" synthesized the experiences of Orthodox East and Catholic West to create a unique social

and cultural space. Moreover, this bridge preserved the legacy of the Kyivan Rus', i.e., Orthodox culture. Thus, the contemporary UOC-MP, as Volodymyr argued, had inherited both the bridge and the legacy which needed to be used to unite Ukrainian society (Volodymyr, 2009).

Shortly after this, the official newspaper of the UOC-MP published the article "The Ukrainian Church is the cradle of Orthodox Rus'" (Dyatlov, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d), which reflected on key messages from the Metropolitan's speech. One can call the contents of this article a long history because it builds a narrative linking the modern UOC-MP with apostolic times, and according to this new narrative both the "Orthodox Ukrainian people" and the "Ukrainian Church" have been important actors throughout the whole history.

This long history, according to the article, began in Crimea. It was "the first pulpit . . . the Gospel Truth had been proclaimed from in the lands of the future Ukraine" (Dyatlov, 2009b). From there apostle Andrew went to the North to bless the mountains on which the city of Kyiv would be founded a few centuries later. It is interesting that the article mentioned not a word about Andrew visiting the place of the future Novgorod in modern Russia, even though this part of his trip has been seen as an important detail legitimating the apostolate of the Rus' Church (Vlodek, 1989).

The narrative further led the reader to the Baptism of Rus' and the era of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, emphasizing the unity of Rus', both the North (the future Russia) and the South (the future Ukraine) in every possible way. The narrative, however, brought up no episodes from the North, even when it came to the fragmentation of the Rus' after the death of Yaroslav the Wise; all the described events took place on the territory of the future Ukraine. The North emerged in the narrative with the Mongol yoke, which was immediately followed by the story of Saint Alexander Nevsky, a "ruler of North-East Rus'." His alliance with the Mongols to preserve Orthodoxy was set against Prince Danylo of Galicia's "South-West Rus'," which allied with the Catholics.

The appearance of two separate Metropolitans "in the lands of Rus'" (Moscow and Kyiv) is presented as a consequence of the struggle for "obtaining the Rus' lands" between the Grand Duchy of Muscovy and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The author of the article neither mentions that a separate metropolis was established in the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia in the fourteenth century, nor that Lithuania also managed to establish a separate metropolis in due time. Instead, according to the author, a separate Kyiv metropolis in the fifteenth century was created by the Greek schismatic bishops, who in 1438 adopted a union with Rome. At the time when "the Grand Duchy of Muscovy finally threw off the Mongol yoke and became the only independent Orthodox state in the world," a schismatic Kyiv Metropolitan "moved to the ethnic lands of Lithuania" (Dyatlov, 2009c), the article states, i.e., the lands inhabited by the non-Orthodox population. This metropolis in Lithuania, separate from Moscow, became legitimate in the eyes of readers through the figure of the martyr Makariy, Metropolitan of Kyiv, whose cult has been

widespread among contemporary Orthodox believers in Ukraine. The article does not mention him until he unexpectedly appears in the story, collecting money for the restoration of the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv and perishing at the hands of the Tatars.

At this point of the article the legitimate metropolis of Kyiv had to face the "planting of Catholicism" and Greek Catholics. But here the narrative focuses the reader's attention not so much on Ukrainians' previous suffering, but on victories, such as the appearance of brotherhoods (lay societies) or the foundation of the Orthodox monastery in Pochaiv. The greatest triumph in this series is the "epoch of Saint Petro Mohyla" when the "ancient shrines of Kyiv" were restored, and the academy was established to "defend the truth of the Orthodox faith." However, despite the "efforts of Saint Petro . . . the attitude of the Orthodox inhabitants of South Rus' to the government remained tense," which led to Bohdan Khmelnytsky's uprising, and then to the "oath of the Cossacks to the Moscow Tsar" (Dyatlov, 2009d) – the term Ukrainian national historiography uses in lieu of the Soviet phrase "the reunification of Ukraine with Russia."

Moreover, there was no "reunification of the Rus' Church" in this narrative. Instead, "the Kyiv Metropolis became part of the Moscow Patriarchate." "Mazepa's betrayal," an episode central to Imperial and Soviet history is hardly touched upon. Instead, the narrative focuses on the ill-conceived policy of Russian tsar Peter I causing "a decline of the resurgent economy in Ukraine" and pushing Mazepa, a "patron of Orthodox Churches," into an alliance with the tsar's enemy – Charles XII of Sweden (Dyatlov, 2009d).

