

Politics and Orthodoxy in Independent Ukraine

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Independent Ukraine has faced a momentous conundrum in dealing with Orthodox believers and churches and their aspirations and demands on political authorities. The Ukrainian government has pursued varied policies towards a changing structure of Orthodox bodies. Although independent Ukraine was far from a fully functioning democracy or even on a consistent democratizing trajectory before the Orange Revolution, the new state has certainly been far removed from the Soviet totalitarian model from which it emerged. This paper will explore how political transformation has affected the Orthodox in Ukraine, above all the structures of their churches, and how the Orthodox and their churches have influenced Ukrainian democracy and political life.

The 14,954 Orthodox communities in Ukraine on January 1, 2004, made up a majority (52.2 percent) of all religious communities in the country.¹ In declarations of religious adherence Orthodoxy commanded an imposing percentage of Ukraine's population. In this land where a considerable group had no religious allegiance, approximately 40 to 50 percent of the population considered itself Orthodox in the 1990s.² Polling in recent years reveals that 27.8 percent of the population considers itself members of one of the Orthodox churches, and an additional 53.2 percent as "Orthodox," though the latter figure includes a considerable number of "culturally

Orthodox" atheists and agnostics.³ Therefore, although Ukraine has much greater religious pluralism than other traditionally Orthodox countries such as Georgia, Greece, or Serbia, in part because of its large Catholic and Protestant populations, Orthodoxy constitutes a major presence in the country and its self-image. At the same time, with 47 million people, Ukraine is the second largest traditionally Orthodox country and, although its population is only about a third of Russia's, Ukraine has a larger number of Orthodox communities than does its northern neighbor.⁴

The importance of Orthodoxy within Ukraine and of Ukraine for the Orthodox world explains why the division of Ukraine's believers into three Orthodox churches has had such far-reaching reverberations. In early 2004, 10,384 (9049 in 2001) of the Orthodox communities were part of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC-MP), a body having some elements of autonomy under the Moscow Patriarchate.⁵ The UOC-MP held the allegiance of 69.4 percent of all Orthodox communities, a slight, but steady decline in percentage from 72.2 percent in 1995 and 70.4 percent in 2001. The Moscow Patriarchate, therefore, had almost as many religious communities in Ukraine as in Russia, since the entire patriarchate lists 23,000 parishes in Russia, Ukraine, and all other former

¹ See the press release of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine of April 16, 2004, and its table of "Religious Organizations in Ukraine as of 1 January, 2004," taken here from the newspaper of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, *The Herald* (Winnipeg) June 1/15, 2004. Statistics for 2004 are from this source.

² See the Sotsis-Gallup poll of February 1998, published in *Den'* on February 26, 1998, cited in Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (New Haven-London, 2000), 349, fn. 9, with 45.7 percent answering Orthodox in some form.

³ See Iuryi Chernomoretz, "Sotsial'naia baza ukrainskogo pravoslaviia" <http://www.risu.ua/ukr/religion.and.society/chernomorec-sozbaza/p.2>.

⁴ A December 2, 2002, article in the newspaper *Den'* asserted that there were then 11,000 Orthodox parishes in Russia and 15,000 in Ukraine, of which more than 10,000 were part of the Moscow Patriarchate (www.day.kiev.ua). This proportion appears in line with the statistics for 2004 mentioned below.

⁵ Statistics on religious communities in Ukraine, other than those for 2004, unless otherwise indicated come from the tables compiled by A. Zaiamiuk and Y. Komar. I am grateful to Rev. Dr. Borys Gudziak for providing me with copies.

Soviet republics.⁶ Alongside the UOC-MP communities in 2004, there were 3395 communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP), constituting 22.7 percent of all Orthodox communities. The Kyiv Patriarchate was the most rapidly growing Orthodox Church, having increased its parish communities from 2,781 in 2001, or by 22.1 percent as opposed to a 14.8 percent increase for the Moscow Patriarchate.⁷ In contrast, the 1,156 communities of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC), 7.7 percent of the total, had grown a more modest 13.9 percent from 1015 communities in 2001. The breakdown in religious communities is at variance with polls of the population that have consistently shown supporters of the Moscow Patriarchate to be supported by a smaller percentage of believers than its percentage of religious communities would indicate and frequently shown the Kyiv Patriarchate to have a larger number of supporters.⁸

⁶ "Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' na sovremennom etape," on www.mospat.ru/text/history/id/10.html.

⁷ On the rapid growth of the Kyiv Patriarchate, especially in southern and eastern Ukraine, see "Interview with Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko)," conducted on November 16, 2003, and disseminated by the Religious Information Service of Ukraine (www.risu.org.ua/content.php?page_id=162&l=en).

⁸ See the statistics on the Sotsis-Gallup poll mentioned in note 2, revealing for the total population 20.4 percent UOC-KP, 7.5 percent UOC-MP and 1.8 percent UAOC, though with 16 percent just answering Orthodox. A 1997 comprehensive survey discussed by Wilson (pp. 236-37) found that of the 65.7 percent of the population that considered themselves believers, 23.9 percent supported the Moscow Patriarchate, 43 percent the Kyiv Patriarchate, and 4 percent the UAOC. A poll conducted by the Ukrainian Sociology Service on November 5-21, 2003, for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church revealed that of the 27.8 percent of the population that professed allegiance to a specific Orthodox church, 15.4 percent adhered to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11.7 percent to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, and 0.7 percent to the UAOC. The religious allegiance of the larger group that was simply Orthodox was very amorphous. Chornomoret, "Sotsial'naia baza," pp. 2-3. Possible reasons for the discrepancy of the polls and the number of communities may include that the polls include the large number of non-practicing Orthodox who may lean toward the Kyiv Patriarchate, that Kyiv Patriarchate churches may have larger constituencies, that the disposition of the churches may reflect the clergy's preference and not the laity's, or that local authorities may have preferred the Moscow patriarchate in assigning church buildings and registering communities in many areas of Ukraine.

