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THE POLITICAL FACE OF FAITH

The question of correlation between faith and authority was acute for centuries. And still we don't have an unambiguous recipe for this dilemma. There are different points of view present in the society regarding religion and its influence on policy, i.e. the social peace. A Christian worldwide two-thousand-year-old tradition also has many examples and attempts of solving this question. There were examples of conflict overcoming between secular and religious in favor of the Church. There also was a dominant time for secular authority with all the consequences for the Church that came with it. It's necessary to look objectively on this problem. The object of this research was narrowed down to Ukraine, the transformation process of which is the most important. The last several years this country is experiencing severe military, political, economic and world-view shocks. At the same time, there is no unity in Ukraine on the church level, so it's impossible to exactly indicate the ruling Church and the religion community, which in this region of the world have the significant influence on the socio-political processes. I'm considering that it certainly will be a subject of research for the next years, especially after receiving of the *tomos* of Autocephaly by the Ukrainian Church. And one more important component as the contribution of Church in the Revolution of Dignity is present in the story of the Ukrainian Church. In full, it will be possible to write about it only when some time has passed and have a look on the events in Ukraine of the years 2013-2014 from a long-term perspective.

The three possible options of resolution of the question of interaction between the faith and politics

Scientists sociologists speak about three options for the solution of the issue of interaction between religion and politics in Ukraine. Political scientist Serhij Hrabovsky offers the following three views on the interaction of religious and political. The first view is that the Kingdom of God is absolutely not tangent to the Kingdom of the Earth. According to this view, there is no point in discussing the relationship between politics and faith; these two categories are in different directions.

The second option considers the religion as one of the forms of ideology. Opponents of religion, taking this view, always talk about a negative of the religious factor and begin to actively struggle with all its manifestations, including faith. In Ukraine, this was the case when churches were persecuted in the communist Soviet Union, cults were forbidden, and the rights of believers were limited. At the official level, they argued that God doesn't exist. However, there is also a mirror-reverse situation, when religion dominates and becomes a militant fundamentalist ideology. There are many such examples in the modern world. An example of religious fundamentalism close to us is the Orthodoxy that is distorted by imperial ideology. It is represented by the active and sometimes aggressive intervention of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in public relations in the midst of Russia and beyond. According to the ideology of the *Русский мир* (Russian world), there is the elected triune Russian people who have their own special mission, and this unique people have existed since the times of Kyivan Rus', and it can't be divided into different nations in order to meet modern political sentiments.

The third and the most widespread view on the relationship between politics and religion is that these are two separate social phenomena, but they constantly interact and mutual influence.

I will try to consider the issue of the political face of faith based on this last point of view. Also, for the better understanding of the actuality of my research I would like to emphasize that the issue of mutual influence of the faith and politics has a wide world context. As an example, United States presidential candidate Barack Obama's 2006 speech on this topic, in which he tried to substantiate the importance of faith for contemporary pluralistic democracy. Barack Obama mentioned many prominent politicians of the US history, including Frederick Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, William Jennings Brian, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, who were motivated by faith, and religious lexicon allowed them to defend their own peaceful position.

Separation into secular and church

The division into secular and church is rather conditional. Although the old Benedictine is called the prayer and liturgical life of the monastery as *Opus Dei*, it certainly does not deny, but confirms the position that in daily works, Christians must go out and nurture from the original image of Christ to draw inspiration for work and ministry. In addition, we must mention the important long-standing principle that sounds: *laborare est orare* ("To work is to pray"). As a result of such beliefs, Christianity contributed to the emergence of modern European culture, becoming its

foundation, and we observe that all those universal human values that are so often debated and discussed by the public are also deeply rooted in Christianity.

The age of humanism set forth the great Christian principles - liberty, equality and fraternity, as their creation and their property. If the opponents of the Church take on one of these achievements of human civilization, this does not mean that Christians should refuse them. The slogan *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* was the achievement of the French Revolution and the outcome of the Enlightenment, which laid the foundations for the secularization of European society. Though it has become like the ultimate dividing line, between society and the Church, between education and religion, between political power and personal faith in God, according to the German scholar of state law, Karl Schmitt, all modern doctrines of the state are inherently secular theological notions; and this is because, despite its metaphysics, religion that is rationalized and is reflected in political reality.

The Imitation of Christ

As in past centuries, Europe has experienced excessive clericalization and counter-reaction of representatives of the Enlightenment, as well as Russian and Ukrainian society in the tsarist and Soviet era, felt the burden of clericalization, and subsequently repression and violence.

Regardless of those historical drama, spirituality is born in the Church, which far exceeds the political intrigue of all time and regions, namely faith in Christ as the Divine and the Human Model. In the 15th century, the book *De imitatione Christi* (The Imitation of Christ) was published, attributed to the Rhine mystic Thomas à Kempis.