The article also repeats the thesis from the article of Metropolitan Filaret that Saint Patriarch Tikhon established the "autonomous Ukrainian Exarchate" in 1918 and then Patriarch Alexy II granted this exarchate "independence and self-governance" in 1990. However, these events were not presented as the creation of a church as Filaret did, but rather as the restoration of genuine rights that a pre-existing Ukrainian Church had "prior to becoming a part of the Moscow Patriarchate" (Dyatlov, 2009d).

In addition, the article avoids talking about the "reunification of Greek Catholics" with the ROC in 1946, which in the Ukrainian national narrative of history is typically presented as an element of the Stalinist repressions against Ukrainians. Moreover, there is not a word of condemnation of the schisms of the 1920s, 1940s, and 1990s that led to the emergence of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

This long history, unlike the previous narratives, turns out to be a continuous story, where the main character is the Ukrainian Church with its "special path." The narrative dates this church back to the apostolic times and also describes it as a "cradle" from which Christianity spread to the rest of the lands of the Rus'. Certain concepts, such as the "reunification of Ukraine with Russia" or "national-religious oppression" were abandoned while the Moscow Patriarch and Russia were implicitly represented as those who violated the rights of the Kyiv Metropolitans by taking away their broad autonomy.

"It is necessary not only to know the names of saints, but also to read their lives"

This gradual invention of the long history in the 2000s was accompanied by the Church's own creation of a pantheon of specifically Ukrainian saints. This process consisted of two interrelated approaches: the canonization of Ukrainian saints, that is, those who were born or lived in the territory of modern Ukraine; and the nationalization of already-existing saints from the Rus' pantheon.

A vivid example is Saint Dmitry of Rostov. The official newspaper of the UOC-MP devoted more than a dozen publications to this saint in the 2000s. The description of his life usually began with this argument:

> Saint Dmitry is called "of Rostov" after the ancient Rus' city of Rostov, which is in the present Yaroslavl Oblast of Russia. In Rostov [he] occupied the episcopal see for eight years, until his death. . . . However, the saint of God spent the previous half-century, from the moment of his birth, in his native Ukraine – the spiritual heir of the ancient South Rus'.
>
> (Dyatlov, 2009a)

Further, the narratives built up in such a way as to maximize Saint Dmitry's life in his "native Ukraine" and to minimize his life in Russian Rostov. One of the most striking examples is an article published in 2012 which, after a long description of Saint Dmitry's life in Ukraine, abruptly finished with the following phrase: "The last place of service of Saint Dmitry was Rostov Veliky (Yaroslavl Oblast, Russia)" (Zozulenko, 2012). Beyond publicizing his life the Synod of the UOC-MP established the Order of Saint Dmitry in 2009, making the nationalization official (Svyatyteliu otche Dimitrie, 2009).

Similarly, Saint John of Tobolsk was also Ukrainianized. The official UOC-MP newspaper published the story of his life under the title "The Lantern of the Siberian Land." However, judging by the content of this article, Saint John, having spent his whole life "in the lands of Ukraine," brought his books to Siberian Tobolsk and died almost immediately (Hor, 2012).

In 2011, the Synod of the UOC-MP established the Synaxis of Kyiv Saints – the day of all Kyiv Saints (Holy Synod of the UOC [Holy Synod], 2011). The bishops of the Holy Synod included in this Synaxis traditionally Russian characters such as Theophan the Recluse and Joasaph of Belgorod. This step, apparently, caused such an ambiguous reaction among believers that in less than a year the Church authorities had to explain their decision: "Although many names in this Synaxis may seem unexpected, each of them was justifiably included in this list" since all of these saints were born, studied, or served for a long time in Kyiv (Holy Synod, 2012).

Following this principle, the Synaxis of Volhynia Saints, for instance, included "natives of Volhynia"; the Chernihiv Synaxis – apart from natives – included the above-mentioned Russian John of Tobolsk, because after all, he brought the "traditions of the of Chernihiv's theological schools" alongside his books to Tobolsk (Holy Synod, 2012).

