

**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA**

Dottorato di ricerca in

Scienze Umanistiche

Ciclo XXXIV

**The History and Policy of the
Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow
Patriarchate: The Case Of Ukraine (1989-2009).**

Candidato Marianna Napolitano

Relatore (Tutor): Prof. Stefano Calabrese

Eventuale Correlatore (Co-Tutor): Prof. Alberto Melloni

Coordinatore del Corso di Dottorato: Prof. Marina Bondi

Summary

This research aims to analyze the evolution of Church-State's relations in Post Soviet Russia, with particular reference to the field of the foreign policy. Its purpose is to investigate the impact of the arrival of Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, the present Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', at the Department for External Church Relations (DECR) of the Moscow Patriarchate, and to analyze if and how he contributed to strengthen this branch of the Moscow Patriarchate compared to the other Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)'s Departments. Indeed, it is based on the hypothesis that since Kirill's presidency, the DECR came back to efficiently administer not only the Church's international relations but its internal affairs as well: this research will grasp the process of the renovated symphonia after the Soviet Union imposed state atheism, it will study its features (in comparison to the Soviet period), and the terms of the correspondence between Church and State's foreign policy, in particular with regard to the role of the Church in maintaining the legitimacy of the post-soviet space through the use of a terminology that tacitly refers to the shadow of the Imperial/Soviet space. This demands a re-conceptualization of what is "external" for the Church, and what defines the new active public position promoted by Kirill and his party. The strong alliance of the Kremlin with the ROC will be addressed from the perspective of the pan-Slavic mission as a vehicle of influence of the Russian Federation in the former republics of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, Moldavia and Estonia, where the ROC is an active promoter of a moral, spiritual and ideological agenda that certain corresponds with the ideological foundation of the Russian Federation's identity as a conservative world power. These cases allow us to grasp the complementary interests between the ROC and the Kremlin that from the beginning of the 1990s have provided for a Church-State rapprochement based on the ROC's aim to gain the privileges it had enjoyed before the October Revolution, and on the Kremlin's desire to strengthen its mandate overwhelming the national and international legitimization crisis. It intends to investigate the reality of the balance in Church-State collaboration in post-soviet Russia, and - namely, how the construction of relations with the State, the restoration of Orthodoxy as dominant religion, the affirmation of a political, social and religious hierarchical model based on managed pluralism translated into international presence of the Church as soft power of the State, into the promotion of the image of Russia as world power and in the defence of Holy Rus'.

This work will examine in depth the case of Ukraine from the independence till 2009. Referring to Ukraine as case study will allow us to deal with the main aspects of Church-State collaboration, with the reality of inter-orthodox and orthodox-catholic relations, and with the ontological character of the fall of the Soviet Union. The study will be conducted through an analysis of relationship of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Ukrainian Churches, and of their implications in Russia's international relations, exploring the meaning of the Kievan tradition, the role of the Byzantine legacy and the issue of the participation of the Greek-Catholic Church in this tradition. It will deeply grasp the importance of the difference between the ecclesiastical and national fidelity and of the change of the power's conception imposed by the independence.

Sintesi

Questa ricerca si propone di analizzare l'evoluzione delle relazioni Chiesa-Stato nella Russia post-sovietica, con particolare riferimento alla politica estera. Il suo scopo è quello di indagare l'impatto dell'arrivo del Metropolita di Smolensk e Kaliningrad, Kirill, attuale Patriarca di Mosca e di tutta la Rus', al Dipartimento per le Relazioni Esterne del Patriarcato di Mosca (DECR), e di analizzare se e in che modo egli ha contribuito a rafforzare questo ramo del Patriarcato di Mosca rispetto alle altre istituzioni della Chiesa Ortodossa russa (ROC). Questa ricerca si basa infatti sull'ipotesi che con la presidenza di Kirill, il DECR sia tornato ad amministrare in modo efficiente non solo le relazioni esterne della Chiesa, ma anche i suoi affari interni: questa ricerca intende quindi analizzare la nuova symphonia Chiesa-Stato dopo il periodo di ateismo sovietico, essa intende studiare le sue caratteristiche (in confronto al periodo Sovietico), e i termini della corrispondenza tra la politica estera della Chiesa e quella dello Stato, in particolare per quanto riguarda il ruolo della Chiesa nel mantenere la legittimità dello spazio post-sovietico attraverso l'uso di una terminologia che si riferisce tacitamente all'ombra dello spazio imperiale/sovietico. Ciò richiede una ri-concettualizzazione di ciò che è "esterno" per la Chiesa, e di ciò che definisce il nuovo ruolo della ROC promosso da Kirill e dal suo partito. La forte alleanza del Cremlino con la ROC, sarà analizzata dalla prospettiva della missione pan-Slava come un veicolo di influenza della Federazione russa nelle repubbliche dell'ex Unione Sovietica, l'Ucraina, la Moldavia e l'Estonia, dove la ROC è un attivo promotore di una agenda morale, spirituale e ideologica che corrisponde all'ideologia che è alla base dell'identità della Federazione Russa come potenza mondiale conservatrice. Questi casi permetteranno di cogliere gli interessi complementari della nuova relazione instauratasi tra la ROC e il Cremlino dall'inizio degli anni '90 sulla base dell'obiettivo della ROC di riguadagnare il riconoscimento dei privilegi di cui aveva goduto prima della Rivoluzione d'Ottobre e il desiderio del Cremlino di rafforzare il suo mandato superando la crisi di legittimazione nazionale e internazionale che stava vivendo. Questo studio analizzerà le caratteristiche di questa nuova relazione Chiesa-Stato nella Russia post-sovietica e, in particolare, come la sua costruzione, la restaurazione dell'Ortodossia come religione dominante, l'affermazione di un modello politico, sociale e religioso gerarchico basato sul managed pluralism si traduca nella presenza internazionale della Chiesa come soft power di Stato, nella promozione dell'immagine della Russia come potenza mondiale e nella difesa della Holy Rus'.