The distribution of religious communities in Ukraine in general, including Orthodox churches, is subject to great regional differentiation. The western areas annexed by the Soviet Union only during and after World War II have the highest per capita percentage of religious communities and religious practice. The industrial regions of southeast Ukraine have the lowest, as they did in Soviet times, although the difference is diminishing. Thus while in 1989 Lviv oblast in the west had approximately the same number of inhabitants as Luhansk oblast in the southeast (2,727,000 to 2,864,000), in 1992 Lviv oblast had 2,206 religious communities, or 13 times as many as Luhansk oblast's 166.⁹ In 2000 the discrepancy was still 2,541 to 463, or 5.5 times greater. In general, the predominantly Ukrainian-speaking regions of west and central Ukraine have a much higher rate of religious practice and a disproportionate share of Orthodox communities for all three Orthodox churches. Even the Moscow Patriarchate has the majority of its parishes in central and western Ukraine, despite the wave of church openings in southern and eastern Ukraine in the late 1990s.¹⁰

The Soviet Legacy

The relationship between Orthodoxy and the independent Ukrainian state unfolded out of the legacy of Soviet religious policy. That policy prescribed persecution of all religious life, including its virtual decimation in the 1930s, forced secularization of the population, and manipulation and infiltration of those religious institutions allowed by the Soviet government. With the wartime decision to permit the restoration of the patriarchate in the Russian Orthodox church in 1943 and the postwar return to Soviet control of Ukraine and Belarus, where the Germans had permitted churches that had been closed by the Soviets to be re-opened, and the

⁹ Oblast populations are taken from the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 3 (Toronto-Buffalo-London, 1993), 201, 234.

¹⁰ In 2000 it had 2,045 parishes in western Ukrainian oblasts (chiefly in Chernivtsi, Transcarpathia, Volyn and Rivne oblasts, with a few in the three Galician oblasts) and 1948 in the three Right Bank oblasts of Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr and Khmel'nyts'kyi). Adding the communities on the Right Bank of Cherkasy and Kyiv oblasts gives it a clear majority with its 8490 communities. Given the higher percentage of religious belief and practice in these regions, the parishes there were likely to be more numerous and vibrant.

annexation of western Ukraine and Belarus, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) was given a monopoly of control over Eastern Christians. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, founded in 1921, destroyed during the 1930s, and revived in German-occupied territories during World War II, was banned.¹¹ The Uniate or Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) was forcibly dissolved through a sham council in 1946 at which no bishops agreed to attend, and its parishes were turned over to the Russian Orthodox Church. Thus the Soviet state completed the Russian Imperial government's policy of stamping out the Uniate church in lands that it annexed, though at that time the Russian Orthodox Church bore more of the responsibility than it did in the Soviet period.¹² The Soviet government controlled all religious edifices and required registration of church communities. The entire Soviet legacy was one of weakened religious structures, an inequity in its treatment of churches by favoring the Moscow Patriarchate, and a government accustomed to controlling the disposition and actions of religious institutions.

The Soviet government also pursued a policy of treating the formerly Uniate areas of Galicia and Transcarpathia differently than all the other regions of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. Throughout the postwar period, even after the church closings in western Ukraine in the 1960s, almost one-quarter of all the functioning parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate in the entire Soviet Union were to be found in formerly predominantly Uniate areas (and over half were in Ukraine).¹³ In 1989, of the 3971 Russian Orthodox communities in Ukraine, 1688 (42.5 percent) were in the three Galician oblasts. With the Transcarpathian oblast, the number reached 2116 (53.3 percent).¹⁴ The Soviet authorities had permitted this

anomaly, in part, because they did not want to drive the population into the arms of the underground UGCC, which had survived more than forty years of repression.

The disproportionate concentration of the Russian Orthodox Church in the traditional Uniate areas explains the alarm with which it reacted to the possibility of glasnost and perestroika extending religious freedom to the Ukrainian Greek Catholics. Quite simply, if the Uniates were to reclaim their former faithful and parishes, the Russian Orthodox Church in the entire Soviet Union would be greatly weakened and its exarchate in Ukraine would be near collapse. This situation meant that when the reforms initiated in Moscow in the mid-1980s reached Ukraine a few years later, the Russian Orthodox Church opposed the organization of civic and political groups in Ukraine espousing reform but really challenging the Soviet totalitarian legacy. These forces that coalesced into Rukh (Popular Movement in Support of Perestroika) demanded a righting of the wrongs of the Soviet regime, including the Soviet destruction of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. In Galicia, the heartland of the movement, Rukh and the newly emerging civil society enjoyed the support of the Ukrainian Greek Catholics, who were emerging from the underground, and of the large number of Galician city dwellers and villagers who saw restoration of the church buildings to the Greek Catholics as a central point in establishing civil liberties.

Initially the Russian Orthodox Church even benefited from the surfacing of the underground Uniates, because the Soviet authorities turned over many closed church buildings to the Russian Orthodox to keep the still illegal Uniates from taking possession of them. That gain was temporary. By 1989, with Soviet controls crumbling, the Uniates repossessed churches throughout the three oblasts. In the summer of 1989 the situation merely worsened for the Russian Orthodox as a Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was resurrected by the declaration of a pastor and parish in Lviv. It seems likely that UAOC grew so quickly, because clergy who did not want their parishes to go Uniate joined it, while its enemies argued that it had been inspired by the KGB for the same purpose. In any event, the Russian Orthodox Church in Galicia was rapidly disintegrating. While the Moscow Patriarchate emphasized the role of force in taking over churches, it avoided the central issue that the Russian Orthodox Church could not compete effectively for the loyalty of a Galician population that viewed Russian Orthodoxy as imposed by the Soviet regime and associated with Russian imperialism. The elections of March 1990 in which the Communists were defeated in Galicia meant that the

¹¹ On the situation of the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine in this period, see my "The Ukrainian Orthodox Question in the USSR," in Serhii Plokhy and Frank E. Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* (Edmonton and Toronto, 2003), 74-87.

¹² On the abolition of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, see Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950)* (Edmonton-Toronto, 1996).

¹³ For statistics on the proportion of churches in western Ukraine, see Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "The Orthodox Church and the Soviet Regime in Ukraine, 953-1971," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 14, no. 2 (Summer 1972): 193-94 and 196.

¹⁴ Adding the other three traditionally Orthodox western Ukrainian oblasts, the western Ukrainian total was 2881 or 72.6 percent.