Nationalization was presented to believers as a correction which revealed forgotten things about the saints:

> If the ascetic spent less time in the last place of his earthly ministry than in other places, and this last place subsequently became associated with (his) works . . . people usually add this place to ascetic name, "overshadowing" other places of his life and ministry. Is it not a kind of "limitation"? **It is necessary not only to know the names of saints, but also to read their lives.**
>
> (Dyatlov, 2009a, emphasis added)

In addition to nationalization, the UOC–MP has canonized more than 300 local saints during the post-Soviet period (Local Council of the UOC, 2011). Many of these saints were heroes from the national discourse of Ukraine. Among them are several figures of the Ukrainian clergy, including Metropolitan Petro Mohyla (recalling the revival of Ukrainian Orthodoxy and a vivid example of how to use Western and Eastern traditions to unify the Church) (Drabinko, 2015), and Metropolitan Volodymyr Bogoyavlensky (a martyr of the twentieth century, as the Church claims, the first churchman persecuted by Bolsheviks). The list also includes Ukrainian statesmen, such as Prince Yaroslav the Wise (builder of Saint Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv) and Petro Kalnyshevsky (the last Koshovy *Otaman*, a chief officer of the Zaporozhian Host, and an opponent of the Russian imperial government).

"History of Orthodoxy in Rus'"

Along with the process of constructing a long-history narrative and appropriation of saints, another narrative has been developing. This one is aimed at legitimating the unity with Moscow. This section identifies the roots and schema of this narrative, as well as its key messages.

In order to explain the ties with the ROC and undermine claims of schismatics to establish a separate Ukrainian Church, the UOC–MP leadership employed the historical narratives from the Soviet times, which emphasized the common origin and common historical fate of Russians and Ukrainians. Turning again to the case of the 2002 film *Anatomy of a Schism* one could observe strong anti-schismatic sentiments strengthened by the appeals to the alleged unity of the Rus' people or fraternal peoples – which in other words were nothing but a mere repetition of the narrative schema from *Pravoslavny Visnyk*.

The textbook for the theological seminaries of the UOC–MP, titled "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'," is yet another example of this scheme remaining in the official discourse. It opens with the phrase: "The history of the Rus' Church as an academic study . . . depicts the course of the gradual development of Christ's Church in Rus'. . . . It also finds out . . . how the Rus' Church guided the people of Rus' toward moral progress" (Vlodek, 1989, p. 1). This textbook, compiled as early as 1989 and republished several times since then with the

imprimatur of the Kyiv Metropolis, offers students the history of a common Rus' Church. The narrative is built in such a way that most of the events take place in the north – Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

The textbook history is divided into four periods. The first, the Kyivan period of the "common cradle," was before the Mongol invasion. Following that was the Moscow period, when the Metropolitan moved to the north and the Metropolis was subsequently divided in two. The authors emphasize that during this period "for the Moscow Metropolis a time of internal prosperity had come . . . and the Kyiv Metropolis suffered disasters from hands of non-Orthodox" (Vlodek, 1989, pp. 1–2). The third period was in Saint Petersburg, when "the Rus' Church was under the strong pressure and influence of the state," and the final one was the Soviet era.

Like the Soviet articles from *Pravoslavny Visnyk*, "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'" tells the readers about sufferings of "people from South-West Rus'" (Ukrainians) before the reunification with Russia, and condemns Greek Catholics and so on. Above all, this narrative used the concept of "one people" (*odin narod*) defined by their location in Rus' and affiliation with the Orthodox church. And this people had only one true Church – the Russian Orthodox Church. Both the people and the Church could have been divided either by different states or metropolises, but against all odds they remained unified, albeit temporarily separated by state or administrative borders.

The cornerstone of this narrative was the commemoration of Kyivan Rus' as the "cradle of the Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian nations." The present-day unity of UOC-MP with Moscow was explained by appealing to the Kyivan Rus'. In 2008, leaders of the ROC came up with the idea of "Holy Rus'," which brought together narratives from the Soviet period and the seminary textbook. This idea was founded on the formula of Lavrentiy Chernihivsky (1898–1950), a monk canonized by the UOC-MP in 1993: "Ukraine, Russia and Belarus are together the Holy Rus'" (Suslov, 2014). Beginning in 2008, then–Metropolitan of the ROC Kirill (Gundyayev) made several trips to Ukraine, addressing the flock with this formula and starting public debates about it. The Holy Rus' project considered the period of the Kyivan Rus' a golden age when the Orthodox people lived in an Orthodox state created by Saint Prince Volodymyr the Great. The Prince's legacy, allegedly, lasted until now in the form of a common Orthodox-based culture shared by Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians. The key actor of the Holy Rus' narrative – "the people of the Rus'" – despite "being divided by the borders of the different states and certain inconsistencies in politics" remained spiritually united (Kirill, 2009).