Questo lavoro esaminerà in modo approfondito il caso dell'Ucraina dall'indipendenza fino al 2009. Il riferimento all'Ucraina come caso di studio ci permetterà di affrontare i principali aspetti della collaborazione Chiesa-Stato, la realtà dei rapporti inter-ortodossi e ortodossi-cattolici, e il carattere ontologico della caduta dell'Unione Sovietica. Lo studio sarà condotto attraverso un'analisi del rapporto della Chiesa Ortodossa Russa con le Chiese ucraine, e delle loro implicazioni nelle relazioni internazionali della Russia, esplorando il significato della tradizione di Kiev, il ruolo dell'eredità bizantina e la questione della partecipazione della Chiesa Greco-Cattolica in questa tradizione. Esso analizzerà l'importanza della differenza tra la fedeltà ecclesiastica e nazionale e del cambiamento della concezione del potere imposto dall'indipendenza.

Table of Contents

Abbreviations.....	6
Introduction.....	7
1. Russian Orthodoxy's changed trajectory in the Post-Soviet period.....	23
1.1 Review of the literature on Church-State Relations	23
1.2 The Soviet legacy in Russian Orthodox Church's External Relations. The Church under Communist Control before 1988-1991.....	43
1.3 The Post-Soviet revival, the evolution of Church-State Relations.....	62
1.3.1 Formation of a new, Post-Soviet model of church-state relations in comparative and theoretical perspective. The Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations (1997 law): comparative analysis with the 1990 law and the 1993 Constitution*.....	71
1.3.2 The Basis of the Social Concept – the model of relationships with the secular world.....	80
1.3.3 Basic Principles of Attitude to the Non-Orthodox: main principles of the relation of the ROC with <i>Inoslavie</i> . Foreign policy through inter-church relations and beyond.....	91
2. The Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (DECR) under Metropolitan of Smolenk and Kaliningrad Kirill	112
2.1 The main fields of the Church's "foreign policy", Its correspondence with the state's foreign policy	112
2.2 The idea of "Post-Soviet space" and the role of the Church in maintaining its legitimacy.....	158
2.2.1 The idea and discourse of "canonical territory".....	158
2.2.2 Estonia, Moldova, Ukraine.....	168
Case I. Estonia.....	169
Case II. Moldova.....	175
Case III, Ukraine.....	181
2.2.3 The World Russian People's Council.....	187
2.2.4 Russkiy Mir and the conception of Orthodoxy as soft power.....	195
3. Inter-Church relationship and its implications in Russia's international relations: Ukraine's independence and the origin of the crisis in faith.....	199
The Council of Kharkov.....	203
Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Russian Orthodox Church.....	210
Ecumenical Patriarchate.....	218
Unification.....	222
Ownership of church properties.....	231

Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) – Russian Orthodox Church.....	233
Persecutions of believers.....	238
Ecumenical Patriarchate.....	242
Historical memory, historical properties.....	249
Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church – Russian Orthodox Church.....	252
Unification.....	254
Ecumenical Patriarchate.....	258
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church – Russian Orthodox Church.....	261
Status of the UOC-MP in Western Ukraine, and the issue of proselytism.....	263
Visit of the Pope (23-27 June 2001).....	278
Properties and new buildings.....	281
The Role of the State(s).....	287
The presidency of Yushchenko.....	288
The presidency of Kuchma.....	296
Conclusions.....	304
Bibliography.....	318

Abbreviations

CDAGOU Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine

DECR Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate

GARF State Archive of the Russian Federation

MOFA Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ROC Russian Orthodox Church

CDAVOU Central State Archives Of Supreme Bodies Of Power And Government Of Ukraine

UOC - MP Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate

UAOC Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

UGCC Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

UOC – KP Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate

ZhMP Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate

Introduction

“I speak only of the brotherhood of man. I say that the heart of Russia, perhaps more than that of all other nations, is chiefly predestined for this universal, pan-human union”¹.

(F. Dostoevsky, *Pushkin Speech*, 1880).

On 19 August 2000, on the day of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the great consecration of the rebuilt Church of Christ the Saviour took place in Moscow. Emperor Alexander I had made the decision to build the first Cathedral to celebrate the victory in the Patriotic War of 1812, immediately after the war ended. The original project provided for the construction of a cathedral on Vorobëvy gory; however, it was only two decades later that a new project by Alexander Vitberg was developed according to the Russian–Byzantine style and approved in 1832 by Emperor Nicholas I. The construction was financed by the treasury, and further supplemented with donations from believers. Metropolitan Ioanniky (Rudnev) of Moscow and Kolomna, in the presence of Emperor Alexander III, consecrated the building on 26 May 1883. At that moment it was the tallest building in Moscow and the largest Cathedral in Russia (height 103.5 m, 10,000-person capacity). In the gallery that surrounded the building were placed 177 marble plaques with the names of officials who died in the war and in overseas campaign of 1797-1806, and 1813-1814.