Russian Orthodox Church could no longer depend on the civil authorities. From 1989 to 1992 the communities of the Moscow Patriarchate in Galicia decreased from 1,688 to 457, while Ukrainian Catholic communities increased to 2,441 and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox to 1,339. The majority of these communities were newly founded, but others represented Russian Orthodox parishes that were matters of dispute between the Ukrainian Catholics and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox.¹⁵

In contrast to Russia, where the Gorbachev policies of liberalization had offered many new opportunities for the Russian Orthodox Church, they presented a much more mixed bag of losses and opportunities for the church in Ukraine. Indeed, the belated legalization of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church that had so embarrassed the Soviet government internationally had been vehemently opposed by Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi's government in Ukraine and the exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, because they realized what an avalanche it would unleash. The reemergence of the UAOC was potentially more dangerous as a church that could compete for Orthodox believers throughout the country. Like the Ukrainian Catholics, the UAOC drew support and a hierarchy, Metropolitan Mstyslav, from the Ukrainian diaspora. Its traditions of martyrdom, conciliarism, autocephaly, and Ukrainianization were in keeping with the tone of the times and offered a model of Orthodoxy very different from that of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The restoration of the UGCC and the UAOC had been accomplished even before the declaration of Ukrainian sovereignty in July 1990. Consequently, the new Ukrainian state had to face an already tense religious situation. In the same way, the Orthodox world had to deal with the declaration of an autocephalous church in Ukraine largely as a movement of clergy and laity undertaken even before an independent Ukrainian state existed. At the same time, the Russian Orthodox Church had found itself greatly weakened and on the side of the old Soviet order during an anti-Soviet and Ukrainian national groundswell that in the late 1980s and early 1990s had tremendous impact in western Ukraine, including Orthodox Volhynia, Kyiv, and among the intelligentsia throughout Ukraine. The national movement did not take deep root in the south and east or the central Ukrainian villages, which with the loss of Galicia were to

be increasingly important to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Two types of democratization challenged the Russian Orthodox Church. The breakdown of the Soviet political monolith had allowed the church's rivals to reemerge in western Ukraine and had brought political groups to influence and local power that favored its religious opponents. At the same time, the rebirth of the UAOC had revived modernizing influences that arose in the Russian Empire just prior to the Revolution.¹⁶ These tendencies advocating conciliar governance and greater influence of the parish clergy and laity were intrinsic to the UAOC tradition, and the church had reemerged through the efforts of these groups and the religious brotherhoods. In June 1990, when the reform movement in Ukraine was in full swing, the UAOC was even able to hold a council in Kyiv in a municipal facility and to declare a patriarchate. The ROC exarchate's being renamed Ukrainian Orthodox in October 1990 and obtaining some measure of autonomy largely represented reaction to events rather than a thought-out and voluntary policy. The UOC-MP did benefit from the new situation in Ukraine in having latitude to form new parishes, and its de facto alliance with the old Soviet elite in central and eastern Ukraine meant that it was handed over church properties, especially if newly forming autocephalous communities tried to claim them. The hierarchs also took part in the electoral process, with Metropolitan Agafangel of Vinnytsia (later of Odesa), elected to the Supreme Rada in 1990, making common cause with the Communists.¹⁷ While the church of the Moscow Patriarchate declined from 6,505 communities in January 1990 to 5,031 on January 1, 1991, because of its losses in Galicia, it was still stronger than it had been in the pre-perestroika period.

The Kravchuk Presidency

The new Ukrainian state that declared its

¹⁵ On this period, see my "The Third Rebirth of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Religious Situation in Ukraine 1989-1991," in Plokhy and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*, 88-119.

¹⁶ On the UAOC as a modernizing and reform movement, see Bohdan Bociurkiw, "The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1920-1930: A Study in Modernization," in Dennis Dunn, ed., *Religion and Modernization in the Soviet Union* (Boulder, Colo., 1977), 310-47.

¹⁷ On Agafangel (Savin)'s role as leader of the Russian nationalist wing in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, see Ihor Isichenko, "Lektsiia 15. Pravoslavna Tserkva v nezalezhnii Ukraïni: 1991-2002," in his book *Istoriia Khrystovoï tserkvy v Ukraïni: konspekt lektsii dlia studentiv dukhovnykh shkyl*, 2d ed. (Kharkiv, 2003).

independence on August 24, 1991 (and received international recognition after a referendum on December 1, followed by the official dissolution of the Soviet Union) emerged in part as the result of the activities of the Ukrainian national-democratic movement that had driven the political agenda in the republic from 1989. Essential for its creation, however, was the shift to a pro-independence policy on the part of the old Soviet elite and nomenklatura. They recognized the strength of Ukrainian decentralizing sentiments and sought a way out of the chaos after the August coup in Moscow, which resulted in declarations of independence for all the Soviet republics (except in the Baltic region where declarations had been made earlier). The Communist Party secretary for ideology, Leonid Kravchuk, from western Ukrainian Volhynia, underwent this transformation. He convinced a number of Ukraine's old elite to accept their opponents' objective of national independence by winning an election on December 1 for president over his major opponent, the dissident and Rukh leader Viacheslav Chornovil (62 percent to 23 percent).¹⁸

Having embarked on the path of forming a Ukrainian state, Kravchuk sought to use his contacts with Metropolitan Filaret of Kyiv, exarch of the UOC-MP, to give Ukraine the full attributes of statehood, including an autocephalous church, and thereby steal the march from the UAOC, which, like the UGCC, was associated with the national democratic faction.¹⁹ Kravchuk overestimated the power of Filaret and the new Ukrainian state against the entrenched position of the Moscow Patriarchate. Although Filaret carried a majority of his bishops in a request for autocephaly in November 1991, a Moscow synod in April 1992 refused the request, forced his resignation, and authorized an episcopal synod in Ukraine in May to elect a successor, who was in fact a hierarch from Russia (Metropolitan Volodymyr of Novocherkask).²⁰ Facing the fiasco of the failed attempt to secure autocephaly, the Kravchuk government and parliamentary deputies from the national democratic camp, intent on removing Ukraine's Orthodox from