The consequence of faith is Christian humanism

In the 21st century, there is a dispute over how Christianity should be rooted in tradition, and to what extent it can be progressive. Everyone understands the concept of "progressiveness" in his own way. For example, American religion scholar George Weigel accuses progressive Catholics in authoritarianism, denial of openness and rejection of dialogue. From this it can be deduced that nowadays social ideas affect the inter-church life and Christians can't simply be freed from such ideological contradictions. Although they have for their own purposes the imitation of Christ as a direction in order not to get lost in a complex and confused world, such faith makes them able to combine respect for traditions with a constant effort to bring the light of truth into a dynamic and volatile world.

The three types of nationalism

All this was a general background for the analyses of the Ukrainian question and the political face of faith. Nowadays Ukraine is known through the Kyiv Revolution of Dignity, the annexation of Crimea by the Russian forces and the war on the Donbass. Archimandrite Cyril Hovorun, in a contribution under the title "*Forms of National Awareness in Ukraine*" spoke about a certain stereotype that exists in the west, to which a war in the Donbass is between ethnic Ukrainian nationalism and Russian imperial nationalism.

In order to clarify the term of nationalism, he proposes the typology to which the nationalism is divided on three types: imperial (civilizational), ethnic (balkanic) and civil. (1.) Imperial nationalism, or chauvinism, is the worst and most destructive. (2.) Ethnic nationalism - the eternal antagonist of imperial chauvinism due to Ukrainian experience, was this type of nationalism that destroyed largest empires. However, ethnic nationalism is also a threat, since it places one ethnic group in a dominant position. (3.) The most appropriate type of nationalism is considered civil because it deals with basic issue of human dignity. Father Hovorun considers that through the experience of the Revolution of Dignity, Ukraine can offer the world certain recipes on how to overcome the negative phenomena associated with the existed imperial nationalism. Events in the Kyiv on the Maidan have become a victory of civil society, which can be called the affirmation of ideas of civil nationalism among the ruling population. Despite the existence in Ukraine of representatives of all types of nationalism, and the polarity of political views among the active part of society, the Maidan was able to prove that for the sake of higher goals and in the times of the existential crisis, Ukrainian society is able to unite and defend the fundamental human freedoms.

Father Hovorun argued that the two countries offered the world basic models of nationalism - France and Germany. He refers to the American professor Rogers Brubaker, who in his article "Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany" writes: "While the French understanding of the nation is state-centered and assimilative, the German understanding of the nation is Volk-centered and differential". Brubaker stresses that the German understanding of the nation is ethnocultural rather than political, which is because the German national feeling appeared earlier than a national state.

It's necessary to mention about the importance of such existed typology, but there can be difficulty with implementing it to the Ukrainian realities. This is mainly due to the fact that the situation with nationalism in Ukraine is different from Western Europe because of its negative historical experience of being a part of colonial empires.

Ukrainian nationalism

On the one hand, Ukrainians are like the Germans, because their national idea was also formed when there was no Ukrainian state. On the other hand, Ukrainians, at a difficult moment, supported their fellow citizens of Crimean Tatars who are not just representatives of another ethnic group, but they also have a completely different culture and religious affiliation from the Ukrainian one. This does not prevent Ukrainian nationalism from dreaming of its own state, where it will be able to comfortably co-exist, as Ukrainians with the Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups. In this Ukrainian model is similar to French. It seems that ethnic nationalism in Ukraine tends to be civil. Therefore, not everyone understands it. Many European countries, where ethnic nationalism has historically tended to the imperial (civilizational), are therefore afraid of Ukrainian nationalism, because they do not know all the details of Ukrainian history, and the manifestations of ethnic nationalism in Ukraine are measured by their own examples.

The imperial form of nationalism is the greatest threat and danger to European civilization. The manifestations of this type of nationalism must be fought both in Ukraine and abroad. A big problem is when the Church is struck by imperial chauvinism, because it leads to religious fundamentalism, which removes believers from the Gospel commandments. In Ukraine, according to Archimandrite Cyril (Hovorun), where there are four Churches of the Kyiv tradition, each of them has a predominance of one or another type of nationalism, and all of them have problems with imperial (civilizational) nationalism.

The contribution of the Revolution of Dignity in the creation of the nation

And here comes the Revolution of Dignity. Thanks to the events at the Kyiv's Independence Square, society, politicians and the Church were able to get rid of the dirt. Indeed, Maidan - was a revolution that actualized a certain part of universal values. After the Maidan, church and political life began to talk about dignity and freedom, and even celebrate the Dignity and Freedom Day at the official holiday. This should lead to the fact that all witnesses and participants of the Revolution of Dignity events became the motto of the national evolution that took place after the Maidan. This is all but not without dangers. Father Hovorun, for example, warns the Church of a fusion with any type of nationalism, even if it is civil nationalism, in what, for instance, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is sometime criticized. This is because civil society in its present form is the result of secularization, and the Church's direct involvement in civil society, will cause the loss of its identity and the strengthening of the Church's secularization.

