

Healing of Memories in Ukraine

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Dear Colleagues, it is an honor and pleasantness for me to shortly present you a situation of healing of memory in Ukraine. My presentation is divided into four parts: obscured conflicts; the origin of the process of Healing of Memories; problems and prospects of the process; assets and resources used in the process of Healing of Memories.

1. Obscured conflicts

As in Ukraine the talk about the most substantial things which determine social life is almost absent, they are difficult to be included into the dialogue of healing of memories, because they do not have any priority. Although some researchers (Hrytsak, Jakovenko)¹ try to write their own and common history with others, and often mark such necessity that there are a lot of obscured **historical** conflicts.

As it is generally known, during the ages the Ukrainian people did not have an independent state, and this entailed that the history was written by the representatives of occupation forces. All neighbors of Ukraine came before her, except for Byelorussia and Moldova. It is Russia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia. Today we need our own view of autochthonic nation on ourselves, healing with our own personality such it is, and then general look with neighbors on the common outlived historical events.

It is a not simple task, because there is not found out the role of significant number of foreign and another language population which was transmigrated to Ukraine. Responsibility of this category of people, which co-operated with different invaders against a local population, is not found out also. In many cases there is need to set facts by common historians and lawyers, and after this to leave it for a court of independent instances which actually until now has not been created.

In reference to a **cultural** aspect there are obscure linguistic and ethnic conflicts. The linguistic **conflicts** last in those places, where instead of the language of the local population the language of the state which administered this territory was introduced. To the ethnic conflicts it should be included the opinion of the society in relation to the role of the Jewish community, the representatives of which were integrated in all of the directions of history of this land – the majorities positive and also negative.

Church conflicts – it is Orthodox-Roman Catholic, Orthodox-Orthodox, Orthodox-Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic-Greek Catholic. Also there are conflicts

¹ Heleen Zorgdrager, *Stepping Stones and Stumbling Blocks. The Role of the Churches in the Process of Reconciliation and Coming to Terms with the Past.* Lecture at the 2nd Ecumenical Social Week, Lviv, Oct 5-11, 2009.

caused the origin of new religious organization. It is necessary to mention, that protestant and reformative movements have not yet taken the proper place in mentality of the Ukrainian people, as a valuable serious religious force.

2. The origin of the process of Healing of Memories

As we already said, there is not the conceptional for national building so it is difficult to talk about some more or less prominent results. By the way, it is possible to observe considerable growth of tolerance in society due to preventive prejudice of conflict situations on initiative of single groups of people, and power structures, what we do not exactly know about.

In relation to the origin of the **church**, much healing was done by UGCC². Already metropolitans Andrey Sheptytskyy and Josyph Slipyj in XX century carried out the opened policy in relation to the Ukrainian Orthodox. In patriarch Myroslav Ivan Lyubachivskyy's time the process of healing began between UGCC and Polish Church, and the hand of healing was extended to the Russian Orthodox Church. In patriarch Lyubomyr Huzar's time theological letters to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) appeared, loyal attitude appeared towards the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. From 1996 there is an important forum of communication between Churches and the religions of Ukraine, namely Allukrainian Council of Churches and religious organizations.³

Political healing has its root in the dissident movement, which wanted to see a man in the face of the repressive system with whom they will have to discuss. Afterwards the rehabilitation of political prisoner, and forgiveness of the Verkhovna Rada of USSR, came in 1991, but without apologies for the broken destinies.

Social healing is based on initiatives of single groups of people. It is also other Ukrainian-Polish and Ukrainian-Jewish initiatives, as for instance common prayer, which is organized every year, on November 1, UCU and "Yi" (Ї) on Lychakiv cemeteries, when on the Ukrainian and Polish graves Ukrainians and Poles pray together.

3. Issues and prospects of the process of Healing of Memories

In relation to the problems and prospects of **church** healing the first idea is such, that the already existent range of documents were not very much changed by relations between societies and Churches healing memory is and farther needed, as more old so more new common experience. It is needed to pass from a doctrine to procedure.

Doctor Andriy Yurash from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate said: "In Ukraine UGCC found out quite a lot of gestures of good will in relation

² Yaroslav Hrytsak. *Essays in Ukrainian History: the Making of a Modern Ukrainian Nation* (in Ukrainian, 1996, 2000), *History of Ukraine* (in Polish, 2000). Natalia Jakovenko. *An Introduction to History* (in Ukrainian, 2007).

³ Bibliography of UGCC is chosen to the theme of reconciliation / <http://www.ucu.edu.ua/irs/reconsal/>.

to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, to Church which was entailed to liquidation of UGCC. UGCC showed the models of healing and understanding not known until now in Ukraine. Thus, it witnessed the large level of Christian virtues and aspiring to the unhypocritical peace. Cardinal Lyubomyr repeatedly came to Lviv local authorities with the request to give a place for the building of a cathedral temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

However, such actions of UGCC have not found the proper review in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. No church negotiations have happened without mentioning *the* so-called *defeat* of three orthodox eparchies in Ukraine, that is revival of UGCC.⁴

Greek Catholic Ph. D. Mykola Krokosh writes: “There is an impression that ecumenism in UGCC is the matter of the Patriarch and several theologians, but still did not become the main leading motive of the Church life, its hierarchy and first of all, its laity. All of this is limited by sporadic initiatives and general slogans, but there is not enough concrete affairs, proper resolution and some plan of actions made in advance.”⁵

