Michał Wawrzonek

Memory, Politics, and Legacy of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky

CONTENTS

Introduction

The topic of memory studies related to Ukraine and the politics of memory in Ukraine have already attracted the attention of many scholars.[1] The issue of the Holocaust in Ukraine and its commemoration has been particularly scrutinized.[2] The life of Metropolitan Sheptytsky

---

[1] Oxana Shevel, "Memories of the Past and Visions of the Future: Remembering the Soviet Era and Its End in Ukraine," in: *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, eds. Jan Kubik, Michael Bernhard, New York 2014, pp. 146–170; *The Burden of the Past: History, Memory, and Identity in Contemporary Ukraine*, eds. Anna Wylęgała, Małgorzata Głowacka--Grajper, Bloomington 2020; Tomasz Stryjek, *Ukraina przed końcem historii. Szkice o polityce państw wobec pamięci*, Warszawa 2014; *Kultury historyczne Polski i Ukrainy. O źródłach nieporozumienia między sąsiadami*, eds. Tomasz Stryjek, Volodymyr Sklokin, Warszawa 2021; Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, Yuliya Yurchuk, "Memory Politics in Contemporary Ukraine: Reflections from the Post-colonial Perspective," *Memory Studies* 12 (2019), no. 6, pp. 699–720; Yuliya Yurchuk, "Historians as Activists: History Writing in Times of War. The Case of Ukraine in 2014–2018," *Nationalities Papers* 49 (2021), no. 4, pp. 691–709.

[2] Olga Baranova, "Conceptualizations of the Holocaust in Soviet and Post-Soviet Ukraine and Belarus: Public Debates and Historiography," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 34 (2020), no. 1, pp. 241–260; Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine*, Princeton 2007; Idem, "Дискомфортне питання: відповідь моїм критикам," *Україна Модерна* 15 (2009), pp. 326–347; Anna Chebotarova, "Collective Memory on the Holocaust in Post-Soviet Ukraine," in: The Burden of the Past. History, Memory and Identity in Contemporary Ukraine," eds. Anna Wylęgała, Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, Bloomington 2020, pp. 183–205; John-Paul Himka, "The Lviv Pogrom of 1941: The Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crown," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53 (2011) no. 2–4, pp. 209–243; Idem, "Debates in Ukraine Over Nationalist Involvement in the Holocaust, 2004–2008," *Nationalities Papers* 39 (2011), no. 3, pp. 353–370; Idem, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine," in: *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, eds. John-Paul Himka, Joanna Beata Michlic, Lincoln–London 2013,

and his activity in the ecclesial, social, national, and political realms has been of interest to many researchers.[3] The book consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents the main theoretical assumptions of the work and a justification for the choice of Metropolitan Sheptytsky as well as a description of the Ukrainian mnemonic field. The second chapter discusses the challenges related to the memory of Sheptytsky, which the actors creating the Ukrainian historical culture had to face on the eve of the collapse of the USSR and after Ukraine gained independence. The third chapter contains an analysis that attempts to link selected elements of Sheptytsky's legacy with the Europeanization of Ukrainian historical culture after the Revolution of Dignity. The fourth chapter shows the mutual relationships and dependencies between Polish and Ukrainian historical culture in connection with restoring the memory of Sheptytsky. The final chapter contains an attempt to reconstruct selected elements of Sheptytsky's activities, which are significant for the entirety of his heritage and which have not yet been described in full.

---

pp. 626–662; Idem, "Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust," in: *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 26: *Jews and Ukrainians*, eds. Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, Antony Polonsky, Liverpool 2014, pp. 337–360; Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*, London 2016.

3 *Metropolita Andrzej Szeptycki. Studia i materiały*, ed. Andrzej A. Zięba, Kraków, 1994; *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptyts'kyi*. eds. Paul R. Magosci, Andrii Kravchuk, Alberta 2009; Magdalena Nowak, *Dwa światy. Zagadnienie identyfikacji narodowej Andrzeja Szeptyckiego w latach 1865–1914*, Gdańsk 2018; Ліліана Гентош, *Митрополит Шептицький 1923–1939. Випробування ідеалів*, Lviv 2015; *Kościół, naród, państwo. Działalność Metropolity Andrzeja Szeptyckiego (1865–1944)*, ed. Andrzej Roman Szeptycki, Wrocław 2011; Андрій Михалейко, *Митрополит Андрій Шептицький і нацистський режим 1941–1944*, Lviv 2021.

The research project would not be possible without the help of a number of people. Thus, I would like to express my profound gratitude to:

- Maciej Szeptycki, for giving me access to the family archive,
- Heather Coleman and Natalia Khanenko-Friesen from the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, for their assistance, support, and hospitality during my visit to Edmonton,
- Father Porfirio Basílio Pedruche OSBM, for his assistance during my research in Rome,
- Iwona Bzowska and Iwona Mika, who administratively supported the project with full professionalism and empathy, and
- Urszula Wawrzonek, for translations from German.

Separately, I would like to express my gratitude to Olha Morozova. Although it was a very difficult time for her, she agreed to work with me on the first chapter of this book. Special thanks are also due to the reviewers Prof. Yuliya Yurchuk and Prof. Taras Kuzio. Their insightful and inspiring comments were very helpful during the final stage of writing the book.

Chapter 1*

Introductory remarks

1.1. Theoretical framework

"Collective memory," "historical memory," "cultural memory," "social memory," "public memory," and "national memory"—these terms are used the most by researchers, often without finding a common language, without creating a single, agreed upon definition.

The starting point of this study is the concept of "collective memory" formulated by Maurice Halbwachs in its "classical" sense. The notion of "cultural memory" is closely related to this theoretical approach. According to Astrid Erll it means "the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts."[1] Erll's approach offers a wider look at the problem of collective memory and "allows for an inclusion of a broad spectrum of phenomena as possible objects of cultural memory studies—ranging from individual acts of remembering in a social context to group memory (of family, friends, veterans, etc.) to national memory with its 'invented traditions,' and finally to the host of transnational *lieux de mémoire* such as the Holocaust and 9/11."[2] It is worth noting that the notion of culture refers to "a community's specific way of life, led within its self-spun webs of meaning."[3] This approach is rooted in

---

[*] Chapter 1 is co-authored by Olha Morozova (University of Warsaw/The Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy).

[1] *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, eds. Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning, Berlin–New York 2008, p. 2.

[2] Ibidem.

[3] Ibidem, p. 4.

the German academic tradition of cultural studies. Astrid Erll argues that "cultural memory" can be useful as an "umbrella term" for research in various scientific disciplines. Among other things, it can be "the starting point for memory research in the social sciences."[4] The concept of cultural memory was developed by John Assman, among others. He emphasized several important features of cultural memory.[5] Since this study focuses on the nation-building process, it is worth emphasizing its function in "the concretion of identity." Assman argued, that "the objective manifestations of cultural memory are defined through a kind of identificatory determination in a positive ('We are this' or in a negative ('That's our opposite') sense."[6] Following Assman, it is worth recalling that a "capacity to reconstruct" is another typical feature of cultural memory. Although it is based on "immovable figures of memory and stores of knowledge," they are always juxtaposed with "an actual and contemporary situation." Therefore, depending on the current social context, the same figures of memory and stores of knowledge could be sometimes appropriated, sometimes criticized, and sometimes preserved or transformed.[7] There is no doubt that the memory of the past is a very important factor that shapes national identity. There is one caveat: the memory of the past can only fulfill this function if there is a generally accepted consensus about the basic values on which society is to be based. The subject of the past may turn into a dangerous tool for manipulating mass consciousness.

Collective memory is a conditional and fragile construct, which is built in the clash of political and corporate interests and ideological guidelines. The past (memory) cannot be "preserved"; it is constantly mediated by the present, adapting to it, encompassing not only the accumulated historical experience, but also symbols, myths, and everything that is contained in the realm of the collective unconscious— to use the terminology of Carl Gustav Jung. At the same time, the

---

4   Ibidem.

5   Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* (1995), no. 65, pp. 130–132.

6   Ibidem, p. 130.

7   Ibidem.

possibility of sanctifying certain events and characters becomes quite real and the search for "historical truth" itself loses its meaning.[8] Thus, objective historiography is a rather dubious term. After all, historical narrative is a reflection of events in the minds of those alive today and those to follow. A fact that passes through a researcher's consciousness ceases to be an objective reality, becoming only an image created in his mind. Historians look at their historically determined objects from a perspective that is itself historically determined. This brings about the problem of the researcher's responsibility for the "history" he offers to society. A politician's responsibility for the image of the "past" that he promotes is no less of a problem. Very often, the political and ideological situation forces us to "avoid" certain "inconvenient" facts or, on the contrary, to "embellish" and "demonstrate" events.

