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“TO AVERT POSSIBLE ABUSES”: UKRAINIAN GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH’S TEACHING ON GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

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Free elections in a democracy are a key moment for the determination and implementation of “government of the people.” There are more than 50 Christian denominations in Ukraine, but at the same time, an abstract church in general as a social institution in Ukraine has enjoyed the highest level of social confidence for a long time. Results of sociological investigations confirmed that fact. Therefore, the church has an observable potential to influence social processes.

PREFACE

In accordance polling by the fund “Democratic initiatives” of September 2001, 73% of Ukrainians committed to the church altogether or partially. Simultaneously, 36% of respondents committed to the parliament and 44% to the president¹. In December 2007, analogical polling fixed 73.1% level confidence to the church in general, 28.8% to the parliament and 36.4% to the president². Especially audibly church’s authority excelled during political crisis and decline of confidence to political institutions of the last years. As polling by “TNS-Ukraine” in September 2010 ascertained, 68.3% of Ukrainians committed to the church while 21.4% committed to the parliament and 41.4% to the President³. After results of the

1 «Круглий стіл ‘Громадська думка в Україні – вересень 2001 року’», Official website, *Фонд «Демократичні ініціативи»*, 01, October 2001, <http://2008.dif.org.ua/ua/poll>.

2 «‘Громадська думка населення України – грудень 2007 року’», Official website, *Фонд «Демократичні ініціативи»*, 24, December 2007, <http://2008.dif.org.ua/ua/poll>.

3 «Українці і надалі найбільше довіряють Церкві», Informational website, *Релігійно Інформаційна Служба України*, 29, September 2010, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/community/social_questioning/38116/. At the same time, Liudmyla Fylypovych from the Department of Religious studies of National Academy of Sciences

sociological investigation by the “Laboratory of legislative initiatives” and the TNS-Ukraine in February 2011, yet 67.1% of respondents committed to the church in general, 18.7% to the parliament and 30.8% to the president.⁴ It is indicative that issues of polling less one year before the Euromaidan in Ukraine (another name “Revolution of Dignity” 2013–2014) fixed exiguous abasement of confidence to the church and essential growth of confidence to state power institutions. After a polling by the “Razumkov Center”, which were disclosed in February 2013, 66.5% of Ukrainians committed to the church but 41.9% committed to the parliament and 48% to the president⁵. Nevertheless, lowermost level of confidence to the abstract church during 2010–2016 sociologists traced in July 2015, to wit after the Euromaidan. Then 62% of Ukrainians trusted to the church, 15.5% to the parliament and 29.5% to the president. The church first time admitted the leader’s position to another institution, that time to volunteers, who received 66.6% of social confidence⁶. Still, already at the beginning of 2016, the church revived the position with 58.8% of confidence at the time when volunteers acquired 57.6%⁷.

Along these lines, the exploration and explication positions of different denominations in Ukraine concerning elections and citizens’ control over the state power are timely and important. In this text, we aspire to analyze the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (forth UGCC) teaching about government elections and the role of democratic elections in social change. The UGCC is the largest Eastern Catholic Church with 5.3–5.5 million members. It is one of the heirs of Kyiv⁸

of Ukraine admitted even 72.5% of Ukrainians committed to Church in 2010. See Людмила Филипович, *Культура релігійного життя. Вибрані праці* (Київ: Українська асоціація релігієзнавців, Відділення релігієзнавства Інституту філософії ім. Григорія Сковороди Національної академії наук України, 2016), 383.

4 «Українці довіряють Церкві більше, ніж владі», Informational website, *Релігійно Інформаційна Служба України*, 10, March 2011, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/community/religion_and_society/41175/.

5 «Українці найбільше довіряють Церкві», Informational website, *Релігійно Інформаційна Служба України*, 12, February 2013, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/community/social_questioning/51275/.

6 «Кому більше довіряють українці: владі, громадськості, ЗМІ?», Official website, *Фонд Демократичні ініціативи*, 2015, http://www.dif.org.ua/ua/publications/press-relizy/komu-bilshe-dovirjayut-ukrainci--vladi_-gromadskosti_-zmi____.htm.

7 «Українці найбільше довіряють церкві та волонтерам – дослідження», Informational and analytical website, *Українська правда. Життя*, 15, January 2016, <http://life.prawda.com.ua/society/2016/01/15/206550/>.