Bishop Yevstakhiy from UOC KP says: “However, over the ecumenical dialogue among Kyiv patriarchate and UGCC hangs over difficult future. This year will be 20 years after the time UGCC has gone out from underground. That is the exit which to many of the orthodox people on Galychyna is still remembering like “returning” of temples, beating of priests and faithful, obstruction, intimidation, and threats. All these mentioned events are living in the memory of the whole generation of modern Orthodox and Greek Catholic priest and laity. They are forming the way of thinking and are influencing on relationships.”⁶

From all of what was said it is possible to see that even the perspectives are big, but common Christian ideals are not being reached because of the lack of time which could be dedicated to the meetings for mutual learning. For instance, UGCC has still not found strength to express significant gestures which could witness about sorrow for proper religious-fanatic elemental excessiveness, which took place at the end of ‘80ies and at the beginning of ‘90ies. Also we should notice that alienation from UGCC pseudo-religious leaders, which find shelter in the specific groups like “leftevrist” is kind of purifying of memory.

According to issues and perspectives of political healing Myroslav Marynovych considers that a “formulation mistake was made (vyshla oshybochka)” – it is inadmissible as there was not excuse for broken fates of many people. Above all guilty in terrors of communist regime are not only judges or cagebists but also simple people who supported all this.” The Vice-rector of UCU says: “I understand that there are

⁴ Андрій Юраш. Церковне життя УГКЦ є дуже інтенсивним /http://sobornews.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=415:andrij-jurash-^cerkovne-zhittya-ugkc-je-duzhe-intensivnim?

⁵ Микола Крокош. Екуменізм як тест на помісність / http://sobornews.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=72:ekumenizm-yak-test-na-pomisnist&Itemid=78.

⁶ Євстахій Зоря. Екуменізм – але без подвійного дна / http://sobornews.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=73:ekumenizm---zorya&Itemid=78.

a lot of guilty people, but there is no judge. There is no judge who can say that has the moral law to judge this.” And he adds: “The crime of communism is so big as the crime of Kain. And God should judge, but not people.” To the mind of Marynovych, there are reasons to confirm that regime of communist occupation was in Ukraine. But also significant number of Ukrainians took part in it: “therefore we have no moral right to point our finger to Russia and to say that she is the only one guilty”, thinks peacemaker.⁷

The other problem of political healing, how it is written in the press release of the International conference “Geopolitics, healing and memory” that was held in Kyiv in 2008, that is: “there can be observed the strengthening of the tendency to use “historical politics” as the instrument of influence in the internal and external politics. Conflicts which would seem to become the subject of studying for historians, once again are the subject of war for memory. The healing has not happened in relationships among old-established empires and postcolonial countries. In the international politics the neighbor countries often dramatize opposite imagination about the controversial history of neighborhood. The manipulation can take different forms: the falsification of evidences, the destruction of documents, the prohibition of access to archives or even their destruction, repressions and elimination of witnesses, the censorship of speeches etc.”⁸

But “meeting new history, which was falsified and distorted by invaders becomes the fact that form the feeling of national consciousness and status on the international scene.” But defective one as the identity formed only the memory about tragedy *conflictogenna* and it has the lack of *blagovist*, which could create *conceptional* principles for the whole social life.

Concerning the issues and perspectives of social dimension of healing in Ukraine it is difficult to talk as this phenomena is not enough untwisted (developed). But it is important to declare that it change those who are participants of the actions of healing. If laity decides to pray together it changes them. Yevgen Sverstyuk constantly speaks about initiative of social *conversion*, that brings the real peace of Christ, but he is the only one person with several other enthusiasts such as Marynovych. There is hope in young scientists, writers (Taras Prokhas’ko) who are not blemished by the Soviet social stereotypes. They put before themselves all the questions mentioned above.

And the last, but not the smallest issue that there is not almost the concept of “reconciliation” in Ukrainian society, but it is translated then only by the word “prymyrennya” that carries in itself the sense of connection with God leaving individuals in its autonomy. Hence, in the word “prymyrennya” the thought about exchange of gifts between a victim and a guilty person does not always exist.

There is also medial extension, which should be used for finding and establishing social consensus.

⁷ Західна інформаційна корпорація / <http://zik.com.ua/ua/news/2009/12/11/208136>.

⁸ <http://eu.prostir.ua/calendar/43617.html>.

4. Assets and resources (societal, cultural, experiential and material) used in the process of Healing of Memories

Society being in poverty does not feel the need in high values of the world. For instance, the community “Egidio” started its work feeding miserable people. Not to waste saint memories we should treat carefully to remembering the victims of violence, trying not to utilize it in political aims realizing different projects. There is the need of understanding, extends, methodological instructions.

In the end I would like to say to mention the most interesting leaders of the presses of healing of memories in Ukraine, the names which I know. These are: Institute of the Religion and Society UCU and Commission “Justice and Peace” UGCC, Institute of the Ecumenical Studies UCU and Ecumenical Social Weeks, Foundation of St. Volodymyr and Christian and Politic, Independent Culturological periodical “Yi” (І), magazines “Patriarkhat” and “Our Faith”, editing house “Dukh i Litera”, archives of the Ukrainian Secret Services . I wish to express from my and Your name gratitude and encourage for further work, and another people to call to follow their example to make everyone in Ukraine be touched by the presses of healing memories.

Thank you for your attention.