Difficult issues from the past should be considered in the context of the present era, in accordance with the legal and moral norms of the time. It is on the principles of peaceful coexistence and defense of European democratic values that the historical policy of a united Europe was built. Even if it concerned painful and difficult events from the past, its main goal was to shape a better future. The European future of Ukraine will therefore also depend on the extent to which the policy of remembrance in Ukraine can be adapted to the standards that have been developed in Europe in this respect.

The state of permanent identity crisis in Ukraine, especially before the Revolution of Dignity, resulted from the lack of a single coherent vision of symbolic space on which its identity could be based. This led to the escalation of memory wars and the deepening of the fragmentation of symbolic space.

The same historical phenomenon can be interpreted in different ways, depending on the type of consciousness deemed appropriate to the researcher: rational or magical (mythological). Researchers of the past who represent the first type treat social reality as a sphere of practical activities in which man himself plays the leading role. In this approach, values such as freedom and democracy play a key role

---

8   *Культура історичної пам'яті: європейський та український досвід*, ed. Юрій Шаповал, Київ 2013, pp. 5–6.

and society appears as a self-conscious structure. On the other hand, researchers who operate in the sphere of magic and mythology are distinguished in their assessments of the past by maximalism and a revolutionary approach. They are characterized by a desire for compensatory justice, a victim complex, the search for external enemies, etc.[9] When reconstructing the past, anyone can choose between realistic and mythological social analysis.

Historiography in post-communist historical cultures very often has an ideological and propagandistic function. The English historian John Tosh rightly observed that the objectivity of historical knowledge is eroding in the collective memory, for which the phenomenon of distortion and silence is not at all surprising. This is the pragmatics of collective action—for a group to acquire a collective identity, it needs a common vision of its prioritized values. In the name of such a goal, the image of the historical past is often corrected to the detriment of credibility.[10]

The culture of historical memory is an important factor that influences the development of society. However, cultural heritage can be destroyed, leading to a loss of a sense of the uniqueness of a given community. That is why it is so important to be able to influence the process of learning about and discovering the past. On the other hand, historical memory very often does not correlate with scientific historiography. Each new generation follows the principle of "figurative modeling," looking for something in the past that is in line with its moods and expectations. Constructing "images of the past" inevitably involves transplanting concepts and mixing times. In fact, in the process of transferring knowledge about the past, the picture of what actually happened is distorted.[11] Maurice Halbwachs stated that "recollections that have not been thought about for a long time are reproduced without change. But when reflection begins to operate, when instead of letting the past recur, we reconstruct it through an effort of reasoning, what happens is that we distort this past, because we

---

[9]   Ibidem, p. 11.

[10]   Ibidem, p. 12.

[11]   Ibidem, pp. 17–18.

wish to introduce greater coherence. It is then reason and intelligence that chooses among the store of recollections, eliminates some of them, and arranges the others according to an order conforming with our ideas of the moment. From this come many alternations."[12] For several centuries, nation-states have been more or less successful in constructing the image of a "collective past." Quite often, this process has a political overtone. The reverence of one historical figure's exceptional merits is frequently accompanied by claims against "others." Identities formed under such conditions are programmed for conflict. The "fight for the past" is accompanied by a sharp clash of interests of various social strata and political actors. Because the modeled past is somehow a valuable symbolic resource and has its own mobilizing potential, interpretations of it in a polarized society acquire the power of ideological weapons.

Historical myths and symbols are deliberately used to distract the public from the harsh reality of the present. Thus, certain events and characters are sanctified, evaluation takes on a black and white nature, and everything that does not fit into given schemes is "bracketed." A one-dimensional perception of the past gives rise to at least two extremes—a kind of national megalomania or a persistent "victim complex."

The model of collective memory represented by scientific discourse was and remains an important component in the process of forming national identities, especially at turning points in history. Today, Ukrainians are forming a new system of values, developed by new realities. Accordingly, historical events, figures, and places are a proposed historiographical discourse, since they are symbols which play the role of a certain canon for the people and the state. This, in turn, is the basis of ideological constructions designed to influence consciousness and to shape and direct it in a predetermined direction.

According to Leonid Zashkilniak, if the policy of memory corresponds to the cultural traditions and hopes of the community, the community is strengthened and legitimized. If it does not suit them, it causes conflicts within the community and instead of being integrated,

---

12 Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Chicago–London 1992, p. 183.

it generates resistance and divisions.[13] National memory is part of the national idea. According to Ihor Girych, the latter can be understood as the goal of the political activity of the elite in a certain historical period. It appeared as part of the solution to the national idea during the construction of the national state in the 19th century. Among European peoples, one can distinguish the national idea and memory (1) of a "historical" (complete) nation, or the nation that entered a new national time, already having its national/state territory and (2) of a "non-historical" (non-complete) nation which was within the boundaries of another nation-state when the national ideology matured (every nation must create a separate state). State-nation, generally speaking, had more than one nation or ethnic group under its rule at the time of the emergence of modern nationalism. From the beginning, their task was to legitimize their right to rule, at the scientific level, over those peoples who had not actually become nations yet, because all of them had the intellectual and economic capacity to liberate themselves from the rule of imperial nations— although this was far from being the case. Instead, pariah nations faced a challenge to substantiate their claims to the other European nations in order to acknowledge their right to sovereign agency.[14] It was very hard to achieve this goal, as so-called non-historical nations had lost (or had never possessed) a representative class and were reduced to an inarticulate popular mass, with little if any national consciousness and a predominantly folk culture.[15] The distinction between "historical" and "non-historical" nations took on a particular importance in the legal and administrative practice of the Habsburg Empire. Ukraine was one such example of these "non-historical" (incomplete) nations.[16] Memory of the past is effectively an emotional

---

[13] Леонід Зашкільняк, "Національний метанаратив та його соціальні функції: між наукою та історичною пам'яттю," in: *Національна та історична пам'ять*, vol. 5, Kyiv 2012, p. 51.

[14] Ігор Гирич, "Національна схема української історіографії кінця XIX – початку XX століття як ключовий елемент національної пам'яті," in: *Національна та історична пам'ять*, vol. 5, Kyiv 2012, pp. 50–61.

[15] Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History*, Edmonton 1987, p. 41.

[16] Ibidem, pp. 40–41.

and mobilizing tuning fork which, working at the level of a feeling turned to the past, awakens national consciousness. Therefore, national memory became, to a certain extent, synonymous with the historical or collective memory of the people, expressed in folk art: songs, epics, legends, historical stories about the past, etc. These stories are not a stable substance, but are formed by means of public or state influence over the masses. The dominant state imposes its (self-benefitting) national memory through administrative institutions, repressive bodies, mass media information (newspapers, magazines, and literature), and education (primary and secondary schools and universities).[17]

All these elements create a historical culture. According to Jörn Rüsen, historical culture consists of "all kinds of knowledge, beliefs and perceptions, socio-cultural processes and contexts for their assimilation, including activities for their dissemination and commemoration practices, as well as all the functions that representations of the past perform in a given society." Historical culture understood in this way manifests itself in a variety of dimensions that can be analyzed. Rüsen himself identified three such dimensions: esthetic, political, and cognitive. The first includes artistic representations of the past. In this case, the form of these representations plays a key role, and "the essential value is beauty."[18] This dimension is deliberately omitted from further analysis. From the point of view of the topic at hand, the other two dimensions are of key importance. In the political dimension, discourse on the past is linked to the processes of legitimizing power structures. In other words, it is shaped by actors who try to legitimize their power by influencing the historical identity of individuals, social groups, and the whole of society. "It is in this dimension that the sense-making of the past takes place, which responds to the human need for stability and to live in a state of 'functional or

---

17   Ibidem.

18   *Kultury historyczne Polski i Ukrainy…*, p. 23. For more on this issue, see David Carr, "History as Orientation: Rüsen on Historical Culture and Narration," *History and Theory* 45 (2006), no. 2, pp. 229–243.

pragmatic coherence.'"[19] It can be assumed that this sense of security and the satisfaction of the need for stability will be stronger, the stronger one's belief is that the past is known and understood. Thus, the third dimension of historical culture, the cognitive one, is of such great importance. In contemporary societies, it is this dimension which historical sciences should focus on. In this case, the central value is truth.[20] Within historical culture, specific groups of actors can be distinguished. These groups create a kind of "hardware" of historical culture. The concepts of hardware and software of historical culture refer to the concept presented by Alexander Etkind. According to him, "in culture, as in the computer, there are two forms of memory that can be compared to hardware and software. Soft memory consists mainly of texts (including literary, historical and other narratives), while hard memory consists mainly of monuments."[21] This way of conceptualizing software and hardware resulted from the fact that Etkind studied the issues of collective memory from the point of view of cultural studies and anthropology.