8 The form “Kyiv” used in this paper instead of Russian form “Kiev” because it is the original Ukrainian name of the Ukrainian capital. Ukrainian state returned to using form “Kyiv” like the Czech Republic had returned the form “Karlovy Vary” instead of “Karlsbad” or the Slovak Republic had returned form “Bratislava” instead of

Ecclesiastical province of Kyivan Rus’ (Kievan Rus’ is Russian variant). Accounting the UGCC history is very important for understanding its present position and its relations with other churches and the state as well. In 1596, Metropolitan of Kyiv with five bishops entered/renewed communion with the Pope of Rome by the act of Union of Brest. On the other hand, two bishops from the territory of modern Ukraine and many laypersons disagreed with that act. Consequently, a break in the Church arose. After the Moscow Patriarchate under the guidance of the Tsardom’s of Muscovy state power (it became the Russian empire since 1721) had annexed the Orthodox part of the Kyiv Ecclesiastical province in 1686, that state started to destroy the Catholic part. There were actions of “re-union” of Eastern Catholics – namely “uniates” – to Russian Orthodox Church in 1839, 1875, 1946 and 1949.⁹ In the Soviet Union, Greek-Catholics were under criminal oppression. The Soviet state did not recognize their existence and pursued any expressions of their Catholic identity. Soviets arrested dozens of thousands of believers and hundreds of priests including the head of the Church Josyf Slipyj and all the bishops. Much of them were murdered, but the Church survived in catacombs and diaspora. In the Homeland, it earned legalization only in 1989.¹⁰ Creation of the independent Ukrainian state became a chance to free development to the UGCC. Henceforth, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics actively involved in public life. After the Soviet Union collapsed the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church was transformed into the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (in unity with the Moscow Patriarchate) or the UOC (MP), but many clergy and believers separated from it and formed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate or UOC KP and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Each of them is pretending to be an assignee of Ukrainians’ religious and socio-cultural identity.

The UGCC position on politics in independent Ukraine, and likewise its teaching on elections, has attracted the conscientious attention of Ukrainian scholars,

form “Pressburg”. The form “Kyiv” is also accepted in a diplomatic practice. For example, the Council of Geographic Names of the USA officially accepted form “Kyiv” in 2006. See *GPO Style Manual: An Official Guide to the Form and Style of Federal Government publishing* (Washington DC: U. S. Government Publishing Office, 2016), 336.

9 *Католицизм / Історія релігії в Україні: у 10-ти т., vol 4* (Київ: Світ знань, 2001), 189–450.

10 *Католицизм*, 451–510; Володимир Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні. Від 40-х років ХХ століття до наших днів* (Полтава: АСМІ, 2002).

especially Liudmyla Fylypovych¹¹, Olha Nedavnya¹², Volodymyr Pashchenko¹³, Victor Yelensky¹⁴, and Andriy Yurash¹⁵.

CHURCH'S APPRECIATION THE VOTING

The UGCC declared it appreciates democracy as a system of government that provides an opportunity to practice and proclaim Christian values. The Church has emphasized citizens' participation in social and political life. In honor of considering the cyclical character of political activity, the Greek-Catholic bishops concentrate their efforts on election periods when the social constraint is reaching its peak.¹⁶ Nevertheless, already in early 1990s they realized the church is not "a compendium of Ukrainian community" and "the church's life is not identic to the life of the nation".¹⁷ According to the UGCC teaching, voting in elections is a person's right and a «gift of God»; though, part of humanity around the Earth still cannot attain it. Concurrently, the Church explains voting as a duty «that the

11 Людмила Филипович, «Християнські церкви України та стратегії їх відносин з суспільством», *Релігія та соціум*, no 1 (2008): 65–70; Филипович, *Культура релігійного життя*.

12 Ольга Недавна, «Історичні Церкви України і національні виклики глобалізаційної епохи», в *Релігія і нація в суспільному житті України і світу* (Київ: Наукова думка, 2006), 219–242; Ольга Недавна, «Стан сучасного українського греко-католицизму», *Українське релігієзнавство*, no 46 (2008): 259–81.

13 Пашченко, *Греко-католики в Україні*.