Church and nation-building

It's necessary to outline an important task for the future for the Church in post-revolutionary Ukraine. The Revolution of Dignity has proven that the spiritual component is an important element in the construction of a modern and democratic Ukraine. At the moment, trust in the Church is the highest among all social institutions, therefore the Church in such a situation is obliged to take a more active action. Since civil consciousness was the basis of the Maidan, the Church, as one of the participants in the revolutionary events, had the opportunity to join the formation of the agenda of the revolution. Today, the Church can be involved in the development of a new and just Ukrainian society.

The way out of the Church testifies about its readiness that Christians values can be used by society as universal and secular. This new approach will manifest itself in the political dimension, and this requires a rethinking of some church stereotypes. For example, those believers who practice the ideas of monarchism in their church must understand that these ideas have no future and no chance of success. Or another example, carrying portraits of Russian tsars and the use of imperial symbols will only marginalize representatives of a specific church community.

The problem of mutual distrust between secular and religious society is relevant for a lot of countries. Barack Obama in his speech on faith and politics, mentioned about this problem and expressed strong support for its overcoming. He called faith an effective and tangible factor in the world, because faith can be a source of hope for a world that is plunged into sociopolitical contradictions.

I think that the theses voiced by Barack Obama in his speech of 2006 is a good model for the coexistence of Christians with people of other religions or non-believers. Obama rejects the monopoly of believers on morality and condemns the alleged Christianity. Instead, as a new testament to the US, he offers people, including the secular ones, to confirm their own morals and ethics and not to be hypocrites. In the context of moral and material development, one can speak of the existence of common values for both believers and non-believers.

Without the participation of Christians in the social sphere and participation in social processes, one should not hope for a successful proclamation of the Gospel in a secular society infected with postmodern ideas. The disciples of Christ are called to preach the truth. In turn, the truth is the best weapon against totalitarianism and postmodern relativism. The religious community on the Maidan has shown that it can fulfill the role of peacemaker and mediator in society. In this case, the political face of faith is very important, because the modern world is in possession of dangerous delusions - religious and political fanaticism. Democracy now depends on rational

discourse and the possibility of a debate, when all parties have equal opportunity to express their own position, and this opportunity is realized less and less.

The peaceful protest has become a true value of the Maidan, which will have a long-term impact on Ukrainian politics. An important contribution in this belongs to the Ukrainian Churches. After all, the Church has defended another important value on the Maidan - it is the support of the neighbor. The churches, through their faithful, conducted a constructive dialogue with each other. They actively acted together as soon as they saw the need to help their neighbor. This experience is a skill capable of influencing society and returning political discourse from a populist to a value dimension.

The Church on the Maidan has proved that it is capable of rejecting secondary issues for social reconciliation and unity. In post-colonial Ukraine, it became clear that its moral and spiritual guidelines are important for the free development of society. Problems of modern democracies are often associated with the rejection of such guidelines. This leads to the (re)occurrence of manipulation of moral and cultural issues for the purpose of information warfare. In such a world, the question of values and the revival of public discourse will again be acute, and ethics shaped by Christianity can convince political elites in the need for constructive discourse that will supplant populist and propaganda rhetoric.

Instead of conclusion

The way out of Christianity, the spreading of Christian values in the society will surely touch upon the political issue. Lively and dynamic Christianity has a chance to penetrate all spheres of human activity. The same Christians should not be afraid to take the initiative. The world now lives in an information society, where many ideas and views compete with each other. Christians must confidently defend their traditional Christian values (faith, hope and love). The most important thing is not to be hypocrites with this, and to follow the rules that they proclaim. The easiest way to experience the change for yourself - is to start listening to the word of God and realize it in practice and know that to follow Christ - is to be a disciple, so to be able to make mistakes and then also recognized them.

Despite Christ and his gospel unite all Christians they may don't have the same political views. But actually, it's a challenge that they are facing with. So, through faith in God, they could be responsible for society as a whole, as God created it.

Ukrainian Christians are only at the beginning of the way of understanding the common roots of all Churches of the Byzantine rite in Ukraine. On the one hand, the Revolution of Dignity was the manifestation of civil activity and the birth of a civil

society, and on the other hand - it was materialization, the explosion of living Christian energy, which broke out from the outside. Believers of all four churches of the Volodymyr Baptism did not suit the role of passive parishioners. Perhaps today Ukrainians lack the unity in politics and in church-religious life. However, time will put everything into place. After all, the effect and influence of the Church is not always visible to the human eye. This beneficial effect comes from the human heart and manifests itself in relationships. Mutual respect and relationships are something that should work separately for Ukrainian politics and society as a whole. If Ukrainians learn to listen to the opposite side, do not criticize without sound reasons, if one party respects another party, the society will trust the media, and those in turn will tell truth about the activities of the authorities at all levels, then they will definitely be on the right path of development.

The positive impact of Christianity may not be immediately apparent, because the improvement of relation in the middle of a society needs to work long and hard. But everything is possible with God's blessing and personal and social efforts that are directed on the building and increasing of civil responsibility.