On 17 August 1917 in the Church the work of the Local Council was carried out; this work restored the Patriarchate after a nearly two-hundred-year synodal period. On 5 November in the Cathedral the election of the new Patriarch of All Russia took place. The elected Patriarch was Metropolitan Tikhon (Belavin) of Moscow, who was later canonized in 1989. In 1922-1923, as result of the Bolsheviks rule, the Cathedral was seized by Renovationists and in 1931 it was closed. By order of Joseph Stalin on 5 December 1931 the Cathedral was demolished, and in its place were plans to build a Palace of Soviets, a huge building crowned with a sculpture of Lenin. However, the war prevented the implementation of the project, and in 1960 an outdoor swimming pool, which existed until 1994², appeared on the site of the Cathedral.

¹ «Я говорю лишь о братстве людей и о том, что ко всемирному, ко всечеловечески-братскому единению сердце русское, может быть, из всех народов наиболее предназначено», see: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова на X Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе [Speech of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the 10th World Russian People's Council]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04-04-2006, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30696/>, (last accessed October 2021).

² It seems that the water of the pool was not completely clean, and this recalled the legend of a nun who, opposing the construction of a temple on the site of the Alekseevsky Monastery, cursed the site of the construction and predicted that a huge muddy puddle would be located on the site of the temple. See: Храм Христа Спасителя [Cathedral of Christ the Savior], https://tonkosti.ru/%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC_%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%

In the days of the coup and the accompanying reorganization of Soviet Union, on February 1990, the Holy Synod blessed the idea of reconstructing the Cathedral, and appealed to the Russian government in order to obtain permission. The official who approved the idea was Aleksii Ridiger, metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, who would be elected Patriarch three months later, on 6-7 June of the same year: sooner after his enthronement ceremony, he announced that he wished to reconstruct the Cathedral. In his perspective, the Church had to align with the representation of military, and patriotism, indeed on 5 December 1990, on the original site of the Cathedral was installed a slab of granite on which was read: “this is the cornerstone of the Church of the Derzhavnaya [Sovereign] Icon of the Theotokos, which shall be the predecessor of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, that will be reconstructed on this spot”³. Soon after, Orthodox believers began to wear a special badge showing the outline of the Cathedral: this was a clear sign that plans of rebuilding it were already taking shape in the hearts of the believers. Aleksii pressed for rebuilding the Cathedral on its original site (by contrast the party intended to construct it on Poklonnaya Hill in order to link the Soviet triumph to victory in 1812), and quickly started to seek out allies. The first person on his list was the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin. Therefore, if on 21 August 1991, the President had publicly appealed to Aleksii for help, and he replied to this request with two public statements. This time the roles were reversed. On 16 July 1992 Yeltsin signed the decree *The Establishment of a Fund for the Reconstruction of Moscow*, and the plan for the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour topped the list of the buildings. Aleksii was able to make fundraising easier: he synchronized the project for the reconstruction with the celebrations for the 850th anniversary of the founding of Moscow that the mayor Yury Luzhkov was organizing. A number of new rich oligarchs and businessman, who wanted to be associated with the coming celebrations, contributed to the construction. On 7 January 1995, the day of Orthodox Christmas, Patriarch Aleksii blessed the cornerstone in the foundation of the Cathedral: the mayor of Moscow was the honoured guest. On 20 August 1995 he laid the first stone together with Victor Chernomyrdin, prime minister of Russia. On 7 January 1996, the mayor celebrated a service on the site, and unveiled the first two memorial plaques listing donors⁴. The last three bricks in the wall of the main entrance were laid by the Patriarch, by President Yeltsin and by the Mayor Luzhkov. This was the representation of the new assessment of power in the Modern Russia: a new trinity which blessed the main Cathedral of the Russian Federation. The Cathedral returned to dominate much of the downtown Moscow

BO_%D0%A1%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8F, (last accessed October 2021).

³ Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent. Faith and Power in New Russia*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008, p. 87.

⁴ В Храме Христа Спасителя В Этот Торжественный День Молились О Моряхах, Труд [In the Cathedral of Christ the Savior On this solemn Day we prayed for the Sailors, Труд], 22.08.2000; Храм Христа Спасителя [Cathedral of Christ the Savior], https://tonkosti.ru/%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC_%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0_%D0%A1%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8F, (last accessed October 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, *Кафедральный соборный Храм Христа Спасителя (Москва)* [Cathedral of Christ the Savior (Moscow)], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/232770.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

skyline: a central figure in the view from the Kremlin, its history was the symbol of de-secularization in Post-Soviet Russia.

Theoretical Background: Two historical traditions

On the subject of de-secularization, I follow the definitions provided by Vladislav Karpov, who made a distinction between de-secularization from above and a de-secularization from below⁵. He highlighted that the process ongoing in Russia was a clear reaction to the forced secularization under the communist regime. The resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church at least in part was prepared by the return to Orthodoxy of large numbers of the Soviet *intelligentsia*. Moreover, another crucial role was played by secular elites, governmental and political leaders who carried out the de-secularization of public institutions, as schools or armed forces. At the same time, this guided process had proliferated in the reaction of the belonging without believing: over 80% of Russians described themselves as Orthodox, but the percentage of church people, and of persons who combined consistent Orthodox belief and active church attendance was relatively small. Indeed, it favoured the spreading of vicarious religion⁶. From a civil perspective, this resurgence is understood as the establishment of a new relation with the State.