14 Віктор Бондаренко and Віктор Єленський, «Спасіння душ – найвищий закон. Релігійні організації України: огляд подій 1994 року», *Людина і світ*, no 1–2 (1995): 2–8; Віктор Єленський, *Велике повернення: релігія у глобальній політиці та міжнародних відносинах кінця ХХ – початку ХХІ століття* (Львів: Вид-во Українського католицького університету, 2013); Віктор Єленський, *Релігія після комунізму. Релігійно-соціальні зміни в процесі трансформацій центрально- і східноєвропейських суспільств: фокус на Україні* (Київ: Київський педагогічний університет імені Михайла Драгоманова, 2002); Віктор Єленський, «Православні й католики в посткомуністичну добу», *Людина і світ*, no 3 (1996): 10–14; Віктор Єленський, «Спливає століття...», *Людина і світ*, no 1 (1999): 2–15; Віктор Єленський, «Restitutio in integrum», *Людина і світ*, no 7 (1999): 30–36.

15 Андрій Юраш, «Церква і суспільство: рух однією траєкторією», в *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви (1989–2008)*, Джерела християнського суспільного вчення та служіння 1 (Львів: Вид-во Українського католицького університету, 2008), 625–35.

16 Пашченко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 535, 549, 550, 560.

17 Єленський, *Велике повернення*, 445–46.

Fourth Commandment obligates us to fulfill». Hence, the UGCC has amplified the Commandment to honor one’s parents in the direction of appreciating the Motherland.¹⁸

The UGCC has reminded Ukrainians about their duty to take part in voting in each election because they are responsible for own community. In 1994 the leaders of the Church explained that citizens could distinctly show their identity by their balloting. The bishops interpreted elections as a trial for revealing social identity¹⁹. An explanation that citizens declare their opinion about the optative course of state development by their votes was enunciated in the bishops’ address before the elections to the Ukrainian parliament (the Verkhovna Rada) on 19 March 1998.²⁰ In official documents of 24 June 2004 and 10 March 2006, religious leaders characterized elections as a clue moment when citizens realize their right to choose political leaders, make own arrangements for the future, and accentuate their dignity and freedom. The same thought was expressed in an address of the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (further AUCCRO) of 30 September 2009.²¹

As Olha Nedavnya has stated, the UGCC acted in advance of the presidential elections in 2004, and its claims had a significant influence on society. At the least, precautions from the Church deepened the adoption of democratic values by Ukrainians.²² We see the same line in the Ukrainian Catholic University address of 24 February 2014²³ and in the Synod of UGCC bishops’ message of 6 May 2014.²⁴ The AUCCRO message of 15 May 2014 accentuated that amenable participation in voting is an act of state defense.²⁵ According to Victor Yelensky, during the presidential elections in 2004:

18 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви (1989–2008)*, Джерела християнського суспільного вчення та служіння (Львів: Вид-во Українського католицького університету, 2008), 236, 604.

19 *Ibid.*, 91.

20 *Ibid.*, 138.

21 *Ibid.*, 315, 374.

22 Недавня, «Стан сучасного українського греко-католицизму», 276, 277.

23 «Звернення Українського Католицького Університету», 24, February 2014, http://news.ugcc.ua/documents/zvernennya_ukrainskogo_katolitskogo_un%D1%96versitetu_69380.html.

24 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ до вірних та всіх громадян України з нагоди президентських виборів», Official website, 06, May 2014, http://news.ugcc.ua/documents/poslannya_sinodu_yepiskop%D1%96v_kiievogalitskogo_verhovnogo_arhiiepiskopstva_ukrainskoi_grekokatolitskoi_tserkvi_do_v%D1%96rnih_ta_vs%D1%96h_gromadyan_ukraini_z_nagodi_prezidentskih_vibor%D1%96v_70346.html.

25 «Звернення Всеукраїнської Ради церков до народу України щодо виборів Президента України», 15, May 2014, <http://bit.ly/1tqxPA9>.