This work, in turn, focuses more on the social and political dimensions of collective memory. Therefore, the term hardware will include here not only monuments, but above all agents that influence decisions related to memorial sites and commemoration activities. A particularly interesting place in the emerging equipment is the junction of the political field, dominated by "professional decision-makers," and the area of science, with its "professional historians." In this approach, the software contains not only various cultural texts and narratives, but also the state of the collective memory of a given political community.

If the main hardware agents ignore commonly shared narratives and views about the past, they lose credibility and their actions are ineffective. This can be especially dangerous for agents operating in the field of politics. Software, on the other hand, needs to be constantly

---

[19] *Kultury historyczne Polski i Ukrainy...*, pp. 23–24.

[20] Ibidem, p. 24.

[21] Alexander Etkind, *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied*, Stanford 2013, p. 177.

updated to stay in line with the socio-cultural context. One such update tool is hardware-generated memory policy.

This policy is shaped by autonomous sets of rules, according to which actors function within them. These are "institutions, professions, media and addressees."[22] The first group, i.e. institutions, consists of entities operating within the education system and institutions that research and popularize knowledge, archives, museums, and exhibitions. In turn, the actors operating within the "profession" could include "specialists in historical culture"—that is, academic lecturers, librarians, archivists, and others. Actors operating in the sphere of "media" are also important for historical culture, as they are a kind of link between the first two groups and the addressees. The last group, on the other hand, are recipients of the message articulated by institutions and representatives of the profession.

At the same time, Tomasz Stryjek and Volodymyr Sklokin rightly noticed that they do not necessarily have to be passive recipients. This means that, first of all, they can choose what to accept or reject among the elements of the message from these institutions and "specialists in historical culture." Secondly, there may also be feedback when the addressees "initiate new forms of dealing with the past themselves, to which hardware representatives respond by satisfying the needs reported by consumers."[23] Therefore, in relation to this category, it is worth differentiating between the two types of actors: passive "addressees" and active "participants." It can be assumed that in a historical culture shaped by the conditions of a totalitarian system, there will only be room for the "addressees."

It is worth juxtaposing these categories with the typology of behavior of participants in Soviet totalitarianism proposed by Alexei Yurczak. This allows us to better capture the nature of the historical culture formed under this regime. Yurchak distinguished three typical groups. The first one is comprised of activists, "associated with excessive ideological activism." The second one consists of "dissidents,

---

[22] Ibidem, p. 25.

[23] Ibidem, p. 26.

associated with excessive critique of the system."[24] Yurchak underlines that representatives of these two groups "tended to read ideological descriptions at the level of constative meanings, interpreting them as true or false."[25] Thus, all of them could be qualified as "participants." However, there was one more category of attitudes that enjoyed the greatest popularity, and therefore was the most important. Yurchak called this group "the public of svoi." Being one of the "*svoi*" meant understanding how important it was to participate in Soviet ideological rituals, "paying special attention to their performative dimension, because such participation enabled creative productions of 'normal life' that went beyond, though not necessarily in opposition to, those that these rituals and texts described."[26] This type of attitude refers to a specific kind of behavior, which Yurchak named "being vnye." It came down to "occupying a position that was simultaneously inside and outside of the rhetorical field of that discourse, neither simply in support nor simply in opposition of it."[27] Even if there was room for "the values of critical thinking, personal creativity, inquisitiveness, and education" within this paradigm, it led to "having little involvement with the system's constative concerns, and even being ignorant of them."[28] As far as cultural memory is concerned, this behavior corresponds to the category of "addressees." Even if they did not identify with the Soviet order, they hardly opposed the authorities. It was not important whether they actually accepted and assimilated the "authoritative discourse" promoted under the Soviet regime, because that regime was based on their passivity. Therefore, when there is a demand or at least a place for active "participants" in historical culture, it can be assumed that this may be a manifestation of a broader process of democratization of the entire social life.

---

[24]   Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, Princeton 2005, p. 288.

[25]   Ibidem.

[26]   Ibidem.

[27]   Ibidem.

[28]   Ibidem.

However, when there is also a need for "participants" within the historical culture, it can be assumed that this may be a manifestation of a broader process of democratization of the entire society.

In order to scrutinize how efforts to come to terms with the collective memory of the past are intertwined with the issue of legitimizing the social and political order, Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard's theory of the politics of memory was applied. It seems to be a promising tool which allows for the discovery and analysis of how issues related to historical memory are interrelated with the processes running in a given political system.

According to the theory of the politics of memory, there are four types of "mnemonic actors and their dominant strategies": "mnemonic abnegators," "mnemonic prospective," "mnemonic warriors," and "mnemonic pluralists."[29] The latter two seem to be particularly relevant to the agents involved in the politics of memory in Ukraine. Mnemonic warriors argue that "the problems of the present (and the future) cannot be effectively addressed unless the whole polity is set on the proper foundation, constructed according to the 'true' vision of history." They count themselves as "the proprietors" of this vision, while the other actors "cultivate 'wrong' or 'false' versions of the past."[30] According to Kubik and Bernhard's concept, "the content of collective memory appears to warriors as largely nonnegotiable; the only problem is how to make others accept their 'true' vision of the past."[31] Mnemonic pluralists in turn "accept that, in addition to 'us' and our vision of history, there are 'them' with their own visions of the past. ... If they disagree with those visions, they are ready to engage in a dialogue whose principal aim is the orderly pursuit of 'the truth,' discovery of the areas of overlap among the competing visions, and articulation of common mnemonic fundamentals

---

[29] Jan Kubik, Michael Bernhard, "A Theory of the Politics of Memory," in: *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, eds. Jan Kubik, Michael Bernhard, New York 2014, pp. 11–14.

[30] Ibidem, p. 13.

[31] Ibidem.

that allow discussion among competing versions."[32] Kubik and Bernhard indicated three groups of "factors influencing actors' decisions when it comes to the choice of their mnemonic strategy." There are "cultural constraints," "cultural choices" made by actors within these constraints, and "structural-institutional constraints of the political field in which they act."[33] It is worth observing that some reservations have already been reported in reference to the comprehensiveness of Kubik and Bernhard's concept. Ferenc Laczó pointed out that it "seems somewhat narrowly focused on a single moment without investigating the changing contours of historical memory" and "does not do full justice to the complexity and evolution of memory fields."[34] Cédric Pellen, in turn, noted that Kubik and Bernhard did not allow for a transnational dimension of the commemorative activities or a role for actors such as "European institutions" and "foundations from abroad."[35] Moreover, he aptly remarked that they "denied the influence of non-political factors and actors on the process of generating shared representations of the past."[36]

In fact, the authors of this theory were focused on "major political actors and political parties." At the same time they looked into regimes with at least "a minimal level of democracy."[37] In that case, there are also other nongovernmental agents which should be considered while scrutinizing the politics of memory. Marek Ziółkowski noted that, apart from institutions directly related or subordinate to the state power system, two other kinds of agents are involved in "the game of memory." These are "civil society institutions" and "non-institutionalized

---

[32] Ibidem.

[33] Ibidem, p. 20.

[34] Ferenc Laczó, review of: *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, eds. Michael Bernhard, Jan Kubik, Oxford 2014, in: *Europe-Asia Studies*, September 2015, p. 2.

[35] Cédric Pellen, review of: *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, eds. Michael Bernhard, Jan Kubik, Oxford 2014, in: *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest* 46 (2015), no. 46, p. 271.

[36] Ibidem.