This thesis studies the ROC's activities in Post-Soviet Russia, and the relationship between Church and State's foreign policy. Indeed, it poses a connection among national and religious identity. The connection between national and religious identity is a key theoretical issue in this dissertation. As will emerge in particular in the first chapter of this study, the 1990s were characterized by a crisis of national identity: the Yeltsin administration advocated for the invention of a new idea for Russia, which included the introduction of Western values, and religious rebirth. Religion created some safety in the context of the growing confusion following the end of the Soviet Union. In fact religion

⁵ in Karpov's analysis, depending on the social actors involved in the de-secularization process, it can be seen as initiated and carried out from below and/or from above. When the actors and the activists involved are groups representing masses of believers or grassroots level movements, we talk of "de-secularization from below". When the activists and the actors include religious and secular leadership, we are dealing with "de-secularization from above". See: Karpov Vyacheslav, *Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework*, Journal of Church and State 52:2, 2010, pp. 232–270.

⁶ The concept was formulated by Grace Davie. By vicarious, Davie meant "the notion of religion performed by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number, who (implicitly at least) not only understand, but, quite clearly, approve of what the minority is doing". The idea of vicarious religion is based on two principles: 1) a minority of people are religious on behalf of a silent majority; 2) this majority appreciates the minority's efforts. It involves a "delegating" of the obligation to believe, to regularly perform religious rituals, and to lead the church lifestyle. See: Davie Grace, *Is Europe an Exceptional Case?*, The Hedgehog Review, 6, 2006, pp. 23-34 ; Wawrzonek Michael, Bekus Nelly, "Orthodox Christianity Vis-À-Vis Postcommunist Transformation: A Conceptual Framework" in *Orthodoxy Versus Post-Communism?: Belarus, Serbia, Ukraine and the Russkiy Mir*, ed. by Wawrzonek Michael, Bekus Nelly, Korzeniewska-Wiszniewska Mirella, New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016; Prutskova Elena, *Social vs. Individual Centrality of Religiosity: Research in Religious and Non-Religious Settings in Russia*, Religions 12:15, 2021, pp. 1-18.

created new “social networks”⁷, through “parishes, religious organizations and family ties”⁸. Moreover, returning to the public space, religion became a source of new ideas for a new public debate. Consequently, it also became a lever of mobilisation, and even a source of political legitimization. This is not to say that religion was the main inspiration of political movements, but rather the rhetoric of religion and the rhetoric surrounding the values of the Russian Orthodox Church in the history of the country played a unifying function, first on a national level, then on an ethnic/Slavic, transnational plane. Therefore it became an element of political consolidation.

Here a clarification is needed. The comparison with the construction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, as well as the use of the terms de-secularization and return, refer to the beginning of a new era for Russia and for the Russian Orthodox Church. The end of the atheistic regime, of believers’ persecutions, of requisition of Church buildings, allowed the Church to fulfill freely its role of religious institution. However, this does not mean that under the Soviet rule, the Church had completely disappeared from Russian society, erased by Bolshevik oppression. At the beginning of this study first I present the evolution of that “asymmetrical” collaboration⁹ with the State, which by navigating the field of international relations allowed to the Church to survive, and to become the author of a new diplomacy, commanding international respect for the Soviet Union during the years of the Cold War. The collaboration is often associated with a model that is usually defined as *symphonia*, a term that goes back to the Byzantine tradition and then resurfaces in the history of Russia. According to this model the emperor and the Patriarch were entrusted by God with certain functions, in fulfillment of which the two offices joined in perfect harmony. The power of the Patriarch was the reflection of God’s power over the world, and for this reason he was to be treated with divine honour. The emperor, for his part, was considered responsible for the fate of the Church on the earth, and as such its leader.

The sacred nature of the tsars’ power, and the invisible relation between the Church and the State, and between Russianness and Eastern Christianity, assumed a particular importance in Sergei Uvarov’s formula *Orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality* (Православие, самодержавие, национальность). Indeed, in the state of the Russian tsars, Orthodox religion fulfilled a role similar to the role Christianity fulfilled in the Byzantine Empire: it was a source of legitimacy for Russian absolutism. Notably, the term национальность (national’nost’) in Russian means both nationality and ethnicity, thus indicating a focus on Russia’s own historical path, and on the concept of ethnic nationalism. Indeed, this Official Nationality was an attempt to reject the Western discourse of the nation, and tie the nation to State, religion, and monarch.

The second important myth that should be considered referring to the Russian Orthodox Church is the messianism linked to the theory of Moscow as Third Rome. The idea that

⁷ Agadjanian Alexander, *Revising Pandora's Gifts: Religious and National Identity in the Post-Soviet Societal Fabric*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 53:3, 2001, pp. 474.

⁸ Ibid, pp. 476.