The team of the “state power sole candidate” [i. e. Victor Yanukovych] appreciated religion is just a politic resource and device for propaganda and mobilization. However, during the days of the Maidan, this conception had collided not with a commonplace resistance of the churches, but with symbolic religious sphere where an exodus out of commonness and searching for higher justice are evident.²⁶

An emphasis on the correlation between the degree of voters’ consciousness and the actions of elected authorities is the basis of the UGCC’s approach to elections. Before the presidential elections of 2004, the UGCC bishops had declared that Ukrainians would choose a President as if they were him²⁷. For example, people will vote for a candidate who is fighting against corruption only when they want to defeat corruption. Ultimately, the bishops summarized, Ukrainians did not change their lives because they did not want to change themselves²⁸.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING LEADERS

After own declarations, the Church forbids agitation by the clergy²⁹ because citizens must decide independently to whom they will take their votes³⁰. The UGCC teaches that any nation is worthy of statehood when it ceases to be a plaything for politicians when it acknowledges its interests and attends to the realization of those.³¹ All these recommendations penetrate the normative system of the Church’s social teaching. Theological appreciation of social reality is a basis of that system.

First, the UGCC admonishes citizens to choose candidates and political parties without emotion but on analysis of their programs and foregoing activity.³² Researchers highly appraised that trend.³³ The Church proposes to determine whether the program of any party or candidate considers the common good of society or is addressed to satisfy the needs of some separate group. Each constituent, as the Church requires, should ascertain whether a program avoids

26 Єленський, *Велике повернення*, 459.

27 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 305.

28 *Ibid.*, 316–17.

29 Володимир Мороз, «УГКЦ про просвітницьку роль духовництва: суспільно-політичний аспект», *Мандрівець*, no 1 (2014): 67–70.

30 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 136, 171, 322, 374, 603.

31 *Ibid.*, 387.

32 *Ibid.*, 91, 98, 132, 234, 236, 316–17.

33 Єленський, «Релігія, церква і суспільство в Україні»: 35–36; Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 580.

populism and is directed to the strengthening and prosperity of the state. The UGCC advises voters to back those politicians who respect human dignity and work toward an agreement in society. The Church admonishes them about the universal value of the traditional family, morality, and tolerance.³⁴ The UGCC submits that politicians must concentrate their efforts not only on strategies but also on care about the welfare of individual humans.³⁵

The Church suggests only those politicians and political parties deserve to lead Ukrainians who defend the state independence of Ukraine.³⁶ Of course, the UGCC aspired that independent Ukraine would rehabilitate the Church after decades of totalitarian persecutions. On the other hand, that factor never dominated in its policy.³⁷ The Church managed own activity for avoidance manipulations by politicians,³⁸ although at the local level were fixed some accidents when municipalities and politicians tried to favor its interests inordinately.³⁹ The UGCC warns that concentration on economic problems only is not the way to decide social issues because “those directors who lack morality could not lead the people to spiritual rebirth”.⁴⁰ The Church holds that Christians may not vote

34 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ»; *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 132–33, 135, 139, 235, 374–75.

35 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 386.

36 *Ibid.*, 139, 171.

37 Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 525, 533, 542, 554.

38 Єленський, *Велике повернення*, 456–57.

39 Since 1990s, the Russian Orthodox Church and the UOC (MP) frequently repeated accusations that local governments in Western Ukraine endorsed the UGCC. Notwithstanding, especially during the Revolution 2013–2014 and after the beginning Russian aggression against Ukraine became clear that the ROC and the UOC (MP) just wanted to save ideas of the “Russian world” and Russian control on minds in Ukraine. Russian Patriarch Kirill even tried to comment conflict in the East of Ukraine as sacral because “the ‘uniats’ and ‘raskolniks’ who had allied to them, are trying to win canonic Orthodoxy...”. See: Андрей Мельников and Анатолий Хливный, «Униаты и примкнувшие к ним раскольники...», Informational website, *Релігія в Україні*, 19, September 2014, https://www.religion.in.ua/zmi/foreign_zmi/26911-uniaty-i-primknuvshie-k-nim-raskolniki.html. Many of the UOC (MP) priests supported pro-Russian terrorists. It is evident in this situation that Ukrainian government fills suspicion to this clergy and wants to avoid potential dangers for the national security. There is no account for such suspicions in the cases of the UGCC, the UOC KP or Ukrainian Pentecostals, for example. On this see, for example, *Майдан і Церква. Хроніка подій та експертна оцінка* (Київ: Самміт-книга, 2014), 64–65, 96, 153.; Филипович, *Культура релігійного життя*, 421–22.