[37] Jan Kubik, Michael Bernhard, "A Theory of the Politics of Memory…," p. 2.

actors."[38] Ziółkowski defined "civil society institutions" as "bottom-up voluntary spontaneous associations" focused on activity in a non-governmental sphere. Their main task is "pushing state institutions" with the intent to preserve and transform their members' identity. "Non-institutionalized actors," in turn, are "circles of acquaintances, informal groups, families"—or in other words, "the realm of everyday spontaneous interactions, associations and communities."[39] As Jan Nowak aptly pointed out, "if we understand the democratization of a society's life as the authorities giving back some control over society, then in this context this change will result in increased rights of non-governmental agents of social life"; likewise, these agents' impact on the process of developing historical policy will increase.[40] It is particularly interesting to see whether the mechanisms of historical policy-making—especially those operated by state institutions—show any tendencies related to the process of democratization. With regard to Ukraine, apart from the prospects of democratization, it is also worth considering the potential symptoms of the erosion of the patronal (neo-patrimonial) model of social life that was shaped after 1991.[41] The question would be the extent to which politics of memory is based on unilateral diktat, and the extent to which it stimulates the development of "a form of discourse that allows different points of view, pluralism, and taking into account the interests, convictions and

---

[38]   Marek Ziółkowski, "Pamięć i zapominanie: trupy w szafie polskiej zbiorowej pamięci," *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* (2001), no. 3–4, pp. 5–6.

[39]   Ibidem.

[40]   Jan Nowak, *Społeczne reguły pamiętania. Antropologia pamięci zbiorowej*, Kraków 2011, p. 110.

[41]   Oleksandr Fisun, "Ukrainian Constitutional Politics: Neopatrimonialism, Rent-seeking, and Regime Change," in: *Beyond the Euromaidan: Comparative perspectives on advancing reform in Ukraine*, eds. Henry E. Hale, Robert W. Orttung, Stanford 2016, pp. 181–203; Natalia Minenkova, "Transformacja reżimu politycznego Ukrainy za czasów niepodległości," in: *Polska i Ukraina – próba analizy systemu politycznego*, eds. Stanisław Sulowski, Mykoła Prymusz, Natalia Minenkova, Bartłomiej Zdaniuk, Warszawa 2011, pp. 84–85; Vladimir Gelman, "The Vicious Circle of Post-Soviet Neopatrimonialism in Russia," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 32 (2015), no. 5, pp. 455–473; Henry E. Hale, "25 Years After the USSR: What's Gone Wrong?" *Journal of Democracy*, 27 (2016), no. 3, pp. 24–35.

feelings of all the participants in the dialogue."[42] The message formulated by state institutions can complete and develop the content and standards that are popularized by various "non-state institutions" and family traditions. However, this "state" message can also entail more or less contradictory elements and interpretations.[43]

Hence, Korzeniewski's proposition to consider the democratization of memory to be a consequence of "society's transformation from authoritarian to democratic" seems well-founded.[44] However, this is about a process that "occurs at the level of official interpretations of the past formulated by state representatives, at the level of public memory, as well as the level of common memory."[45] Democratization of the social and political life starts from the evolution of relations between actors from all three mentioned levels. In particular, this process is interrelated with the emancipation of agents from "the middle level"—civil society institutions. This is not only a question of their independence from the governmental institutions, but also of their ability to influence activities of the actors related to the governmental level.

According to Gesine Schwan, "democratization of memory is a derivative of the whole political system." This process is correlated with "democratization of political identity"[46] which means spreading values such as respect for the dignity and freedom of other people, respect for the diversity of memories and interpretations of the past, in addition to responsibility, trust and empathy.[47] Adapting the complicated history of Ukrainian-Jewish relations to the agenda of the memory politics might be favorable to the implementation and/or strengthening of these values in the political identity of the Ukrainian political community.

---

[42] Jan Nowak, *Społeczne reguły...*, p. 110.

[43] For more on this issue, see Anna Wylęgała, "Managing the Difficult Past: Ukrainian Collective Memory and Public Debates on History," *Nationalities Papers*, 45 (2018), no. 5, pp. 781–785.

[44] Bartosz Korzeniewski, "Demokratyzacja pamięci wobec przewartościowań w pamięci Polaków po 1989 r.," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, 12 (2013), no. 2(22), p. 65.

[45] Jan Nowak, *Społeczne reguły...*, p. 110.

[46] Bartosz Korzeniewski, "Demokratyzacja pamięci...," p. 63.

[47] Ibidem.

In order to better grasp the differences in shaping collective memory through actions undertaken by state institutions and non-state structures, as well as messages spread by families and the community, it is worth referring to the model of legacy conceptualization proposed by Jason Wittenberg.[48] It is based on events that occurred in the past, as well as contemporary phenomena that can be derived from such historical origins. Discovering or reconstructing a legacy consists in linking various segments of the world that are currently experienced by the given community with elements of the past that this community considers "its own." As Wittenberg noted, if such a relationship can be reconstructed, then the given contemporary phenomenon becomes part of the legacy. If such a relationship cannot be indicated, the phenomenon falls outside of the area of legacy (Wittenberg describes it as "non-legacy").[49] Wittenberg's concept is complemented by the way legacy was defined by Jan Kieniewicz. In his depiction it is "a collection of information that can be treated as inheritance, legacy transferred, or just left to generations."[50] Multiplying the legacy, on the other hand, means that every generation adds its own interpretation to the received deposit. This interpretation also pertains to the order of precedence of individual legacy constituents. To some extent, each generation decides which constituents are currently relevant and necessary for guaranteeing "a sense of order"[51] on the individual and collective levels.

As Kieniewicz emphasized, the key issue with regard to legacy is not so much caring about the total message of all its elements as about "finding a way of reading it," which requires "ability" and "will"; without these, even the most complex legacy is "merely a potential" whose "invoking is purposeless."[52] The last provision concerns the specific segment of the

---

[48] Jason Wittenberg, "Conceptualizing Historical Legacies," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 29 (2015), no. 2, pp. 366–378.

[49] Ibidem, p. 370.

[50] Jan Kieniewicz, *Wprowadzenie do historii cywilizacji Wschodu i Zachodu*, Warszawa 2003, p. 364.

[51] This expression is used by Kubik and Bernhard: Jan Kubik, Michael Bernhard, "A Theory of the Politics of Memory…," p. 3.

[52] Jan Kieniewicz, *Wprowadzenie do historii…*, p. 365.

legacy of previous generations that we deal with in the case of post-communist societies. Wittenberg calls it aborted legacy. It pertains to phenomena that existed before communism, but did not survive until the fall of communism – those which "might have become historical legacies but did not."[53]

1.2. Ukrainian mnemonic field

There are some important "structural-institutional constraints of the political field" which present a challenge for actors in the Ukrainian mnemonic field. First of all, the Ukrainian political field is quite sensitive to stimuli coming from external agents, particularly from Russia. The Kremlin authorities sought to ensure their hegemony in the post-Soviet space. The attempts to integrate Ukraine into Russia's area of influence were intensified, especially during Victor Yanukovych's presidency. Measures pursuing this goal were also taken in the frames of symbolic violence. The new "Russkiy mir" formula was launched.[54] From the beginning, the concept of "Russkiy mir" turned out to be a new project for integrating the post-Soviet space on the basis of what was perceived as a civilizational community. In 2009, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, who is one of the best known proponents of this idea, outlined the basic assumptions of the "Russkiy" community and designated its core area as comprising the territories of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus—but also parts of

---

[53] Jason Wittenberg, "Conceptualizing Historical Legacies...," p. 371.

[54] For more on this issue, see Alicja Curanović, *The Religious Factor in Russia's Foreign Policy*, London–New York 2012; Mikhail Suslov, *'Russian World': Russia's Policy Towards its Diaspora* (Russie. Nei. Visions, 103), Paris 2017, https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/suslov_russian_world_2017.pdf; Joanna Szostek, "Russia and the News Media in Ukraine: A Case of 'Soft Power'?" *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 28 (2014), no. 3, pp. 463–486; *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, eds. Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska, Richard Sakwa, Bristol 2015; Henry E. Hale, Oxana Shevel, Olga Onuch, "Believing Facts in the Fog of War: Identity, Media and Hot Cognition in Ukraine's 2014 Odesa Tragedy," *Geopolitics* 23 (2018), no. 4, 851–881.

Moldova and Kazakhstan.[55] Russia attempted to promote common values, "mental habits," and the shared cultural and historical legacy in order to consolidate the alleged "Russkiy mir" community.

Actually, the concept of "Russkiy mir" was a projection of a set of forms of discourse "through which Russian political and religious leaders view Ukraine and Ukrainians."[56] This set contains denying sovereignty and questioning any kind of Ukrainian agency in the past separate from Russia. Discourse related to the Great Patriotic War plays a particular role. Commemorative activities related to this discourse reached the status of "de facto religious cult."[57] This highly mythologized event is considered an important factor that cemented "the eternal unity" of Russians and Ukrainians.