Moscow's control, orchestrated a union of the UAOC with Metropolitan Filaret, the few bishops and the clergy that adhered to him, creating the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate in June 1992.²¹ Patriarch Mstyslav of the UAOC had not been consulted in the union. He was pronounced head of the church, but refused to approve fully this union with his former opponent, now deposed by the Moscow Patriarchate. Reservations about Metropolitan Filaret explain why the new church elected the former dissident priest Volodymyr Romaniuk as patriarch on Patriarch Mstyslav's death in June 1993 and why a sizable faction of the UAOC rejected the union and restored their church by electing in September their own patriarch, Dmytrii (Yarema). The UAOC also saw the UOC-KP as opposed to many of the conciliar elements of its program and in favor of the form of governance that Metropolitan Filaret and the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church had practised. The UAOC had no influence with the Kyiv government, which saw the UOC-KP as an incipient state church and favored that church over the UOC-MP throughout 1992-93. The Kravchuk government had badly calculated the strength of the Moscow Patriarchate, above all, to remain the only church recognized by the Orthodox world combatting the UOC-KP's and the Ukrainian state's requests to the Constantinople Patriarchate to recognize the autocephaly. It also overestimated its own influence in the Ukrainian provinces among local former Soviet elites, especially in times of economic decline, fully apparent by 1993.

By the 1994 presidential election, the failure of the Kravchuk policy to obtain a single autocephalous church for the new state was apparent. The Moscow Patriarchate had remained the largest Orthodox Church, even if its growth was slow in this period (from 5,473 communities on January 1, 1992, to 5,998 on January 1, 1994). The Kyiv Patriarchate's 1,932 communities represented a considerable church, but it did not rival the Moscow Patriarchate's size and already had seen 289 communities return to the UAOC and legally register. The Ukrainian state faced presidential elections with Orthodox religious divides increasingly politicized just at the time that language issues and attitudes toward Russia had heated up. The campaign of Leonid Kravchuk against Leonid Kuchma took on the rhetoric of a decision between those who supported full Ukrainian independence, integration into Europe, and recognition of Ukrainian as the state

¹⁸ See Wilson, *The Ukrainians*, 206.

¹⁹ See Serhii Plokyh, "Kyiv vs. Moscow: The Autocephalous Movement in Independent Ukraine," in Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*, 136-45.

²⁰ See my "The Russian Sobor and the Rejection of Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephaly," in Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*, 120-27.

²¹ See Serhii Plokyh, "Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephaly and Metropolitan Filaret," in Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*, 128-35.

language versus those who wished for a closer relationship (and in some cases integration) with Russia and official status for the Russian language. Ukraine divided regionally, with Kravchuk, now fully supported by his former national democratic political foes, gaining 94.80 percent of the vote in Ternopil oblast and 93.77 percent in Lviv oblast in the west and Kuchma obtaining 89.70 percent in the Crimea and 88.00 percent in Luhansk oblast in the east and south. The churches had defined political interests in supporting one or the other of the candidates, and the loss by Kravchuk (45 percent to 52 percent) weakened the position of the Kyiv Patriarchate and strengthened the position of the Moscow Patriarchate.²² How much the churches influenced the elections is more difficult to ascertain, with the most likely possibility being that of the UOC-MP influencing an undecided electorate in the Right Bank Central Ukraine, where the relatively dense network of Moscow Patriarchal churches may have elevated the Kuchma vote somewhat in territories with a rather passive rural electorate. More importantly, the various Orthodox churches merely served to deepen the chasm among Ukraine's population and elections were now essential in deciding the churches' situations.

The Kuchma Years

The Kuchma election appeared to represent a full victory for the east and south of Ukraine, the Russian-speaking population, and the Moscow Patriarchate. In dealing with regional and linguistic issues, the new president soon showed that electioneering was one thing but governing was another. In order to carry on his programs and to serve the interests of state-building, the government turned for support to central and western Ukraine and to Ukrainian-speakers, not least because of the power of the Communists and the hard line left in the south and east, which still included a large segment of the population opposed to Ukrainian statehood and all reforms. In contrast, the Moscow Patriarchate seemed to emerge strengthened, since the Ministry of Religious Affairs that the Kravchuk government had used to support the Kyiv Patriarchate was abolished and the church's allies in local administrations in the large areas of the south, east, and even the center could work to its advantage in turning over church buildings and registering

congregations now that Kyiv's support for the Kyiv Patriarchate had been removed. In popular belief, Kuchma's Russian wife Liudmila was portrayed as an ardent adherent of the Moscow Patriarchate.

In contrast, at a time when the state became antagonistic, the Kyiv Patriarchate faced a loss of parishes, largely in Galicia, to the UAOC (in 1994 the UAOC grew from 289 to 612 communities, while the KP decreased from 1932 to 1753). In 1995, religious affairs in Ukraine reached a boiling point. The death of Patriarch Volodymyr (Romaniuk) in a manner that many considered suspiciously convenient for Metropolitan Filaret was followed by a funeral that the Ukrainian state largely ignored. Metropolitan Filaret insisted on the right to bury the patriarch on the territory of the St. Sophia Cathedral, the mother church of Ukraine still held by the state as a museum, in part because of the contentious claimants to the cathedral. The funeral procession, escorted by some paramilitary units of the radical right but which also included deputies to the parliament, was brutally attacked by OMON police, events which came to be known as Black Tuesday (July 18, 1995). Up until this point, the entire transition to independence and the transfer of power in Ukraine had been peaceful (especially when viewed in conjunction with Yeltsin's attack on the Russian parliament). The bloodshed, therefore, had tremendous resonance in Ukraine, threatening Kuchma with loss of support in Ukrainian patriotic circles. While Metropolitan Filaret had transgressed the line of legality, he had positioned his church as a patriotic body and had delivered a firm message that the government's tilt toward the Moscow Patriarchate might be costly. He also positioned himself for assuming the post of patriarch in October, which was a difficult step in light of the government's antagonism to the metropolitan and the opposition by the former UAOC groups to this authoritarian church leader who was seen as tainted by his past as an exponent of the ROC. Government policies and reaction against Filaret's election continued to undermine the KP's structure as it declined to 1332 communities by the end of 1995 and the UAOC grew to 1209.²³ Nevertheless, the Kyiv Patriarchate showed that not only could it continue without government support, but it could also resist a hostile government.