40 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 133, 139; «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ».

for those who deny the rights, which every human being has from the moment of conception.⁴¹ Finally, the UGCC does not accept the various declarations of candidates about their religiosity as a universal argument to support them.⁴²

While appealing to voters to support the state, the UGCC explains that citizens' irresponsible ignorance about voting breaks the Fourth Commandment. For the Church, that is an incomprehensible and unjustified sin, since "careless neglect of citizens' rights also affronts God which arouses condemnation..."⁴³

The Head of the UGCC Major Archbishop Lubomyr Husar condemned the phenomenon of corruption in 2007. He did it jointly with the heads of the UOC KP, the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christians-Pentecostals, the Ukrainian Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Ukrainian Christian Evangelical Church, the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, and the German Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Ukraine. They warned that citizens who sold their votes acceded to becoming objects of manipulation and can blame only themselves.⁴⁴ At the time of Victor Yanukovych (2010–2014) was president and democratic rights in Ukraine was under the pressure of state officials, significant probation also expected the Church. The UGCC received new head in that period, in 2011. This head is Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, who continued and amplified the line of Lubomyr Husar. For example, the Greek-Catholic bishops included the caution about corruption to address before the extraordinary elections of the president in 2014.⁴⁵

The UGCC's social teaching is accepting citizen's participation in voting as human beings' realization of the right to choose own future. When a candidate who corresponds to the indicated norms is absent, the Church recommends voting for those who most approximate them.⁴⁶ Notwithstanding, the Church's way to claim such recommendations was gradual. Thus, in 2002, the Synod of Bishops of the Kyiv-Halych Metropolitanate of the UGCC indicated that citizens' distrust in a fair count of the votes was due to the absence a tradition of statehood

41 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 135, 374–75.

42 *Ibid.*, 242, 375.

43 «Синодальне послання до вірних УГКЦ та всіх людей доброї волі про суспільно-політичну ситуацію в Україні напередодні виборів до Верховної Ради», Informational and analytical website, *Релігійно Інформаційна Служба України*, 16, September 2014, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resources/church_doc/ugcc_doc/57669/; *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви (1989–2008)*, 132, 138, 170, 236, 375, 517.

44 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 468.

45 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ».

46 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ»; *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 92, 132, 236, 315, 375.

and autonomy. The Head of the UGCC with the Synod of Bishops appealed to Ukrainians before the parliamentary elections in 2006 and after the voting, saying that they must use their opportunities to decide their future. In return, the bishops analyzed the responsibility of politicians and their keeping of their promises.⁴⁷

The UGCC tries to mobilize society by appealing to citizens' responsibility. Meanwhile, the bishops indicated it is not the task of the Church to propose candidates, but to pray and to assist in the creation of social conditions for clean and calm elections.⁴⁸ While the UGCC's social teaching appeals to citizens to preserve a clear conscience and to work for the common good, the Greek-Catholic hierarchy warned of dangers during the elections. These were unilateral information, the use of “administrative resources,” the purchase of votes, and the falsification of the results.⁴⁹ The bishops stated that avoidance of violations is the citizen's duty:

“Each member of our Church who takes part in the process of gathering and calculation of votes for elective offices or in other elective commissions must be well prepared for this responsible social function. He/she has to do well to avert possible abuses.”⁵⁰

Thereby, the Church's condemnation of voter's ignorance of elections can be explained by the fact of its affirmation human beings have a mission to create own future with accountability for the needs of others and the whole nation. The Church not only warns that dishonest people can use the ballots of those who abstained from the elections for falsification.⁵¹ This moment of the UGCC social teaching remains especially little investigated and needs a detailed regard.

47 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 351, 383.

48 «Інструкція про поведінку священнослужителів УГКЦ під час політичних виборчих кампаній» (Синод єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного Архиепископства УГКЦ, 04, April 2014), http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church_doc/ugcc_doc/56012/; «Постанови Шістдесят третьої сесії Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного Архиепископства УГКЦ» (Синод єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного Архиепископства УГКЦ, 4, April 2014), http://news.ugcc.ua/documents/postanovi_sh%D1%96stdesyat_tretoi_ses%D1%96i_sinodu_yepiskop%D1%96v_kievogalitskogo_verhovnogo_arhiiepiskopstva_ugkts_70036.html; *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 233, 236, 242, 243, 318, 472.

49 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 316, 477.

50 *Ibid.*, 322.

51 *Ibid.*, 92, 131–32, 138, 170.