As Taras Kuzio asserts, "Russian security policy towards Ukraine, its annexation of Crimea and ongoing military aggression are being driven in the 21st century by late 19th century Tsarist and Russian historical myths."[58] This means that the custom of denying Ukrainian political, cultural, and historical agency was amplified in comparison to the Soviet period. The official propaganda of the USSR "viewed Russians and Ukrainians as close but different peoples." From the point of view of Tsarist and Russian émigré, there were no Ukrainians at all; there were only "Little Russians."[59] These myths and stereotypes became the agenda of Russian soft power. It was spread in Ukraine inter alia via the Russian Centres created by the Russkiy Mir Foundation.[60]

---

55 "Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирила на торжественном открытии III Ассамблеи Русского Мира," http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/928446.html; "Патриарх Кирилл поставил Украине задачу «перезагрузить» суверенитет и направить его на укрепление Русского мира," https://www.religion.in.ua/news/vazhlivo/6649-patriarx-Cyril-postavil-ukraine-zadachu-perezagruzit-suverenitet-i-napravit-ego-na-ukreplenie-russkogo-mira.html.

56 Taras Kuzio, *Russian Nationalism and the Russian-Ukrainian War: Autocracy – Orthodoxy – Nationality*, London–New York 2022, p. 214.

57 Ibidem.

58 Ibidem, p. 261.

59 Ibidem, p. 264.

60 For more on this issue, see Michał Wawrzonek, "The 'Russian World' and Ukraine,"

The concept of "Russkiy mir" imposes a framework for interpreting the world surrounding the members of this community. This is a basic "axial" conflict which arranges the whole of society, including the fields of power and memory. This conflict was defined under the paradigm of "us" versus "the West." However, it seems that these fields operate under slightly different rules in the Ukrainian case; they are structured by various "axial" conflicts. It seems that a crisis related to the so-called "Revolution of Dignity" was triggered by the attempt to erase these differences.

As a result, the "Europeanness" that is understood as an opposition to "Russkiy mir" has become a significant element of the symbolic capital in Ukraine. Symbolic violence is generated on this basis. Therefore, one of the main axial conflicts in the Ukrainian mnemonic field became a constraint between "us" and the "people of Moscow." For example, this conflict was manifested in a process of decommunization. According to the Coalition Agreement between "pro-European" political forces in Verkhovna Rada, decommunization became an element of reforming the sphere of education and memory politics. Its main aim was "to prevent a recurrence of repressions and totalitarian practices." As Taras Kuzio and Anna Oliinyk pointed out, the reference to such practices encompassed not only the USSR, but also Russia and Ukraine, under Presidents Vladimir Putin and Viktor Yanukovych.[61] The events that led to the "Revolution of Dignity" as well as their aftermath caused Ukraine to shift politically and culturally toward Europe. It is no coincidence that the integration of Ukraine into the EU is intertwined not only with simple political and economic issues. There are also some "soft" factors related to the process of joining the European community, including the emerging transnational "Europeanized" narrative on memory and the attempts to promote a vision of a common European identity. As Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper pointed out, "the 'return to Europe' means joining

---

in: *Politics of the Russian Language Beyond Russia*, ed. Christian Noack, Edinburgh 2021, pp. 19–44.

[61] Anna Oliinyk, Taras Kuzio, "The Euromaidan Revolution, Reforms and Decommunisation in Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies* (2021), p. 3.

not only a common political and economic system, but also a common European memory in which the narratives of World War II and the Holocaust become central elements."[62] Thus, "the memory of the Holocaust plays the role of an 'entry ticket' to the European community."[63] Anna Wylęgała pointed out that "the memory of the Shoah is inconvenient for Ukrainians for more reasons than the potential overshadowing of the Holodomor victims. When talking about the Holocaust, Ukrainians have not yet faced their past, and without such reflection it is difficult to propagate honest remembrance of the victims. Discussions about Ukrainian participation in the Shoah are held—with minor exceptions—primarily outside the country's borders."[64]

At the same time a new tendency has emerged in the process of creating "the common European memory" and narrative in research and in discussions around the Holocaust. It affects quite strongly the Ukrainian mnemonic field. It is based on the conviction that "the simple equation of Holocaust perpetrators with the Nazis or Germans is misleading and deficient." Representatives of this conceptual current attempt to reconstruct "a transnational and European nature of the perpetrators" because they consider that "the perception of the Shoah as a German or German-Jewish event is misleading."[65] Therefore they recognize a new challenge: "writing the history of the Shoah without marginalizing the agency of local actors and showing the complex

---

62 Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, "Memory in Post-communist Europe: Controversies over Identity, Conflicts, and Nostalgia," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 32 (2018), no. 4, p. 929; see also Lothar Probst, "Founding Myths in Europe and the Role of the Holocaust," *New German Critique* (2003), no. 90, pp. 45–58; Marek Kucia, "The Europeanization of Holocaust Memory and Eastern Europe," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 30, (2016), no. 1, pp. 97–119.

63 Anna Wylęgała, Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, "Introduction," in: *The Burden of the Past: History, Memory, and Identity in Contemporary Ukraine*, eds. Anna Wylegała, Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, Bloomington 2020, p. 3.

64 Anna Wylęgała, "Managing the Difficult Past…," p. 787.

65 Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Conceptualizations of the Holocaust in Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine: Historical Research, Public Debates, and Methodological Disputes," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 34 (2000) no. 1, p. 134.

relationships between them and the Germans and the Jews."[66] Their point is to investigate and write "with empathy the history of the Holocaust."[67] This approach is very interesting prospective and challenging at the same time.

Researchers who are trying to follow this path are particularly interested in survivor's testimonies.[68] For example Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe asserts that "the survivor testimonies are, next to the internal OUN documents, essential to comprehend the role the Ukrainian nationalists played in the Shoah in western Ukraine."[69] Inter alia Rossoliński-Liebe refers to the relation of Samuel Golfard who "recalled how during the pogroms in summer 1941 the local perpetrators burned the synagogue and threw the son of the Rebbe of Bełz into the flames."[70] However there is another relation referring to the recalled events in Przemyślany by Leopold Kleiman-Kozłowski. He was a survivor who was born in this city. According to his relation once the synagogue had been burned "a Roman-catholic priest along with a group of the people ran to Father Kovch (a Greek-catholic priest from Przemyślany) and asked him to help rescue the synagogue."[71] Omelian Kovch called out to German soldiers who stood next to the burning building and he demanded an access to the inside. He spoke fluent German therefore soldiers were confounded and let him go and he opened the synagogue. Father Kovch started to pull people out of the building. In that way among the others he saved Rebbe of Bełz

---

[66] Ibidem, p. 133.

[67] Ibidem, p. 135.

[68] Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Conceptualizations of the Holocaust...," p. 135.

[69] Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Survivor Testimonies and the Coming to Terms with the Holocaust in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia: The Case of the Ukrainian Nationalists," *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 34 (2020), no. 1, p. 228.

[70] Ibidem.

[71] Володимир Бірчак, Володимир В'ятрович, "Омелян Ковч – священик, патріот та праведник," https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2019/03/26/153881/.

Aaron Rokeakh.[72] In fact relations of Golfard and Kleiman-Kozłowski complement one another. However Rossoliński-Liebe referred only to one of them. This case shows how easy is to unintentionally take a position of a mnemonic warrior being a researcher of Holocaust.

This tendency seems to be a big challenge from the point of view of the domestic actors of the Ukrainian memory field, especially when the survivors testimonies are used with the purpose to discover "the role the Ukrainian nationalists played in the Shoah in western Ukraine."[73] Such attempts lead to the clash with the adherents of the Ukrainian state-official politics of memory who very often take position of the mnemonic warriors.[74]

The Ukrainian mnemonic field is internally composite. Ukrainian lands have been subject to the influence of various civilizations for centuries. For a long time, Ukrainian lands were under the control of various states that disseminated not only their political and social customs in Ukraine, but also their culture, certain historical images, and stereotypes. As a result, different regional types of identity and

---

72 Евгений Шнайдер, "Двойная родина Белзских хасидов," https://ujew.com. ua/dvojnaya-rodina-belzskih-hasidov. By the way, this Greek Catholic priest later provided Jews with baptismal certificates on a large scale. Since he had gained "a reputation as a reliable defender of Jews," he was arrested by the Gestapo in 1942. Metropolitan Sheptytsky tried to free Father Kovch, but his efforts were unsuccessful. Father Kovch died in a Nazi concentration camp in Majdanek. See "'Besides Heaven, This Is the Only Place Where I Would Want To Be': The Witness of the Greek Catholic Priest-Martyr of Majdanek Blessed Omelian Kovch," https://risu.org.ua/en/index/expert_thought/ana lytic/48079/.