⁹ Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca: Chiesa Ortodossa e potere Sovietico 1917-1958* Torino: Einaudi, 2011, pp. 494

Moscow had a particular and unique religious and political mission as successor of Rome and Byzantium started to develop in the second half of the fifteenth century. The earliest formulation of this can be found in a letter written in 1511 by the monk Filofei (Philotheus), the starets (*starets*) of Eleazarov monastery in Pskov, and addressed to the Tsar Vasily III. This letter presented an image of the Russian State as the third and final Rome in the history of salvation, called to lead the universal Christian Empire. However the theory of Moscow as the Third Rome had been mainly interpreted as a reaction to the Ferrara-Florence Union, to the justification for the expansion of Muscovy as a strong centralized State, from the time when the Metropolitan moved there and tried to bring his jurisdiction on the Rus' into a single state. Translated into the geopolitical sphere, this eschatological concept meant according to Russia the ideal of realizing a universal Christian empire, expanding its influence for realizing the glory of God. People who lived this empire were the chosen people, designated for the salvation of the humanity. On the basis of this presumption, Russia was seen as the last bastion of Orthodox Christianity, which needed to be defended against negative external influences.

Model of Church-State relations

Susanna Mancini reflects upon the manifest evidence that the privatization of religion did not result in “any neat expulsion of religious influence on political thinking”¹⁰. On the contrary, it resulted in “secularization and universalization of religion, and thus in its penetration and amalgamation into liberal political theory”¹¹. This equation left room for the development of different models of managing the relationship between state and religion in Western society. France and United States are traditionally described as secular countries; the United Kingdom, Scandinavian countries and Greece all provide a pattern in which official religion coexists with institutionalized tolerance for minority religions. In Italy and Spain special privileges are conferred upon the majority Catholic Church within a framework that is largely secular. However, Mancini has pointed out that, irrespective of their internal differences, it is possible to classify Western models as referring to two fundamental principles: separation of church and state in the public sphere; and the protection of freedom of, and from religion in the private sphere. Additionally, while religiosity has progressively decreased in certain areas of the world, - not only in Western Europe, but also in China, Japan, Canada, and Oceania, - the rest of the globe has experienced an opposite trend. Examples can be considered the communal religious movements developed within Hindu and Buddhist cultures, the rise and spread of fundamentalists movements within Muslim, Jewish, Protestant Christian communities. This repoliticization of religion embraced the growing tide of religious nationalism, which consisted of the “fusion of religious and national identities and goals”¹², and development of religious populism, on the basis of which traditional religion represents a source of

¹⁰ Mancini Susanna, *Constitutions and Religions*, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2020, pp. 3.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, pp. 9.

legitimization of a “social order or a particular regime”¹³. Israel is an example of religious nationalistic state, in Turkey Erdogan launched a “neo-conservative Muslim political doctrine”¹⁴, Hungary is an example of religious nationalism which “applies both to the country and to the Europe as a political unit”¹⁵. In the United States, the Tea Party, an initially secular-right movement moved toward religious populism after the partnership with Evangelical fundamentalists. Cultural Christianity regained importance in Western countries as a reaction to Islamophobia. At the same time political belonging came to be re-qualified in terms of distinction between secular West, and Muslim otherness. An example is the France model of *laïcité*.

Stoeckl summed up these trends in three model of relationship between religious and political sphere: state church models, which in Europe are rooted in one of the three monoconfessional cultural areas: Lutheran North, Catholic South, Orthodox East. Madely¹⁶ pointed out that state church models across Europe share monopolistic regulation of religion by state and church authorities, a negative attitude toward other religions, cultural conservatism, Church initiatives to embrace worldly institutions and to guide them. Confessional differences entail that in the Orthodox East state churches have been always strictly intertwined with state and politics, while Protestant North Churches have been more willing to accept privatization of religion. In this model the Church is the privileged partner of the State and co-defines the constitutional principles of the State. In the cooperation model, the “State usually recognises more than one religion as cooperation partner”¹⁷. In this model usually one religion’s cooperation with the State also reflects the interests of other state-recognized religions. This is the case of Austria where the State cooperated regularly with selected religious bodies. In the last model, the disestablishment model, all religious groups are equal in their equidistance from the State: paradigmatic of this model is, according Stoeckl, the United States. The different Russian polities historically produced different models of Church-State relations: from a byzantine Church-State symphonia, through a relation which saw the Russian Orthodox Church as the national consciousness of the State in imperial Russia¹⁸, and a forced secularization in which the Church was an instrument of the Soviet power, up to a return of mutual support of Church and Kremlin despite the formal secular nature of the State declared in the Constitution.

I agree with Stoeckl who considered the relation with the State in Post-Soviet Russia as composed of features of the three models briefly presented above. This study will show that the ROC had been a privileged partner of the State in the revision process of the 1997 *Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations*. An example in which the religious actors were able to coordinate their efforts in order to obtain a desired result

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 10.

¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 11.

¹⁶ Madeley John, *A framework for the comparative analysis of church–state relations in Europe*, West European Politics 26: 1, 2003, pp. 23-50.

¹⁷ Stoeckl Kristina, “Three Models of Church-State Relations in Contemporary Russia” in *Constitutions and Religions*, ed. by Mancini Susanna, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2020, pp. 241.