THE GREEK-CATHOLIC CHURCH AND POLITICAL MANIPULATIONS IN UKRAINE

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic bishops have explained many times that various manipulations during election periods were aimed at unsophisticated citizens. The hierarchy also condemned bluff and bribery as methods of working with voters.⁵² Archbishop Lubomyr Husar, on behalf of Synod of Bishops, explained that the disposal of citizens' votes is an amoral way to power. Such actions are "proof that a candidate, party or electoral alliance has not duly cultivated well-grounded and tested arguments for the voter's judgment".⁵³ The bishops declared that people sell their votes when they do not understand the democracy, citizen's responsibility and lack a moral background.⁵⁴ Finally, in 2014 the bishops led by Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk stressed that nobody could change society without a struggle against corruption.⁵⁵

While building its teaching on the role of elections, the UGCC had to avoid also a danger of corrupting the church in general by post-soviet elites.⁵⁶ Political efforts to exploit the church for agitation were also condemned in documents of the UGCC and addresses created with other Churches. The bishops spoke about attempts to gain the public support of the clergy before the voting. In fact, some priests agitated before the presidential elections, for example, in 1994 they endorsed Leonid Kravchuk as "more right-winged" and "more Ukrainian" candidate than Leonid Kuchma.⁵⁷ During elections to parliament and local councils in 2002, some representatives of the Church endorsed right-wing political forces.⁵⁸ The Church condemned such acts of the clergy and politicians. It repeated the same public claims before the presidential elections of 2004 and last presidential elections in 2014.⁵⁹ The realistic position of laypersons toward the clergy is evident in this light.⁶⁰

52 Ibid., 135, 170, 234.

53 Ibid., 324.

54 Ibid.

55 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ».

56 Єленський, *Велике повернення*, 456–57.

57 Бондаренко and Єленський, «Спасіння душ – найвищий закон», 4; Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 535.

58 Єленський, «Спливає століття...», 10; Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 549.

59 Єленський, «Спливає століття...», 8; *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 97, 171, 234, 244, 318, 468; «Інструкція про поведінку священнослужителів УГКЦ під час політичних виборчих кампаній».

60 Филипович, *Культура релігійного життя*, 384.

An analysis of the UGCC’s documents permits to state that its teaching evolves simultaneously with changes in social reality. For instance, while in the official address before the presidential elections in 1999, the bishops assumed that the absence of strict political positions in the candidates’ programs was possibly a better solution for society in a transitional period. Still, before the parliamentary elections of 2002, the Synod of Bishops explained, “*The absence of constitutive differences among candidates’ programs seems to attest to a lack of a deep political culture. Thus, a suspicion arises that the electoral fervor represents a «struggle for power itself» and not for ministering to the common good*”.⁶¹ The Greek-Catholic bishops returned to this specific question before the parliamentary elections of 2006. They specified different programs did not represent politicians’ genuine intentions but were directed toward being more magnetic to voters. Consequently, the bishops summarized that political culture, with care for the common good of the nation, is not advanced in Ukraine. The bishops appealed to prospective candidates for the presidency to avoid abortive and deceitful slogans but present programs for concrete reforms.⁶²

The UGCC attempted to ensure the implementation of moral criteria in the political reality of Ukraine at the transition from the 1990s to the 2000s. The head of the Church, Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, retired, and Lubomyr Husar took over the leadership of the community since 1996. Before that interval, the UGCC had accepted the somewhat romanticized perception of political processes in Ukraine that allegedly, nearly all changes were progressive and led to freedom and democracy. However, the Church adjusted its social teaching about the political responsibility of citizens during the following years. There was symbolic growth in social tension in Ukraine at the divide between the 1990s and the 2000s, especially during electoral campaigns. The UGCC routinely commented on all these processes. For example, Lubomyr Husar stated in 2002 that “the results of this year’s voting are a new starting point.” The head of the Church meant that the principle of justice had not been broken during the parliamentary elections of 2002.⁶³ The Synod of Bishops also stressed the importance of maintaining social justice before the presidential elections of 2004. The bishops pointed out that citizens were attaining democracy and that voters were learning how to avoid manipulations.⁶⁴ Accordingly, if in the early 1990s the UGCC had filled rejection of state authorities because of their belonging to (post)soviet system,⁶⁵ up to 2000s, it faced with rejection in honor of its demand to implement moral norms into the social practice.

61 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 171, 234.

62 *Ibid.*, 386; «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ».