73 Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Survivor Testimonies and the Coming to Terms...," p. 228.

74 Тарас Курило, "Скандаль з Россолінським-Лібе та стан української історії," *Громадянська освіта* (2012), no. 09, http://osvita.khpg.org/index.php?id= 1330953482; Павло Солодко, "Лекція про «фашиста» Бандеру. Конспект та хронологія скандалю," https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2012/03/5/ 75689/. P.A. Rudling described another very interesting example of the clash between mnemonic warriors related to Ukraine—The Yad Vashem Institute and the Ukrainian state's entities involved in shaping an official memory politics: Per Anders Rudling, "The Cult of Roman Shukhevych in Ukraine: Myth Making with Complications," *Fascism: Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* 5 (2016), no. 1, pp. 54–57.

memory of the past have formed. In general, two main paradigms for reconstructing "paths to the present" have emerged in Ukraine. Western Ukraine was influenced by a closer connection with the cultural and societal patterns of Central and Western Europe. In turn, "images of the past" in eastern Ukraine were created in isolation from "the West." They were heavily influenced by Russian and Soviet historical culture.

From 1991 to 2014, these differences were used to create different dividing lines within the Ukrainian political field.[75] As a result, they provided a pretext for questioning "the viability of Ukraine as a nation-state within the borders of the former Soviet Union."[76] On the basis of these doubts, a widespread belief was born that Ukraine was fundamentally divided into two parts. One was considered "Europeanized," while the other was seen as Russified and Sovietized.

According to Tatiana Zhurzhenko, the "myth of 'two Ukraines'" was a reconstruction of the political and cultural realities of Ukraine, based on a certain vision of history, on opinion polls and election results, on Western theoretical constructs, cultural stereotypes and ideological prejudices."[77] At the same time, however, Zhuzhenko described quite convincingly the significant, real differences between the socio-political conditions in eastern and western Ukraine, resulting from the "divided history."[78] For example, she admitted that "Ukraine seems to be trapped between these two different models of dealing with Soviet history: the 'East' is not able to externalize completely the communist experience, and the 'West' has obvious difficulties with appropriating it as a part of its own national history."[79]

---

75 For more on this issue, see Ararat L. Osipian, Alexander L. Osipian, "Regional Diversity and Divided Memories in Ukraine: Contested Past as Electoral Resource, 2004–2010," *East European Politics and Societies*, 26 (2012), no. 3, pp. 616–642.

76 Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "The Myth of Two Ukraines," *Eurozine* (2002), p. 1, https://www.eurozine.com/the-myth-of-two-ukraines/.

77 Ibidem, p. 2.

78 Ibidem, pp. 4–6.

79 Ibidem, pp. 5–6.

It seems that starting with the Orange Revolution, Ukrainians have gained a chance to get out of this trap. The real breakthrough in this matter came during the Revolution of Dignity. After Euromaidan, the nation-building process in Ukraine gained a new dynamic. Ukrainian identity was consolidated in the face of Russian aggression around ideas and patterns typical of the civic model of nationalism.[80] Those who, for various reasons, questioned the ontological status of the Ukrainian political community within an independent and sovereign state were excluded from political life. Tensions within the field of Ukrainian memory are no longer attractive to agents in the political field. However, this does not necessarily mean that these tensions became extinct.

While studying the regional characteristics of the memory of Ukrainians, Yaroslav Hrytsak noticed a certain regularity: the further away this or that historical event or historical figure is from the present, the greater is the unanimity in its assessment among the inhabitants of various regions.[81] In addition, a certain cyclical nature of changes in the approach to interpreting the past is noticeable. Political traditionalism is replaced by a rivalry of interpretations of the past, which in turn may turn into a conflict of memory.[82] As for the structure of the Ukrainian mnemonic field, one may distinguish the dominating center (Kyiv) and a number of peripheries with their own subfields. One periphery is the territory of former Galicia. It is very important that the tension between the legacy of the former Galicia and the cultural capital of other Ukrainian lands traditionally comprises very distinctive features of Ukrainian society.

In other words, for a long time, the historical memory between the "Kyivian center" and the "Galician periphery" was based on different values, symbols, and heritage models. The structure of the social

---

[80] For more on this issue, see "Ukrainian Identity: Changes, Trends, Regional Aspects," *National Security and Defense* (2016), no. 3–4(161–162), pp. 39–40, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/eng/NSD161-162_2016_eng.pdf.

[81] Ярослав Грицак, *Життя, смерть та інші неприємності*, Kyiv 2008, p. 232.

[82] Ольга Волянюк, *Закономірності суспільної пам'яті: політологічний аналіз. Національна та історична пам'ять: Зб. наук. праць*, vol. 5, Kyiv 2012, pp. 37–46.

field of Ukraine's "center" was developed by such experiences as Russification—carried out consistently well before 1917—the Stalinist terror of the 1930s, and the almost total Sovietization and isolation from the influence of Western European civilization (or very limited and selective contact with it). However, within the structure of the Galician subfield, among others, were engraved the consequences of its organic, centuries-old participation in this civilization. Although the extremely intense experience of the Soviet period was imposed on it, key differences between it and the "Kyivian center" have not been eliminated.

It should be emphasized that the cultural capital of the Galician subfield was heavily stigmatized during the entire Soviet period. Official Soviet propaganda created an image of Galicia as a culturally foreign area. Metropolitan Sheptytsky played a very important role in this image.[83] He was in fact the focus of all the negative stereotypes with which Soviet propaganda sought to disavow the Galician part of Ukraine's national heritage. Therefore, the question of how far this tension can consolidate and how much this "system of belief bonding" will break down in the case of Ukraine is particularly interesting, especially at present.

Today, Metropolitan Sheptytsky is widely seen as one of the key figures in the social, political, and cultural life of Ukrainians living in the region of Galicia—and after 1918, on Poland's interwar lands. Celebrating the anniversary of Sheptytsky's birth on a national level can be regarded as a manifestation of the "symbolic interaction" between the "Kyivian center" and the "post-Galician periphery."

Some of the issues from the past generate particular cultural and political constraints in the Ukrainian mnemonic field that affect the actors' choices of strategy. For example, there are a legacy of anti-Semitism and stereotypes toward different nationalities relevant to Ukraine. Also, there might be ways of remembering World War II that differ between former Galicia and the rest of Ukraine and a renaissance of symbols related to Ukrainian nationalism in the new social, political, and cultural context since 2014. One of the most important

---

83 Paulina Byzdra-Kusz, "Obraz metropolity Andrzeja Szeptyckiego w propagandowej literaturze Ukraińskiej Socjalistycznej Republiki Radzieckiej," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* (2021), no. 1(37), pp. 455–480.

sources of constraints is the legacy of foregoing public discourse on the Holocaust in Ukraine.[84] In that case actors' cultural choices made within constraints mentioned above refer to some alternative patterns of conceptualizing the past. For example, this is an issue of choice between a concept of World War II and the Great Patriotic War. Another important choice relates to evaluation of the activities of OUN and UPA (Nazi's collaborators co-responsible for the Holocaust or "fighters for independence").[85] The Greek-catholic Church is also an object of alternative epistemological approaches (supporter of the Ukrainian nationalist movement or defender of the basic human moral values in the Ukrainian social life.[86]

Any community that seeks to define itself as a nation and that seeks to form its own state must construct, disseminate, and perpetuate a version of national memory that would be acceptable and attractive to all its members, or at least to a large majority. First of all, it is about shaping the vision of the history of Ukraine as a community and a multi-ethnic state that is integrated with Europe. In other words, it is about creating a "biography" of the Ukrainian nation that is acceptable from the point of view of the education system and the international community. This "biography" is created by anthropomorphizing the historical development of a given community. As a consequence, the assumption that the process has a beginning and then evolves and reaches the highest state of development—as does a human life—becomes fundamentally important.[87] Therefore, there is an urgent need to re-evaluate the hitherto achievements of historiography, which concerns the so-called "Soviet period in the history of

---

84   Andrii Portnov, "The Holocaust in the Public Discourse of Post-Soviet Ukraine," in: *War and Memory in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus*, eds. Julie Fedor, Markku Kangaspuro, Jussi Lassila, Tatiana Zhurzhenko, London 2017, pp. 347–370.