The narrative from the seminary textbook apparently influenced by the Holy Rus' concept would also appear in the public discourse of the UOC-MP alongside the above-mentioned long history. For example, in 2010 the publishing department of the UOC-MP issued a book titled *The Law of God* – a textbook on Orthodox faith and liturgy and biblical and Church history designed for laymen and clergy alike. Among other things, it contained two chapters on

the history of the Orthodox Church in Ukrainian lands, which present a narrative in tension with that of the long history.

The first chapter, "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'," covered events from the apostle Andrew's trip to the present day. The storyline of the second chapter, "The History of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church," started in the 1990s, when, amidst schisms and revival of Greek Catholics, an institution entitled the "Ukrainian Orthodox Church" was established.

In this book, the history was told exactly the same way as in the textbook for seminaries: after the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century, the Metropolis, being the heart of the Rus' lands, moved up to the North and all the main events took place there. The reader returns to "South-West Rus'" only when the "Orthodox people suffer" at the hands of Catholics, or when they "reunite with Russia" and the "Rus' Church."

Unlike the long-history narrative, here the Ukrainian Church as an actor appeared in the narrative no earlier than 1990, when the Moscow Patriarch granted the Kyiv Metropolis "independence and self-governance" (Drabinko, 2010). But the real birth of this church was in 1992, when Metropolitan Filaret was deposed from his see; the whole history after that consisted of just a struggle against the schisms of Filaret and others.

Moreover, this type of narrative employs the familiar approach of inscribing specific historical episodes into the common historical narrative of the Rus' Church used by Filaret (Filaret, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c). Many of such episodes were published by the *Tserkovna* newspaper after 2009. In them, apostle Andrew usually did reach the North Rus' or Novgorod. The Kyiv prince Volodymyr necessarily baptized "all of the lands of Rus'" (together with its northern parts, namely, where Russia subsequently appeared) (Moiseyenko, 2010c).

Returning to the narratives of schismatics and suffering, the *Tserkovna* newspaper also describes how, after the oppression of the Orthodox people in Lithuania, the Constantinople "pseudo-Patriarch Gregory Mammis" divided the single Rus' Church into two Metropolises – one in Moscow and the other, schismatic, in Kyiv (Moiseyenko, 2010b). This division caused all subsequent troubles: greater oppression, the planting of Catholicism, and the union of Brest in 1596 (Moiseyenko, 2010a). Metropolitans of a separate Kyiv Metropolis "did not have much of any credibility and their moral fiber was low" (Moiseyenko, 2010b), and "the Polish lords, wishing to tear Orthodox Ukrainians away from their brother in faith in the Russian state, acquired Jesuits and other Catholic orders . . . to discredit the Orthodox hierarchy" (Moiseyenko, 2010d). The Union of Brest apace with "national and religious oppression" caused "the national liberation war of the Ukrainian people" and "the reunification of Ukraine with Russia", as well as "the reunification of the once unified Rus' Church" (Moiseyenko, 2011). In eparchies not reunited with Russia, as, for example, in Volhynia, "persecutions continued . . . fanatic crowds thundered churches and even killed Orthodox priests"; "only with the accession of most of the Ukrainian lands to Russia, things began to gradually improve" (Moiseyenko, 2010e).

The narrative, of course, included references to autocephalous schisms, which became possible due to nationalistic rule or Nazi occupation. In 1946, the Greek Catholics "returned to Orthodoxy" for a short while until the 1990s, when together with the *Filaretovtsy* (Metropolitan Filaret's followers) they started to take over Orthodox churches "everywhere . . . accompanied by violence" (Moiseyenko, 2010e, 2010f). The revival of Orthodoxy began after 1992, and all these stories concluded with a common summary, claiming the need to overcome schisms and "firmly cherish the spiritual heritage of three fraternal peoples, growing from the same root, the Kyivan Rus'" (Moiseyenko, 2011).

Thus the narrative, which can be called the "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'," was supposed to emphasize the unity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy with the Rus' Church. It exploited the memory of a common past (the Kyivan Rus') as a starting point and employed discursive approaches of the Soviet-period suffering of Orthodox Ukrainians before reunification with Russia, dangers of separation, etc.