63 Єленський, *Велике повернення*, 243.

64 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 304.

65 Пащенко, *Греко-католики в Україні*, 525.

PASSING THROUGH TWO REVOLUTIONS: TO SUPPORT PRINCIPLES, NOT PERSONS OR PARTIES

The “Orange revolution” 2004–2005 in Ukraine became an exam for the efficiency and potency of the Church’s social teaching. On 11 November 2004, at the beginning of that revolution, the leaders of six Ukrainian Churches stated that Ukrainians were protesting violations in the second round of the presidential elections.⁶⁶ The patriarch of the UOC KP Filaret, Major Archbishop of the UGCC Lubomyr Husar, Vice-chairman of the Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops of Ukraine Markijan Trofymiak, Bishop of the Ukrainian Evangelical Church Michael Panochko and the Head of the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Christian Evangelical Church Leonid Padun signed that address. A new document on the same subject was published on 17 November 2004. The bishop of the Ukrainian Lutheran Church Vyacheslav Horpynchuk joined the above-mentioned religious leaders. The authors of that appeal repeated the same declaration of disapproval of the falsifications and noted that the Church could not condone falsehood. The religious leaders appealed to Ukrainians to defend truth, peace, and unity by upholding the Constitution. This document also reminded about the responsibility of state power.⁶⁷ As Michael Bourdeaux noted, such solidarity among different denominations in Ukraine was an unprecedented ecumenical act.⁶⁸

The UGCC’s “Justice and Peace” commission reacted to the electoral falsifications and social protests on 22 November 2004. It declared that it “*cannot maintain silence in a situation of violence and insults to the image and likeness of God when human beings are deprived of their chief right – the right of free choice*”. In such a way, the Commission condemned “*actions of state authorities who work against their people*”.⁶⁹ On 23 November 2004, the Synod of Bishops of the Kyiv-Halych Metropolitanate stated that the nation had become a witness to democratic principles; however, President Leonid Kuchma promised to organize clean elections. The bishops asserted that people who came into the streets to defend their constitutional rights were not a mob. Religious leaders also recommended that the state authorities correct the situation and heed the voices of protest.⁷⁰

The Synod’s address was a clear example of the fact that the UGCC does not explain democracy as simply voting, but proposes to society the teaching about the responsibility of the state authorities. The Church teaches politicians and state officials must serve society, not to dominate it. The Church similarly proclaims the

66 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 470–71.

67 *Ibid.*, 473.

68 Bourdeaux, Michael, «The Christian Voice in Ukrainian Elections», *Religion in Eastern Europe* 25, no 1 (2004): 1–7.

69 *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 324, 325.

70 *Ibid.*, 326.

principle of equal rights for all citizens. Major Archbishop Lubomyr Husar stated on 26 November 2006 that state structures are accountable for their violations, and must provide their citizens with the conditions for free expression.⁷¹

The bishops of the UGCC interpreted peaceful opposition to totalitarianism during the “Orange revolution” not in terms of conflict, but as proof that citizens acknowledged their dignity and consolidated the nation on that basis.⁷² After Ukrainians had elected the new president Victor Yushchenko, the same religious leaders warned about the rise of social disappointment as Ukrainians waited for officials to make the necessary changes in the country. The bishops appealed to citizens to change society only by their righteous lives and by reverence for the principle of solidarity.⁷³ The UGCC teaches voters must observe politicians’ actions, to help them by advice, and to compare previous arguments for supporting those politicians with their current activities. The bishops pointed out that if one adhered to these rules, he/she could gain experience for the next elections.⁷⁴ This accent on the duty of public control upon politics is another little investigated moment in the UGCC’s social teaching.

The religious leaders of Ukraine advised politicians, too, on how to avoid the situation of 2004. They reminded about social responsibility because there is no goal of lying, contempt for dignity, or violating the rights of adversaries. Despite this, in early April 2007, the AUCCRO stated that several politicians had forgotten their promises after the elections, and were acting as if they, and not the nation, had deputized them. For that reason, the Churches appealed to all citizens once again.⁷⁵ These politicians who had neglected own promises to voters complained about the UGCC position to the Pope and accused the Church supports “some politicians”.⁷⁶ Authors of this document kept silence the UGCC maintained they when they had been demanded to put justice in politics but condemned their breaking this opinion.⁷⁷ It was clear that the Church supported principles, not the persons or political parties.