The government found the alienation of the national democratic camp to be too costly, especially at a time

²² "7/10/94 Presidential Election Results in Ukraine," on www.brama.com/ua-gov/el-94pre.html.

²³ On church affairs in this period, see, Serhii Plokyh, "Church, State, and Nation in Ukraine," in Plokyh and Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*, 166-98.

when it needed its support for enacting a new Ukrainian constitution. It therefore moved toward a more even-handed approach in church affairs in 1996. The adoption of the Ukrainian constitution mandating separation of church from state represented repudiation by the government of the Soviet legacy of interference in church affairs and the independent Ukrainian government's attempts to regulate Orthodox affairs by favoring one church over another. The government initially followed a policy of encouraging tolerance among the Orthodox groups, partially by encouraging a declaration by religious leaders on peaceful resolution of conflicts in 1997 and by issuing a statement, condemning Soviet persecution of churches and promising the return of religious institutions before the 1999 presidential elections. Property controversies, especially over the holy sites in Kyiv, continued to be heated and to try the policy of even-handedness. The shift of the government to a more neutral position was also motivated by the decision of the UOC-MP in 1996 to withdraw the request to the Moscow Patriarchate for autocephaly made in 1991. This decision placed the Ukrainian government in the awkward position of seeing no end to the division and turmoil among Orthodox believers. In many circles the rejection of autocephaly as a goal was seen as reluctance by some in the UOC-MP and of the Moscow Patriarchate to accept Ukraine as an independent country or to desist from pressure for a new Slavic union. Certainly the existence of factions within the UOC-MP—in which Metropolitan Agafangel of Odesa, an ethnic Russian, played a major role—that denied even the existence of a Ukrainian nation and culture and organized Russian nationalist groups caused concern to the Ukrainian state.²⁴ The ardent advocacy by the Communist Party of Ukraine for the UOC-MP, including by its head Petro Symonenko, Kuchma's opponent in the run-off election for the presidency in 1999, also drove a wedge between the presidential administration and the UOC-MP. The anathemization of Patriarch Filaret by the Moscow synod in 1997 undermined the government's policy of building tolerance, and excesses such as the physical attacks by followers of the Moscow Patriarchate when Patriarch Filaret visited Donetsk oblast on April 30, 1999, placed the UOC-MP on the wrong side of the issue of public order and blunted its charges that during the Kravchuk years the Kyiv Patriarchate had used force against it.²⁵

²⁴ See Isichenko, "Lektsiia 15. Pravoslavna Tserkva v nezalezhnii Ukraïni: 1991-2002," in his book *Istoriia Khrystovoi tserkvy v Ukraïni*.

²⁵ See Roman Woronowycz, "Patriarch Filaret attacked by faithful of

Above all, the increasing claims by the UOC-MP to preferential treatment by the government, similar to that which the Moscow Patriarchate received in Russia and Belarus, including even criticism of the president for attending Kyiv Patriarchate services in addition to Moscow Patriarchate services, placed the Ukrainian government in a difficult situation.²⁶

By the late 1990s, the government found its policy of even-handedness was not calming the Orthodox divisions and returned to a more activist policy. The increasing interest of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Ukrainian church affairs was signalled in part by its subordination of the Ukrainian Orthodox churches in the diaspora to its jurisdiction and its negotiation through them with the UAOC, which had not elected a new patriarch at the death of Patriarch Dmytrii in early 2000.²⁷ Events such as the meeting of autocephalous and autonomous churches in Jerusalem, in which presidents and premiers of "Orthodox lands" were in attendance, placed the Ukrainian president and the state in an awkward position, since only the UOC-MP was represented, and not fully as a church but as part of the ROC.

Throughout 2000, the president made official announcements on the need for one Orthodox Church and supported unity talks between the UOC-KP and UAOC with participation of the Constantinople Patriarchate. The Ukrainian government's policy collided with the increasing intervention by the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian government in Orthodox Church affairs in Ukraine. Not only did the Moscow Patriarchate refuse to grant a request for full autonomy from the UOC-MP in 2000, but President Vladimir Putin and Patriarch Aleksei began to sound themes of East Slavic unity more consistently. The refusal of the UOC-MP to agree to a visit by Pope John Paul to Ukraine in 2001, which did take place despite this obstruction, and the statement of the Russian ambassador to Kyiv Viktor Chemomyrdin that the visit was ill-advised challenged the Ukrainian government and permitted Patriarch Filaret and the UAOC to point to their tolerant position toward other religious groups in contrast to the UOC-MP's

revival Church during visit to Mariupol," *Ukrainian Weekly* 67, no. 19 (May 19, 1999).

²⁶ See Plokyh, "Church, Nation, and State," 194.

²⁷ For the situation in the UAOC, see *Diiannia pomisnoho soboru Ukraïns'koï avtokefal'noi pravoslavnoi tserkvy Kyïv, 14-15 veresnia 2000 roku* (Kyiv, 2000).

intransigence.²⁸ By the end of 2001, the Ukrainian government and the head of the State Committee for Religious Affairs, Viktor Bondarenko, were active participants in discussion between the Moscow and Constantinople patriarchates about the church situation in Ukraine, which were reported to center on the acceptance of two autonomous churches, the UOC-MP under the Moscow Patriarchate and the UAOC under the Constantinople Patriarchate. These discussions drew sharp criticism of the government by Patriarch Filaret as abandonment of the principle of autocephaly as well as an obvious attempt to undermine the UOC-KP.²⁹ Though the government denied such a plan was its policy, the increasing strength of Russia in Ukrainian internal affairs under Putin and the weakened position of Kuchma after the Gongadze affair may explain this new tilt. The government was also complicit in undermining contacts of the UAOC with Constantinople through the intermediacy of the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the United States. A combination of the government's desire to limit the influence of the Ukrainian hierarchy in the West and the plan of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine (United) to use the church for its own political goals resulted in a virtual coup d'état in the church in early 2001 by Metropolitan Mefodii and a split in the UAOC.³⁰