¹⁸ See: Freeze Gregory, *Russian Orthodoxy and Politics in the Putin Era*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2017, pp. 1-17.

from the State is offered in the case of the Interreligious Council of Russia's opposition toward new religious movements, and anti-orthodox groups (second model). The third model finds an example in the *Bases Concept's* provision on civil disobedience. With regards to, external, i.e. international relations of the Church, the state-church model has manifested in the promotion of the Russkiy Mir and the relation with Ukraine: the ROC had been a privileged partner in the relation of the State with this country, and Putin often reminded the Orthodox roots of Ukraine as one of the main reasons which explained the importance of Russia-Ukraine relationships.

Proceeding from this theoretical background framing State-Church relations and the Church's foreign policy, this analysis examines these dynamics in the Russian Orthodox Church's external relations after the fall of the Soviet Union. The main focus of this dissertation is the ecclesial policy of the ROC in the inter-religious sphere, its involvement in Russian foreign policy, and its relationships with broader society in Russia.

Archbishop (and from February 1991, Metropolitan) Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, was elected chairman of the Department for External Church Relations on 14 November 1989; he was fully aware that at the beginning of the 90s the Department "needed an internal radical reform in order to be able to respond to the main tasks, set to the Church by the contemporary society"¹⁹. In an interview released in 1990, Archbishop Kirill defined the DECR as a unit called upon to maintain the connection with the Church "in the ecclesiological sense of the word"²⁰ with the outside world. He considered it inconsistent with the needs of the time to narrow the DECR's activities to the functions of "foreign departments"²¹, since, on the contrary, the emphasis should now be placed on the external activities of the Church within the country. In order to determine the principles which should inspire the Church's relations with the external world, according to Kirill it was important to proceed from the norms of Church Tradition (предание). In addition, the Department was felt to have an important responsibility in overcoming the ghetto mentality developed during the Soviet Union: in the new reality of the Russian Orthodox Church, the priests came face to face with a significant number of un-churched people, both inside the walls of their churches and outside them, thanks to the media.

Hypothesis and Purposes of the Research

The purpose of this study is to investigate Church's external relations in Post-Soviet Russia, and to analyze if and how Kirill contributed to strengthening this branch of the Moscow Patriarchate compared to the other Departments of the Russian Orthodox Church²². The Ukrainian issue will be examined in depth as case study. According to Irina

¹⁹ Mitropolit Ilarion (Alfeyev), *Пампуарх Купунн [Patriarkh Kirill]*, Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2019, pp. 98.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² This work does not share the thesis of Irina Papkova according to which Kirill "transformed this branch of the Moscow Patriarchate's administration into the most powerful of the ROC's department" and

Papkova, Metropolitan Kirill's leadership "transformed this branch of the Moscow Patriarchate's administration into the most powerful of the ROC's departments, which came in time to effectively administer not only the church's external relations but to control the course of its internal affairs to a significant degree"²³. This study challenges this idea. Its purposes are to show the importance of the Soviet heritage in terms of Church diplomacy, and that the new role of the Department can be grasped by re-conceptualizing what is *external* for the Church. External, in fact, is quite a fluid term, because, from the perspective of the Church, *external* means everything that is beyond the Church itself, and in this sense, the Russian state, the Russian society, all Russian secular institutions are *external* to the Church in the same way as the Vatican or any other foreign partner. Therefore, external does not necessarily mean foreign, and the Department is not to be equated to the foreign ministry of the Patriarchate. In addition, - in Post-Soviet Russia the Church no longer stands in an "asymmetrical"²⁴ cooperation with the State, but rather maintains a more balanced relation.

This leads to the hypothesis that the Department for External Church Relations in the Post-Soviet period maintained the role of main administrator of Church affairs, transforming the collaboration with the State from an "asymmetrical"²⁵ plane, into a stronger collaboration, in which the Church was not only the source of Russia State's soft power, but also an institution with its own agenda.

The strong alliance of the Kremlin with the ROC will be addressed from the perspective of the Church's pan-Slavic mission as a vehicle of influence of the Russian Federation in the former republics of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, Moldavia and Estonia, where the ROC is an active promoter of a moral, spiritual and ideological agenda that certainly corresponds with the ideological foundation of the Russian Federation's identity as a conservative world power. Another important example of independent state without problem so far is Belarus, viewed by the ROC as a loyal ally, and partner in realizing Orthodox unity and Slavic brotherhood²⁶. These cases will allow grasping the complementary interests between the ROC and the Kremlin that from the beginning of the 1990s have provided for a Church-State rapprochement based on the ROC's aim to gain the privileges it had

affirms that the importance of the role of the Department in Russian Orthodox Church's affairs emerged since the Soviet period.

Papkova Irina, *Russian Orthodox concordat? Church and state under Medvedev*, Nationalities Papers, 39:5, 2011, pp 672; Among others see: Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca*.; Vasil'eva Olga Jur'evna, *Русская Православная Церковь в политике Советского государства в 1943-1948 гг. [The Russian Orthodox Church in the Politics of the Soviet State in 1943-1948]*, Moscow: In-t ros. istorii RAN, 2001; Fletcher William, *Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy 1945-1970*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973; Fletcher William, *Religion and the Soviet State. A Dilemma of Power*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1970.

²³ Papkova, *Russian Orthodox concordat?*, pp. 671-672.