"Ukraine is a divided country"

In a recent study, Ukrainian historian Georgy Kasyanov has outlined two narratives of collective memory in post-Soviet Ukraine – national/nationalist and Soviet-nostalgic. According to Kasyanov, the national narrative is a set of ideas about the "uniqueness, distinctiveness and independence of the community, which is called a nation," while the Soviet-nostalgic narrative is built around the "elements associated with the 'leading' role of Russian culture . . . and [this narrative] insists on a supranational unity of historical experience" (Kasyanov, 2018, p. 29). The peculiarity of the coexistence of these two narratives in the collective memory is that they are in some way regionalized. The national/nationalist narrative has dominated in the western regions of Ukraine and the Soviet-nostalgic narrative has been dominant primarily in the eastern regions (above all in Donbas) and in Crimea (Kasyanov, 2018, p. 31).

Despite the regional variations of Ukrainian collective memory, the UOC-MP, according to statistics, throughout the entire post-Soviet period has been comprised of parishes and monasteries in all regions of Ukraine – both in the west and in the east. Moreover, in most areas it was and still remains the dominant church and thus had to speak to bearers of each of these narratives. Hence the need for both the long history of "the Ukrainian Orthodox Church" and the "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'" narrative in the UOC-MP. In 2008, Kyiv Metropolitan Volodymyr described the phenomenon this way: "The Church must consider that Ukraine is a divided country with two different cultures . . . two civilizational orbits: 'Eastern' and 'Western'" (Ukrayins'ka Pravoslavna Tserkva, 2017). In practice, this means that in order to belong to these different "civilizational orbits," the Church had to use historical narratives that those in each of these "orbits" could have identified as "theirs."

This resonates with Kubik and Bernhard's concept of cultural constraints, which "define actors' understanding of the world." They point out:

> Mnemonic entrepreneurs are free to construct their narratives out of the available . . . repertoire but are limited in their choices by its boundaries. If they choose elements outside this repertoire, they appear to be alien and not credible to their potential constituents.
>
> (Kubik & Bernhard, 2014, p. 22)

In other words, to be adopted by the bearers of the Soviet-nostalgic memory narrative, the Church must use a repertoire that emphasizes the unity of the "fraternal peoples," demonstrates the negative consequences of separation, the leading role of Russian culture, and so on, that is, all those elements that we find in the narrative that can be called the "History of Orthodoxy in the Rus'" after the name of the seminary textbook. At the same time, to be able to talk with the bearers of the narrative of memory focused on nationalism, the Church needs to apply concepts representing a separate and distinctive Ukrainian Church that has existed since the times of Kyivan Rus' and follows "its own special path." This also could be seen in the narrative, which we can call the "History of the Ukrainian Church."

Interestingly, both of these narratives have been given the same weight and the same authority: they appeared on the pages of the same official newspaper, *Tserkovna*. The same commemorative practices and sites of memory have also been used to simultaneously legitimize them both. The historical memories of the Council in Kharkiv of 1992 and the Baptism of Rus' serve as excellent examples of the bifurcated narratives of the UOC-MP.

Kharkiv council

On May 27, 1992, the bishops of the UOC-MP gathered in Kharkiv and elected Volodymyr as the new Kyiv Metropolitan, who later contributed the long-history narrative, while the incumbent Metropolitan Filaret was trying his very best to achieve autocephaly for the UOC-MP from the Moscow Patri-archate. Most of the bishops, once willing to establish an independent church, changed their minds and withdrew their support from Filaret's undertaking. As a consequence, Filaret found himself "in schism" with the ROC, and Volody-myr "preserved the unity (of the UOC-MP) with the mother church" (Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra, 2012d).

This event was memorized in a series of annual commemorations and festivi-ties which reflected the developing imagination of the UOC-MP about itself: unity with the Moscow Patriarchate, preservation of grace (canonicity) and apostolic succession through this unity, as well as a revival of the spiritual life of Ukraine under the UOC-MP guidance and UOC-MP's status of an independ-ent and self-governed church. The Council marked the victory of the conciliar mind (*soborny razum*) of the Church (Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra, 2012d). It also

laid the foundation for a separation of the Church and politics. "This council is famous for electing a brand-new way of Church service in the new social and political conditions," said Kyiv Metropolitan Onufry (Berezovsky) (Ukrayins'ka Pravoslavna Tserkva, 2017). The Council also became a unifying factor. Metropolitan Volodymyr in his interview stressed that "by liberating the Church from the rough interference of the state and politicians, the council had spiritually united the East, the West, the North, and the South of Ukraine" (Anisimov, 2007), emphasizing the uniquely Ukrainian nature of the Church. Moreover, due to the Council, "the spiritual revival of our Church has begun," as Metropolitan Volodymyr would repeatedly recall (Drabinko, 2015). The period after the council was a time of "unprecedented flourishing in **Ukrainian Orthodoxy**," echoed the authors of the film *Council of Kharkiv – 25 years* (Press Service of the Kyiv Theologian Academy and Seminary, 2017, emphasis added). Memories of the Kharkiv Council were also used to legitimize the unity with the ROC: "By retaining a spiritual connection with the Russian Orthodox Church, [the UOC-MP] has become a true Church of the Ukrainian people... (that) respects the national history and traditions" (Volodymyr, 2008).