The parliamentary elections in the spring of 2002 in which the forces of the opposition did well ensured that unlike in Russia, where President Putin was asserting increasing control over civil society and the parliament, while allying with the Russian Orthodox Church, Ukraine would remain a more pluralistic society in which institutions such as the churches would have to be courted. The complexity of the situation was evident in that the two largest blocs of the opposition were Our Ukraine, which largely favored the independent Ukrainian Orthodox churches, and the Communist Party, the supporter of the Moscow Patriarchate. The degree to which politicians were now courting and even subverting churches was apparent in Metropolitan Mefodii's support of the Social

Democratic Party (United) in the elections and his later condemnation of the campaign for "Ukraine without Kuchma" in the fall.³¹

²⁸ On the papal visit, see Gerd Stricker, "On a Delicate Mission: Pope John Paul II in Ukraine," *Religion, State and Society* 29, no. 3 (2001):215-25.

²⁹ See Jan Maksymiuk, "Kyiv Patriarch Warns against Liquidation of Independent Church," *The Ukrainian Weekly* (2 December 2001), 2.

³⁰ See the "Khronolohichna tablytsia" at the end of Isichenko, "Lektsiia 15. Pravoslavna Tserkva v nezalezhnii Ukraïni: 1991-2002," in his book *Istoriia Khrystovoï tserkvy v Ukraïni*.

³¹ See the "Khronolohichna tablytsia" at the end of Isichenko, "Lektsiia 15. Pravoslavna Tserkva v nezalezhnii Ukraïni: 1991-2002," in his book *Istoriia Khrystovoï tserkvy v Ukraïni*.

The 2004 Election and the Orange Revolution

As Kuchma and his regime faced criminal allegations over the Gongadze affair and themselves became subject to opprobrium from much of the international community, government forces and allied oligarchs mounted an all-out campaign to stop Viktor Yushchenko and Our Ukraine from winning the presidential elections in the fall of 2004. After failing to carry out a political reform that would have shifted powers to the parliament, they concentrated on engineering the election of Premier Viktor Yanukovich as president. Determined to elect their candidate come what may, they increasingly undermined the democratic processes of Ukraine. Although elections and contending political groups were more significant in Ukraine than in Russia and Belarus, the decline of freedom of the press and increased pressure on all groups who challenged the government was dramatic. Still the undecided nature of the upcoming election and the significance of religious leaders as figures accorded trust ensured that political factions in Ukraine paid attention to the Orthodox churches and that the religious leaders addressed the issue of the upcoming elections.³² Therefore, Patriarch Filaret's statement that concern for Ukrainian independence is intrinsic to the UOC-KP and that the believers of the church naturally support those politicians who support the church may be seen as staking out the church's stance in the election. Although it expressed the hope that Yanukovich would express such support, it commented on the support already demonstrated by Yushchenko. In contrast, the spokesman for the UOC-MP Archbishop Mitrofan declared that the church would not take part in political agitation, but pointed out the help that Viktor Yanukovich has rendered the church in Donetsk oblast. Meanwhile, statements issued by Patriarch Aleksii to a Slavic council held in Zaporizhzhia praising the Pereiaslav Agreement of 1654 made clear where he wanted his followers to stand on the Russia or Europe issue that underlay the Ukrainian election.³³

Political advisers and spin doctors were well aware of how playing on the religious divides of the Orthodox

³² On the political and church leaders' statements, see "Tserkvi na starte prezidentskoi kampanii v Ukraine," in the internet journal *Religiia i obshchestvo* No. 39 (2004) (vloz@yandex.ru).

³³ See the protest document (unpublished) by F.H. Turchenko, "Sobor iliuzii," disseminated after the events of May 17-19, 2004.

might influence the voters. A Russian advisers' plan from 2003, when a run by Kuchma was still possible, surfaced that urged organizing provocations between followers of the Kyiv Patriarchate and Moscow Patriarchate in order to firm up support for Kuchma.³⁴ After the decision was made by the presidential administration and its allies to coalesce around Yanukovich in the stop Yushchenko campaign, religious questions came increasingly to the fore in the search for wedge issues to build support for a candidate who had numerous personal drawbacks, including criminal convictions for violent crimes. Yanukovich increasingly posed as the candidate of the east and south of the country and a proponent of Russian as a state language and closer ties with Russia. All these issues resonated with much of the leadership of the UOC-MP and its constituency. Yanukovich had close relations with clergy in Donetsk oblast and used them to cast himself as the "Orthodox candidate" and to use the structures of the church in his political campaigns.³⁵ The hierarchs of the UOC-MP and much of the clergy increasingly became advocates of the Yanukovich candidacy by passing out religious literature and holy pictures endorsing Yanukovich and agitating their faithful to support him.³⁶ When Metropolitan Volodymyr of the UOC-MP met with Yanukovich, he blessed him as an Orthodox person worthy of heading the state, and when he later met with Yushchenko, who had been a patron of the UOC-MP, he blessed him but then announced that this was a different type, a personal blessing.³⁷ Other hierarchs took an even more active role. The Metropolitan of Donetsk, Ilarion, called Yanukovich an Orthodox president and Yushchenko a servant of Satan.³⁸

³⁴ See "Tretii termin Kuchmy. Iak tse povinno bulo buty," in *Ukrains'ka pravda*, June 25, 2004 (www.pravda.com.ua).

³⁵ On the piety of Yanukovich, see Tetiana Nikoaienko, "Chy molyvsia za Ianukovycha?" *Ukrains'ka pravda*, 11.11.2004, 21:15 (<http://www2.pravda.com.ua/archive/2004/november/11/5.shtml>)

³⁶ See Serhii Harmash, "Resprotekyva dvokh turiv vyboriv-2004 u Donbasi" <http://www.maidan.org.ua/static/mai/1103719306.html> for a discussion of the political agitation of priests in the Donbas and the distribution of images of the Archangel Michael and prayers for Yanukovich.