²⁴ Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca*, pp. 494.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ By decision of the sobor of the ROC an exarchate was created in the country; since its inception the head of this exarchate had been Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk. The significance of the exarchate grew after Lukashenko assumed power in 1994: his policy was perceived by the Russian Church as a guarantee for preserving its own canonical territory. An important moment in ROC-Belarus's authorities relations was the agreement signed in June 2003, a concordat regulating the status of the ROC and the level of cooperation with the Belarusian State.

enjoyed before the October Revolution, and on the Kremlin's desire to strengthen its mandate to overcome the national and international legitimization crisis. It intends to investigate the reality of the balance in Church-State collaboration in Post-Soviet Russia. Namely, how the construction of relations with the state, the restoration of Orthodoxy as dominant religion, the affirmation of a political, social and religious hierarchical model based on managed pluralism translated into the international presence of the Church as a soft power of the State, promoting the image of Russia as world power and defending the canonical territory and the Holy Rus. The concept of canonical territory, which approximately corresponds to the territories of the former Soviet Union, assumes here a particular significance. Not only because it refers to the territories on which the Church had traditionally exercised its influence, but also for the maintenance of the ROC's status as the church with the largest number of believers in the Universal Orthodox World, a status to which is linked the role of the ROC as civilizational centre of the Orthodox World. Within the canonical territory, the territories which constituted the historical Holy Rus, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus²⁷, assumed a special value and therefore constitute the core of the Slavic identity. Connected with Russian civilization is the concept of Russkiy Mir. Joined by common religion, culture, and language, Russkiy Mir is an instrument of cultural expansion. Russia's soft power depends strongly on its ability to maintain the Post-Soviet sphere, which is the result of the combination of canonical territory (or the near abroad)²⁸, and of those territories that house the Russian diaspora, as Russkiy Mir. The protection of the integrity of the canonical territory, the defence of the historical value of Holy Rus, the safeguarding of the Russian diaspora, and the promotion of the Russkiy Mir: these priorities define ROC's external policy in Post-Soviet period. In addition, I challenge Adriano Roccucci's idea according to which the Russian Orthodox Church is trying to rebuild the former Soviet empire²⁹: he talked of the connection between a sacred imperial space and the concept of canonical territory. What is true is that, the ROC is one of the institutions that keeps the imprinting, or a memory, of the Soviet empire³⁰, but I posit that ROC's external relations can be better understood by referring to a trans-national conception of the idea of canonical territory³¹. Therefore this study will grasp the process of the renewed *symphonia* after the Soviet Union's imposed state atheism, its features (in comparison to the Soviet period), and the terms of correspondence between Church and State's foreign policy, in particular with regard to

²⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, Митрополит Кирилл: «Торжества по случаю 1020-летия Киевской Руси явили торжество Православия» [Metropolitan Kirill: "Celebrations on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of Kievan Rus revealed the triumph of Orthodoxy"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443064.html>, (last accessed, October 2021).

²⁸ Cooley Alexander, *Whose Rules. Whose Sphere? Russian Governance and Influence in Post-Soviet States*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2017, pp. 1-11.

²⁹ I propose an alternative interpretation of this concept.

³⁰ For a reflection regarding political and social attitude toward the Soviet empire see: Mitrofanova, Anastasia, *The politicization of Russian Orthodoxy: Actors and Ideas*, Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2005; Mitrofanova Anastasia, *Политизация православного мира [Politization of the Orthodox World]*, Moscow: Nauka, 2004.

³¹ See Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy," in *Eastern Orthodoxy in a Global Age: Tradition Faces the Twenty-first Century*, ed. by Victor Roudometof, Alexander Agadjanian, Jerry Pankhurst Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2005, pp. 29-57.

the role of the Church in maintaining the legitimacy of the Post-Soviet space through the use of a terminology that tacitly refers to the shadow of the Imperial/Soviet space.

The special case that will be addressed in depth will be that of Ukraine and its ecclesiastic/religious development since independence in 1991 and up to 2009. Referring to Ukraine as case study will allow us to deal with the main aspects of Church-State collaboration, with the reality of inter-orthodox and orthodox-catholic relations, and with the problem identity in relation with the *Other* created by the fall of the Soviet Union. Investigating the problems of the understanding of the political and religious Other(s) created by national independence, this work aims to carry out an historical analysis in order to trace the roots of the religious schism resulting from the crisis of the Maidan Revolution of 2013-2014. The study will be conducted through an analysis of the relationship of the Moscow Patriarchate with the Ukrainian Churches³², and of their implications in Russia's international relations, exploring the meaning of the Kievan tradition, the role of the Byzantine legacy and the issue of the participation of the Greek-Catholic Church in this tradition. It stresses the importance of the difference between ecclesiastical and national identity and of the change of the power's conception imposed by the independence, and the role of the Churches in the peacemaking process: exploring how the policy of the ROC in the Post-Soviet period, going beyond the Church canons, is engaged with the realm of geopolitics, it will investigate the possibility of end the struggle for national-religious identity that has been affecting Ukraine, with a policy aimed exclusively at the unity and communion between the Churches.