85   Per Anders Rudling, "The Cult of Roman Shukhevych in Ukraine...," pp. 26–65.

86   Олег Беген, Олександр Зайцев, Василь Стефанів, *Націоналізм і релігія: Греко-Католицька Церква та український націоналістичний рух у Галичині (1920–1930-ті роки)*, Lviv 2011. See also the review of this book by Liliana Hentosh: *Україна Модерна* 19 (2012), http://uamoderna.com/images/archiv/19/um_19_gentosh.pdf.

87   Леонід Зашкільняк, "Національний метанаратив...," p. 89.

Ukraine." So far, it has not been possible to develop a new approach to this period within the framework of a comprehensive approach to the history of Ukraine. President Victor Yushchenko's nationalizing course only intensified the confrontation in Ukrainian society. The process of eroding traditional ideologies was accompanied by the manipulative practices of influencing social awareness. Therefore, the strategy of "nationalizing" historical memory in Ukraine turned out to not be very effective. The historical memory of citizens remained ambivalent and susceptible to external influences. In the process of reinterpreting the past, divisive events and facts (e.g., the colonial status of Ukraine in the USSR) came to the fore, and the issue of historical memory became a tool in the political struggle. Discussions on the content of Ukrainian textbooks, which took place in October 2007 on the initiative of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, were very characteristic in this respect. Historians analyzed 12 school textbooks and came to the conclusion that school historical literature does not meet the criteria of modern historical science and the needs of Ukrainian society. Archaism, the dominance of a militaristic approach, the overuse of the categories of "national oppression" and "colonial status," hyperideology, aggressive impulsiveness, an irrational view of history, etc., are emphasized.[88] One of the proposals for the basis of the national metanarrative in its educational version for school education was developed by a group of Ukrainian historians under the direction of Natalia Yakovenko. Its proponents tried to bring the national educational meta-narrative closer to the scientific one. Their main demands were formulated as follows: the general principles of updating the content of school history courses in Ukraine should be based on the principle of anthropologization ("humanization") of the past, so that all students may identify with Ukraine's past.[89] According to research conducted in 2012, in the didactics of history, the transition from the Soviet to the ethnocentric vision took place while the old patterns from the authoritarian era were still maintained. "The 'fight for the past' in the

---

88 *Шкільна історія очима істориків-науковців. Матеріали Робочої наради з моніторингу шкільних підручників історії України*, Kyiv 2008, pp. 43–44.

89 Леонід Зашкільняк, "Національний метанаратив...," p. 93.

space of school history was accompanied by the rapid replacement of old symbols and heroes with new ones without any critical understanding of them." Moreover, Oksana Tkach stated that the material concerning the past is presented unilaterally within the self-contradictory ethnic paradigm. It is dominated by "binary value judgments (own/other)" and a simplified (black-and-white) vision of the past.[90] Apparently, the problem of cultural choices is not so important in the case of the Ukrainian mnemonic field. According to opinion polls conducted before Euromaidan, "a substantial part of the population is *ambivalent* about the contested historical past (rather than siding up firmly with one or another camp of mnemonic warriors)."[91] Oxana Shevel asserted that it had formed a favorable background for developing a pillarized mnemonic field in Ukraine.[92] As for modern Ukraine, many observers have noted the diversity and ambivalence of historical memory in Ukrainian society. Many of these differences stem from myths and pre-Soviet and Soviet stereotypes. These myths include "Eastern Slavic unity," "Ukrainian statelessness," "ethnic kinship of Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians," "the hostility of Western civilization toward Ukraine and Ukrainians," "the brotherly family of nations in the USSR," "victory in the Great Patriotic War," etc. All these stereotypical representations actually leave no room for Ukraine and Ukrainians as agents on the political map of Eastern Europe. They also preclude Ukrainians becoming aware of their own national identity and the related need to have a sovereign state.[93] In the Ukrainian case ambivalent attitudes actually are not neutral. In particular it refers to the mnemonic contest between "east" and "west." This is a consequence of the activity of the external mnemonic warrior—Russia which positions itself "as a kin-state in an ongoing and ever more aggressive quest to reassert its regional dominance and its great power

---

90 Оксана Драч, "Колективна пам'ять і національна історія у середній освіті України доби незалежності," *Київські історичні студії: науковий журнал* (2019), no. 2(9), p. 49.

91 Oxana Shevel, "Memories of the Past and Visions of the Future..." p. 153.

92 Ibidem.

93 Леонід Зашкільняк, "Національний метанаратив...," p. 89.

status."[94] In searching for legitimization of this status Russia attempts to interfere in the processes in the memory fields of the "near abroad" countries. In the case of Ukraine Russian activities related to the manipulation of historical memory are focused particularly on "the events of World War II and the projection of the divisions of that time into the present conflict. The much exploited Nazi collaboration in western Ukraine is set against the anti-fascist heroism of Russia."[95]

To a great extent Russian efforts were focused on gaining a right to act on behalf of those who were "ambivalent" and who tried to be "neutral" regarding to the intra-Ukrainian memory and identity debates. The space for "ambivalent" attitudes has distinctly shrunken after the Euromaidan. Mykola Riabchuk pointed out that "the majority of the Russian-speaking Ukrainians and the plurality of Ukraine's ethnic Russians who had largely remained ambivalent in their loyalty to both Moscow and Kyiv, have opted ultimately for the Ukrainian cause driven primarily by civic rather than ethnic, cultural, or linguistic considerations."[96] At the same time, Riabchuk asserts that "this does not mean that the problem of a harmonious coexistence of two major cultural groups in one country is already solved."[97]

1.3. A few words about the history of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC)

At the end of 16th century majority of the Orthodox bishops of the Kyiv archeparchy decided to break their canonical ties with Constantinople and placed themselves under the authority of the pope in Rome. Finally it happened after signing the act of the union in Brest

---

94 Erika Harris, "What is the Role of Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Russia–Ukraine Crisis?" *Europe-Asia Studies* 72 (2020), no. 4. p. 14.

95 Ibidem.

96 Mykola Riabchuk, "'Two Ukraines' Reconsidered: The End of Ukrainian Ambivalence?" *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15 (2015), no. 1, p. 152.

97 Ibidem.

in 1596.[98] In that way the Uniate Church emerged. Its clergy and believers belonged to the Catholic Church but they preserved an organizational autonomy and the eastern rite.

After the final partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795 the structures of the Uniate Church started to function in two states: Russian Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy. The majority of the Uniate Church's structures in the Romanov Empire was liquidated in 1839. Its clergy and faithful were forced to "come back" to the Orthodox Church.[99] The last Uniate eparchy in the Russian state lasted till 1875 (eparchy of Chełm).[100] The Uniate Church survived in the Habsburg Monarchy in Galicia. It was renamed to the Greek-Catholic Church and it gained a new separate organizational frames based on the formally restored in 1807 Archeparchy of Halych. With time the UGCC became a pivotal institution of the Ukrainian national life in Galicia.

The process of formation of the new elites of the UGCC was strongly affected by the reform of the Order of Saint Basil the Great which started in 1882.[101] It was the only Greek-Catholic monastic community at that time. The reformed Basilian order was "the most far-reaching response to the national movement from a Christian perspective."[102] John-Paul Himka asserted, that the Basilian monks "borrowed and improved upon the methods of the national movement in

---

[98] For more on this issue, see Borys A. Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1998.

[99] Софрон Мудрий, *Нарис історії Церкви в Україні*, Івано-Франківськ 1999, pp. 375–395.

[100] Ibidem, pp. 390–391; Богдан Боцюрків, *Українська греко-католицька церква й радянська держава (1939–1950)*, Lviv 2005, pp. 7–8; John-Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine: The Greek Catholic Church and the Ruthenian National Movement in Galicia, 1867–1900*, Montreal–Kingston 1999, pp. 57–60.

[101] For more on this issue, see *Добромильська реформа і відродження української Церкви*, ed. Олександра Левків, Lviv 2003; Петро Шкарб'юк, *Монаший чин отців василіян у національному житті України*, Lviv 2005.