Baptism of the Kyivan Rus'

The UOC-MP celebrated the 1020th, the 1025th, and 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of the Kyivan Rus' in 2008, 2013, and 2018 respectively. In addition, on July 27–28 every year since 2007, Saint Volodymyr's Day and the Baptism of Rus' Day have been celebrated.

The symbolic meaning of these festivities before 2014 was related to the UOC-MP's attempts to construct a long-history narrative. The Baptism of Rus' Day, reported the official newspaper of the UOC-MP, was the first holiday of the Motherland (Darpinyants, 2008). The Holy Synod (2008a) noted in their addresses: "When the Kyiv Church was established, a people was born with its own consciousness and noble spirit." The Synod (2013) also added that "the celebration . . . will encourage the Ukrainian people to realize their historical roots". The large-scale celebration of the jubilee in 2008 in Kyiv was evidently an attempt to legitimize claims of the heritage of Kyivan Rus' and thus to declare a special path of Ukrainian Christianity. The UOC-MP Synod noted on the eve of festivities: "The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is the successor of Volodymyr the Great's baptism, the guardian of the centuries-old spiritual tradition connecting the East Slavic nations with the Orthodox East" (Holy Synod, 2008b).

At the same time, the Baptism of Rus' has been used by the History of Orthodoxy in Rus' narrative to promote the ideas of the Holy Rus' (Suslov, 2014). For this reason, the Moscow Patriarch or his representatives have tried to take part in all the celebrations of Saint Volodymyr's Day and the Baptism Day starting in 2007. For them it was important to convey the idea that the Rus' Church was the heir of Saint Volodymyr's baptism. Different nations may have sprung from this baptism, but all of them were nevertheless united by a common culture – or even further – that they were "spiritually one people."

After Metropolitan Volodymyr's death the ecclesiastical leadership of the UOC-MP changed the symbolic meaning of these festivities in accordance with the History of Orthodoxy in Rus' narrative. In 2017, they even merged celebrations of the Council in Kharkiv and the Baptism of Rus' into one, further legitimizing the subordination to Moscow rooted in the "common cradle of baptism" and preserved by the Council in Kharkiv. Metropolitan Onufry wrote in his annual address: "Do not call us the Moscow Church simply because we guard the millennial spiritual tradition beginning with Baptism of Rus'" (Holy Synod, 2017).

Conclusion

In telling about its own past, the UOC-MP now employs two basic narratives. The one, which could be called the "History of Orthodoxy in Rus'," is based on the concepts of the common history of "fraternal peoples" – Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians – united by the common Rus' Orthodoxy-based culture. The lineage of events in this narrative is built around Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Events on the periphery, that is in Ukrainian Orthodoxy, are described with the help of tropes of suffering and struggle for unity with the "fraternal Russian people."

Another narrative (which I call the "History of the Ukrainian Church") grew out of the intention of ecclesiastical leaders to make their Church more Ukrainian. Initially reflecting the attempts of Kyiv Metropolitan Volodymyr to decrease Moscow's influence and to start a dialogue with rival Orthodox churches in 2007–2014, this narrative gradually transformed into a long history of the Ukrainian Church. This long history claims that the Ukrainian Church was created by Prince Volodymyr in the tenth century and since then has "always been with its people." It avoids direct condemnation of nationalistic schisms and does not use concepts legitimizing the unity of the Russian Church.

Simultaneous employment of these two narratives can be explained by the fact that the UOC-MP unites communities with different collective memories. Accordingly, attempting to remain acceptable to all its members, the Church maintains both narratives. However, after the death of Metropolitan Volodymyr and the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in 2014, usage of the "History of the Ukrainian Church" narrative in its latest version has been increasingly relinquished. The new Church leadership is paying much more attention to legitimizing its unity with the ROC and, following the recognition of the "schismatic" Orthodox Church of Ukraine in 2018 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, also to the condemnation of schisms.

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