³⁷ "Hlava UPTS(MP)na prezidentstvo blahoslovyy v. Ianukovycha, a V. Iushchenka lyshe iak blahoslovliaie usikh viruiuchykh liudei'," 10.11.2004 RISU-UOC MP: Election 2004, [http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot theme/vybory2004/](http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot%20theme/vybory2004/)

³⁸ "Metropolit Donets'kyi UPTS(MP) nazvav V. Ianukovycha 'pravoslavnym prezidentom', a V. Iushchenka-'sluhoiu satana'," 16.11.2004 RISU-UOC MP: Election 2004,

Metropolitan Agafangel of Odesa actively agitated for voting for Yanukovich, while the bishop of Kirovhrad, Panteleimon, announced his apparitions of the Mother of God predicting a Yanukovich victory.³⁹ In some cases, the hierarchy's pressure on the clergy to work for Yanukovich was so high that a priest in Chernihiv was dismissed for resisting.⁴⁰ Priests broke the law not only by using religious institutions for political propaganda, but also by continuing political activity in the last days before the election when it was banned. Even after the second round of voting and the emergence of the Maidan protesting electoral fraud, monks of the Kyiv Caves Monastery organized processions against the pro-Yushchenko demonstrators. On December 27, 2004, after the Yushchenko victory in the election was certain, Patriarch Aleksii thanked Cossack formations in Ukraine for guarding Orthodox holy places, an action he saw as especially needed in view of the Yushchenko victory.⁴¹

The engagement of the UOC-MP on the Yanukovich side called forth negative reactions from its own faithful. In the west and center of Ukraine, where the majority of its parishes were located, anti-Yanukovich and pro-Yushchenko sentiments were very strong with all probability also among the faithful of the Moscow Patriarchate. The church in some cases antagonized its own faithful and in others compromised them before their fellow citizens.⁴² Groups of youth and clergy protested the political activity of their church. A group of clergy and laity went as far as asking that they be taken under the protection of the patriarch of Constantinople in order to be disassociated from the political activity of their church.⁴³

[http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot theme/vybory2004/](http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot%20theme/vybory2004/)

³⁹ See, "UPTS(MP) v Odesi pidtrymaie V. Ianukovycha" 10.09.2004 in RISU-UOC MP: Election 2004,

[http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot theme/vybory2004/](http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot%20theme/vybory2004/) and "Za Ianukovycha zmusyly ahituvaty Bozhu Matir," 22.12.2004. <http://www.maidan.org.static.news/1103735196.html>

⁴⁰ See the interview with Protoierei Serhii Ivanenko-Kolenda, "Oni govoriat, im ne'l'zia risikovat', potomu chto u nikh est' dom..." <http://maidan.org/static/mai/1103130442.html>

⁴¹ "Russian Orthodox Patriarch Asks Cossack Army of Ukraine to Protect Church," <http://www.risu.org.ua/eng/news/article:4215/>

⁴² See Andrei Iurash, "Revoliutsiia i Tserkov'," *Religiia i obshchestvo* 43 (2004 internet version of the journal *Liudyna i svit*).

⁴³ "Hrupa virmykh UPTS (MP) prosyt' Vselens'koho Patriarkha vrehuliuvaty relihiinu sytuatsiiu v Ukraini," 29.12.2004 RISU-UOC MP: Election 2004, [http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot theme/vybory2004/](http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot%20theme/vybory2004/)

With the triumph of the Orange Revolution, the position of the UOC-MP was extremely difficult, because it had engaged itself so actively against the new regime and had lost all claims to political neutrality. In contrast, the Kyiv Patriarchate had come through the electoral process more successfully. Obviously a Yanukovich government would have followed policies detrimental to the church, while a Yushchenko government could be expected to be at least neutral in church affairs and to follow a policy on national independence, relations with Russia, and Ukrainian language that would be in line with that of the UOC-KP. Although there had been some accusations against support for Yushchenko in parishes of the UOC-KP, the hierarchy and clergy on the UOC-KP had been much more muted in showing any political support than those of the UOC-MP had been, not least because a Yanukovich victory seemed likely and the political authorities in most regions initially supported Yanukovich. Therefore Patriarch Filaret had joined other confessions in Ukraine in calling for fairness of the elections, and only after the fraudulent second round and massive demonstrations at the Maidan came to support Yushchenko as the duly elected president.⁴⁴ The splintered UAOC had little political significance in the elections. The connection of Metropolitan Mefodii with the Social Democrat Party (United) placed the church in Western Ukraine on the side of Yanukovich, though the church had little impact in a region so pro-Yushchenko. The faction dominant in the East under Archbishop Ihor followed a policy similar to that of the Kyiv Patriarchate. In contrast to the Moscow patriarch who clearly favored Yanukovich, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople had come out with two messages supporting democratic processes in Ukraine. In his second message that greeted Yushchenko with his electoral victory, the Patriarch offered his services in healing schisms among Orthodox believers in Ukraine.⁴⁵

Orthodoxy was politicized and the churches, above all the Moscow Patriarchate, took part in electoral politics during the elections in late 2004 to a much greater degree than they had ever done before. Unquestionably Yanukovich gained considerable advantage from the

⁴⁴ On Patriarch Filaret's statements in the early part of the elections and the position of the UAOC, see Kateryna Shchotkina, "Mandat nebesnyi," *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, no. 37, 18-24 September 2004 and Oleksandr Sahan, "Tserkvy obyraiut' prezidenta," 18.10.2004. RISU-UOC MP: Election 2004, [http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot theme/vybory2004/](http://www.risu.or.ua/ukr/news/hot%20theme/vybory2004/)

⁴⁵ Klara Gudzyk, "A Place in the Hierarchy," <http://www.day.kiev.ua/130700/>

support of the UOC-MP, and he and the new opposition in Ukraine will turn to the church again for support. Yushchenko benefited from the refusal of the UOC-KP and part of the UAOC to support the government candidate and their joining the protests for democracy and against fraud after the second round of the elections. Although Yushchenko consistently declared after the elections that the state should not determine religious issues, the new Ukrainian government has to face the reality that a major Orthodox church tied to a center in Russia had campaigned against it. On the other hand, the UOC-MP had to deal with the consequences of its political choices and loss, both among its constituency and in determining relations with the state.