[102] John-Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality…*, p. 161.

order to initiate a religious revival among the spiritually endangered Ruthenian peasantry."[103]

Pope Leo XIII entrusted the Polish Jesuits with carrying out the reform. The entire process of rebuilding the Basilian Order lasted from 1882 to 1904. One of the first candidates to enter the reformed novitiate was young Roman Sheptytsky. As a monk, he took the name Andrew. Soon after, he became one of the most prominent representatives of the "reformed" Basilian monks.

The UGCC's position in the Ukrainian social life in Galicia was questioned at that time by increasing wave of the anticlerical mood among the laic representatives of the Ukrainian elites.[104] This Church got at least partially its social leadership back under the metropolite Andrey Sheptytsky. He actively supported the Ukrainian strivings in political, economic and cultural spheres including the issue of the state-building in the Eastern Galicia at the end of the World War I.

During the interwar period the Ukrainian national life in Galicia was strongly influenced by the underground nationalist movement. Some part of the Greek-catholic clergy sympathized with the nationalists and supported their activity. One of the leaders of the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) Andriy Melnyk had very close relations with A. Sheptytsky.[105] After the former Eastern Galicia had been incorporated to the Soviet Union, the UGCC became one of the main obstacles to the process of sovietization. Therefore the Soviet authorities decided to smooth it out and they held a so called "council" in 1946. Its participants were strictly supervised by the NKVD. This gathering "decided" on liquidation of the UGCC and

---

[103]   Ibidem.

[104]   More on this issue see: Роман Лехнюк, *На порозі модерного світу: українські консервативні середовища в Галичині в першій чверті XX століття*, Lviv 2019, pp. 181–204.

[105]   Олександр Зайцев, Олег Беген, Василь Стефанів, *Націоналізм і релігія. Греко-Католицька Церква та український націоналістичний рух у Галичині (1920–1930-ті роки)*, Lviv 2011, pp. 240–2411; Ліліана Гентош, *Митрополит Шептицький...*, p. 205.

declared "reunion" with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC).[106] As a result the UGCC was formally eliminated. The Russian Orthodox Church not only discussed (as it finally seemed) the consequences of the events in 1596, but also "consumed" the ecclesial structure and infrastructure, which she herself after the period of Bolshevik repression would never be able to rebuild and would not be in a position to compete with. It was no accident that during the whole Soviet period the densest network of the ROC's parishes existed in the Lviv, Stanislaviv (Ivano-Frankivsk) and Ternopil oblasts, meaning in the former "uniates" areas.

In subsequent years, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and its consequences has become—especially from the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate, a constitutive element of an official Soviet order. However the UGCC survived in the underground. The "catacomb church" was supported by the UGCC structures on exile (in Western Europe, North and South America).[107] Finally, the UGCC was legalized in December 1989. This event not only called into question further activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in the territory of former Galicia. The catacomb Uniate Church became a symbol of a fight for freedom and was one of the few elements of Ukrainian identity which were not Sovietized.

Allegedly, "the voluntary return" of the Greek Catholic Church to the bosom of the Orthodox Church, which was to take place as a result of the so called "council" in Lviv 1946, was one of fundamental foundation myths which were to legitimate Soviet power in the territory of the former Galicia. Therefore, the permission to legalize the UGCC again called into question the legal validity of the communist party's monopoly not only in the ideological sphere, but also in the power structures and in the public space. When the era of the

---

[106] More on this issue: Богдан Боцюрків, *Українська греко-католицька церква…*, pp. 89–186; *Ліквідація УГКЦ (1939–1946). Документи радянських органів державної безпеки*, vol. 1–2, ed. Володимир Сергійчук, Kyiv 2006.

[107] Borys Gudziak, Switlana Hurkina, Oleh Turij, "Hierarchia i duchowieństwo ukraińskiego Kościoła greckokatolickiego w podziemiu," in: *Polska–Ukraina. 1000 lat sąsiedztwa*, vol. 4, ed. Stanisław Stępień, Przemyśl 1998, pp. 311–339.

Ukrainian independence had begun the UGCC was of few well institutionalized structures of the social life with non-Sovietized and non-Russified identity.

1.4. Why Sheptytsky?

The Sheptytsky case is interesting for at least three reasons. Firstly, it is a very good example for scrutinizing the topic of memory politics on different levels. The commemoration of Sheptytsky was launched by state institutions, as well as by non-governmental entities and individuals. Secondly, the legacy and biography of Sheptytsky very effectively generate all the main constraints affecting mnemonic strategies of different actors in the Ukrainian mnemonic field. Thirdly, the case of Sheptytsky's commemoration shows cultural memory's "capacity to reconstruct." The meaning of this reconstruction relies on adapting Sheptytsky's legacy to the needs of the process of nation-building in Ukraine and to the question "Who are we and what is our opposite?"

For example, on the one hand Sheptytsky condemned the political terror fomented by the Ukrainian nationalists and competed with them for "the souls" of Ukrainians. At the same time, he maintained close relations with the leaders of the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) who were receiving support from the UGCC in various ways. Sheptytsky maintained good and friendly relations with the Jewish community, especially in Lviv. However, when members of nationalist military groups had started or actively had joined the pogrom in Lviv, he officially supported the "renewal" of the Ukrainian state in July 1941 under the aegis of the OUN. On July 5th 1941 metropolitan Sheptytsky drew up an address "on the occasion of the liberation of Halychyna from Soviet occupation." At the end of this address he gave an order to pray for "good fortune for the victorious German army."[108] Afterwards he contributed to the action of saving

---

[108] "Послання митр. Андрея Шептицького до духовенства й вірних з приводу визволення Галичини з радянської окупації," in: *Митрополит Андрей Шептицький. Життя і Діяльність. Документи і Матеріали 1899–1944*, vol. 2, part 1, ed. Андрій Кравчук, Lviv 1998, p. 518.

Jews launched by several structures of the UGGC. As a result, the Yad Vashem Institute still has serious reservations about granting Sheptytsky the title "Righteous among the nations." At the same time, the International Catholic-Jewish Historical Commission concluded in 2000 that "no other high-ranking Catholic Churchman, to the best of our knowledge, provided such direct eye-witness testimony and expressed concern for Jews *qua* Jews (and as primary targets of German bestiality) in the same way."[109]

Sheptytsky was a representative of the aristocracy. The Sheptytskys descended from the Ruthenian gentry and the grandfather of Andrey Sheptytsky was likely baptized in the Eastern Rite as well.[110] However, when the future metropolitan was born, the world of the Galician nobility had already been entirely polonized. Thus, he was apparently completely strange for the Ukrainian people in Galicia at the time—from both the cultural and societal points of view. However, Sheptytsky became one of the most prominent leaders of the Ukrainian national life.

Sheptytsky was raised in an ultramontane spirit. Therefore, consolidating the ties between his religious community and the Catholic Church, and its center in the Vatican, was one of the most important points of his priestly agenda. On the other hand, he attempted to build relationships with representatives of the Ukrainian elite from Galicia who were members of the Orthodox Church. Sheptytsky aimed to strengthen and develop the Greek-Catholic Church, borrowing institutional patterns from the Western Christian tradition (e.g., making the Eastern Rite branches of the Latin monastic orders and promoting celibacy). At the same time, he attempted to eliminate the consequences of latinizing the Greek-Catholic tradition and he encouraged the clergy to return to the Eastern Christian sources. In other words, he coped with the conflict between fidelity to the Eastern Christian identity and participation in the community of the Catholic

---

[109] "The Vatican and the Holocaust: A Preliminary Report," https://www.jewish virtuallibrary.org/preliminary-report-on-the-vatican-during-the-holocaust-october-2000-2#24.

[110] Magdalena Nowak, *Dwa światy...*, p. 41.

Church dominated by the Western tradition.[111] Sheptytsky regarded communism as threat not only to his Church, but also to the existential basics of the Ukrainian nation and to the cultural foundations of the European model of social order. However, in 1944 he drew up words of thanks to Stalin for the Red Army unifying the Ukrainian lands and liberating them from the German invaders.[112] Potentially, Sheptytsky's legacy and related symbolic capital might be useful in "Europeization." It provides an opportunity to come to terms with various problematic issues from the past, one of which is the topic of the Holocaust in Ukraine.

---

[111]   Ibidem, pp. 164–182.

[112]   *Хресною дорогою: функціонування і спроби ліквідації Української Греко-Католицької Церкви в умовах СРСР у 1939–1941 та 1944–1946 роках. Збірник документів і матеріалів*, ed. M.I. Гайковський, Lviv 2006, pp. 99–101.