During the Euromaidan 2013–2014, the Greek-Catholic bishops, led by Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, concentrated citizens’ attention anew on the problem of politicians’ ignorance of social interests:

71 Ibid., 327, 328, 470–71.

72 Ibid., 328, 331, 335.

73 Ibid., 332, 344, 348.

74 Ibid., 386.

75 Ibid., 477–78, 513, 514.

76 «Звернення Верховної Ради України до Його святості папи Римського Бенедикта XVI», *Голос України*, 11, Квітень 2007. *Соціально зорієнтовані документи Української греко-католицької церкви*, 513–14.

77 КЛИМОВ, Валерій, *Свобода совісті, церква, релігійність в українському суспільстві періоду незалежності: Вибрані статті* (Київ: Відділення релігієзнавства Інституту філософії ім. Григорія Сковороди НАН України, 2009), 23, 24–25.

“State authorities who allegedly do not hear the cries of their people and try to mute their voices on human rights by police batons and gunshots are on a dangerous path of terror and dictatorship. Such actions contradict the authorities’ mission to safeguard national unity, to maintain state sovereignty and to work for the common good.”⁷⁸

Indeed, the protests in Ukraine started in 2013–2014 because of the authorities’ disinclination to consider citizens’ interests. Greek-Catholic priests, like the clergy of other denominations, stood together with the Ukrainians on the Maidan. The Greek-Catholic bishops again appealed for a restitution of the legitimacy of the state authorities through elections.⁷⁹ This renewal began with the extraordinary presidential elections in May 2014 and parliamentary elections in October 2014. Ukrainian society entered a new political cycle. Next elections in Ukraine will start in 2019. It is due then the Church will react to sociopolitical reality because of experience 2014–2019.

Therefore, our analysis of the UGCC’s attitude to elections in Ukraine permits us to make the following conclusions: the UGCC’s social teaching explains elections as a method to improve state order. Understanding the correlation between the degree of citizens’ consciousness and governmental actions is fundamental to the elaboration of the Church’s conception of the electoral process. This connection is based on the affirmation that people vote for candidates with the same values they abide. The UGCC recommendations for electoral periods constitute an integral system for the formation of responsible civic positions. The Church orients its believers to analyze the political programs of candidates and parties. The bishops admonish them to vote for those who are working for the common good of all society, not only for personal or sectional interests. It is stressed that politicians must honor the dignity and health of each human and care about social development. The Church’s stewardship extends, for example, to the institution of the traditional family, morality, and tolerance.

The UGCC understands citizen’s ignorance (without reasons) about voting as the sin of breaking the Fourth Commandment. The bishops’ appeal opposes discouragement and demands responsibility from elected officials. It is evident that the UGCC condemns electoral manipulations and any attempts to falsify the results of a voting. The bishops especially convict efforts to use the Church for political agitation.

During the first twenty-five years of Ukrainian Independence, UGCC’s teaching on elections has partially evolved. Generally, at the turn of the XXth and XXIst centuries, the Church changed some of its romanticized judgments about

78 «Звернення греко-католицького єпископату України з приводу суспільно-політичної ситуації в державі», 31, January 2014, http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resources/church_doc/ugcc_doc/55174/.

79 «Послання Синоду єпископів Києво-Галицького Верховного архієпископства УГКЦ»; «Синодальне послання до вірних УГКЦ».

state-building in Ukraine to a position that was more critical. The structuring of the Church’s requirements of citizens and politicians became defining features in that period.

The escalated political tension in the 2000s was a trial for the Church. The UGCC answered the challenge and did not side with either of the opposing political camps. Peaceful opposition to totalitarian tendencies during 2004–2005 and 2013–2014, as leaders of the Church explained, attested to the fact that citizens recognized their dignity and united to defend it. For now, the Church reminded voters about their duty to work for the common good and to monitor officials after their election.

ABSTRACT

This article analyses changes in the teaching and attitudes of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church towards elections and their political manipulation in the country. Its main focus is on the Church’s efforts to ensure informed participation of the citizens in elections, considering especially the goals of respective political programs and their impact. Even during the escalated political conflicts of the last fifteen years, the Church kept policy of non-indulgence with a particular side involved in the conflicts.

KEYWORDS

Greek-Catholic Church, Ukraine, political attitudes, clergy

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