How then have the Ukrainian state and church affected each other in the partial democratization process in Ukraine? Neutrality in Orthodox affairs is, in fact, an impossible goal for the Ukrainian central or regional governments as long as there are church buildings it controls or other public buildings that the churches seek to obtain. At the same time, the concept of Ukraine as an Orthodox land and the claims of three Orthodox churches (as well as of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church) to be guardians of the national patrimony make it impossible for any Ukrainian government to divorce itself from religious issues. In Russia the public role of the patriarch and the attendance of the president and members of the government at holiday services of the ROC are easily accepted as fitting. In Ukraine similar functionalities must carefully plot each step just as the state media must plan its broadcast of various services.

In addition, the history of granting autocephaly in predominantly Orthodox lands has involved state support and in the case of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1924 was even orchestrated by a state in which the Orthodox were a minority. The importance of Orthodox allegiance to states that had emerged from the USSR was demonstrated by the Estonian state, which saw the revival of the pre-World War II autonomous Orthodox Church under Constantinople replacing the Soviet legacy of all Orthodox being under the Moscow Patriarchate as a matter of state sovereignty. Hence the contacts of the Kuchma government with Constantinople and the president's expressions of hopes for Orthodox unity were a form of state activism that has a considerable tradition. In general, the churches have argued against state intervention when it would oppose their interests, as the MP has demonstrated in its objections to the Ukrainian state's actions on autocephaly and unity issues. On the other hand, the Orthodox churches still make claims to special rights in an Orthodox land. The Ukrainian

Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has held up Russia as an example of what its own relations should be with the Ukrainian state.⁴⁶

How then has Orthodoxy influenced the political transformation in Ukraine? Although the Orthodox leaders conceive of Ukraine as an Orthodox land and the Orthodox hierarchs are given symbolic precedence by government officials, even in matters such as army chaplaincies, the Orthodox have not been able to assume the leading position that the church has in Russia, Georgia or Romania or that the Catholic church has in Poland. In part this situation results from the greater activity of non-Orthodox Christian groups, especially the existence of a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia and Transcarpathia that also claims the mantle of a traditional national faith and because of the very active Protestant groups, missionizing in the south and east. Just as important has been the split among the Orthodox groups and their varied stance on political and national agendas, above all the ambivalence to hostility in some quarters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate, to Ukrainian independence and Ukrainian language and culture (especially in the south and east).

As a result, the Orthodox have not been able to take an authoritative position in Ukraine commensurate with their large numbers and organizational network. This situation has strengthened religious pluralism in Ukrainian political life. On the other hand, the Orthodox churches have turned to political leaders and the political process in order to further their own jurisdictions' interests, thereby deepening cleavages among Ukrainian political groups and interjecting church affairs into the political process. This process has not resulted in the formation of significant religious parties in Ukraine, but it has identified religious allegiance with certain political orientations. Given that the parties and churches already have linguistic-cultural and regional colorings, the religious factor only increases the divides in a fractious Ukrainian political life. The progressive distribution of church buildings somewhat lessens the political jockeying of the church groups, but complaints continue over whether the distribution has occurred in an equitable manner and the continued control by government of edifices that could be used for churches, especially in the south and east where surviving church buildings are few, keeps the pot boiling. As the central administrations of the

⁴⁶ See the Itar Tass article of April 9, 2004 "Some Ukraine Politicians Create Difficulties for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church," reproduced on UR-2004, #58 April 12.

Orthodox churches and the parishes control great revenues and property and economic rights they also have reason to maintain political and administrative allies and political alliances.

The breakdown of the Soviet system and the establishment of a semi-democratic system in Ukraine with multi-foci of power and elements of civil society has permitted the breakdown of the enforced unity of Orthodox believers and the surfacing of contending Orthodox traditions. Just as the state had to deal with the Soviet legacy, the Russian Orthodox Church had to deal with these traditions as well as the reemergence of the early twentieth-century questions of Ukrainian autocephaly, Ukrainization, and conciliarism. The radically divergent views that Orthodox clergy and laity held on these questions and the fact that they had surfaced and been debated before and had been kept alive by the religious institutions of the Ukrainian diaspora meant that positions were staked out and the church split even before Ukrainian independence. For the UAOC and the UOC-KP this has left the primary question recognition by the Orthodox Oecumene, apparently advanced somewhat in the last few years through contacts with the Constantinople Patriarchate, as well as the question of unity, despite the differing modes of church governance in the UAOC and the UOC-KP. In contrast, the UOC-MP still finds these questions unresolved as well as the attitude of the church on Ukraine's political status and orientation and on national-cultural issues. In many ways, the defection of the UAOC and UOC-KP and of the many believers who went over to the UGCC has diminished the group within the UOC-MP that advocates autocephaly and Ukrainization. The losses have in some ways made the church suspicious of any discussion and more dependent on the Moscow Patriarchate (hence the withdrawal of the autocephaly request), though the various regional and national constituencies of the UOC-MP ensure that differing views are held within the church.

In no country that emerged from the former Soviet bloc did the state and Orthodox church face so many explosive and divisive issues as in Ukraine. The learning process for the government and the religious leaders has been a difficult one. The adoption of Western models, in particular American ones, was impossible, given the Soviet legacy and the Orthodox tradition. Even today the state does not view the division of the Orthodox as conducive to social order and the tendency to see autocephaly as an attribute of an independent country is strong, in part because those who wish a renewed Slavic union reject it. Political, linguistic and cultural groups have all turned to the Orthodox churches as institutional

sources of support or an arena for propagating their agenda. Though the three churches have defined constituencies, groups from Russian nationalist to Ukrainian autocephalists in the UOC-MP create opposing pressures. Yet in the last decade the state and Orthodox churches have dealt with a limited democratization and the development of contending political groups. The issues of state- and nation-building have intertwined with Orthodox affairs in forming independent Ukraine. The new government in Ukraine will have to deal with a situation in which the Orthodox issue has moved to the fore in political life just as the question of the situation of Orthodoxy in Ukraine has assumed a higher profile in international Orthodox circles. Whether a stable, more democratic Ukraine will emerge from the Orange Revolution is still uncertain. What is certain is that a more democratic Ukraine would pose new opportunities and challenges for the Orthodox churches.

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