Structure of the text

This study consists of three chapters, which address the issues considered from a political and church perspective. The two approaches are often combined in order to highlight the degree of the two institutions' collaboration in terms of ideology, and purposes. Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of the current scholarly opinions regarding the role of Russian Orthodox Church in Post Soviet Russia. In particular it is focused on the studies and research which treat Church-State relations, with the politicization of Orthodoxy, and with the use of religions by political parties. Then it analyzes directions and principles of Russian Orthodox Church's "religious diplomacy"³³ during the Soviet Union. In particular it considers how the role of the Church changed after Patriarch Sergius of Moscow's declaration of loyalty to the USSR, with the meeting of Stalin with three archbishops held in 1943, and then with chairmanship of Nikodim at the DECR. The second part of the chapter explores the Post-Soviet revival of the Russian Orthodox Church, the establishment of a new relationship with the State, and the work of the Department considering its *external* activities on the level of what was external to the Church inside Russian Federation: the evolution of the law on religious freedom approved

³² I refer to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic Church.

³³ According the definition provided by Alicja Curanovic. See: Curanovic Alicja, *The Religious Factor in Russian Foreign Policy*, New York: Routledge, 2012.

in 1990, up to its version of 1997, its contradictions with principles established in the Constitution, the reasons why it creates a hierarchy of religions, by legalizing a system of managed pluralism which accords a special status to Orthodoxy. Moreover it explains why the law contradicts the principle of neutrality of the State stated in the Constitution, and further posits a question regarding the definition of secular, secularization, de-secularization when applied in the Russian context. How does this legislation impact interfaith relations in Russia? Why did it intend to limit missionary activities and proselytism?

The model of relationship with the secular world is formalized in the *Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* approved in 2000. The relevance of the *Concept* lies in particular in the chapters dedicated to relations with the State, and with the Nation, in the meaning of the concept of patriotism provided by the document, and in what had been considered to a large extent a manifesto of independence with regard to relation with the State: the possibility of civil disobedience. Is it a merely theoretical concept? What are the limits of the separation of the Church from policy? The last sub-section is focused on the analysis of the *Basic Principles of Attitude to non-Orthodox* which regulate relations of the ROC with non Orthodox Churches. In particular, it analyses relations with the Protestant Church, with the Roman Catholic Church, with the Russian Orthodox Church abroad, and discusses the main obstacles to an active collaboration with them: proselytism, respect of the canonical territory, and the acceptance of more secularized practices which do not respect Church traditions. Chapter 2 analyses the ROC's foreign relations since the arrival of Archbishop Kirill at the DECR. The focus of what is *external* here changes: it deals with the relations established with what is external to the borders of the Russian Federation, but is considered part of the Russian Orthodox Church because it falls under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, thus linked to Russia as part of its diaspora, or as canonical territory. The chapter explores how the foreign policy of the ROC evolved after the fall of the Soviet Union, and how the new principles that inspired it fit with the principles which inspired the policy of the Kremlin. Emphasis is placed on the conservative turn of Vladimir Putin, on his purpose to end Russia's dependence on external powers. Proceeding from this policy based on the defence of national interests, the chapter then explores the features of the new conception of space and territory shared both by the Church and by the State, the idea of rebuilding the Soviet empire, and the reference to Orthodoxy as tool for expanding Russia's cultural and political influence. The term Russian World (Russky Mir) epitomizes the intersection of interests of the Russian State and of the Russian Orthodox Church, indeed it is a spiritual concept which unites people who share the same Slavic-Russian identity even if they do not live inside the borders of Russian Federation. The idea was taken into consideration already within the Yeltsin administration, which was searching for a national idea in the mid-90s: it was conceived as a way to consolidate the nation and make it an influential political force on the international stage. Exploring the meaning of Slavic identity, and of the historical, traditional, and cultural heritage of the Rus', the chapter lays out the reasons why Estonia, Moldavia, and Ukraine represents the core of this discourse, and are pillars of the new conception of Post-Soviet space. Chapter 3 examines the Ukrainian case, the relations of the Moscow Patriarchate with

Ukrainian Churches (Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate, Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church). The reconstruction of these bilateral relations, also takes into consideration the internal relations between the four Ukrainian Churches, with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, with the Ukrainian State and with the Russian State. After the fall of the Soviet Union, and the recognition of national independence, a series of intertwined events took place in Ukraine. The results of these events were the struggle for autocephaly, or the idea that being an independent state should mean having an independent church, and the end of subjection to Moscow perceived as unfair. These claims raised the reactions of the Moscow Patriarchate determined to defend its tie with Ukraine and with Kiev considered the *mother of all the Russian cities*, the *cradle of the Orthodox civilization*, of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to whom the so called schismatic churches, appealed for the healing of the schism in the name of its being the Mother Church of the modern Orthodox Churches. The State considered its duty to actively participate in processes that determined the identity of the country, and its relations with the Orthodox World, thus confirming again a conception of secularity which does not conceive of the Church as an institution completely distinct from the State, but rather approximates the Russian conception of symphonia. Is it conceivable to think of an ecclesiastical identity as different from the national one? To whom belongs the Baptism of Rus' tradition, and the legacy of the "Russian" people of Holy Prince Vladimir?

Methodology and sources

This study is conducted on two levels of analysis: inter-church relations and Church-State relations. For a number of reasons I have limited my research to the period between 1989 and 2009. The choice of analysing the two decades of Kirill's chairmanship of the Department, thus focusing on the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in external relations, was made in order to focus on the Russian Orthodox Church's self-projection in the world after the end of Communism, analysing how its activities and priorities changed, and the impact of those believers not disrupted by Communist rule. At the beginning of 2009, Russia had a new Patriarch (Kirill) and a new President (already by mid 2008). Few months had passed since the celebration of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus in Kiev, where Patriarch Aleksii returned to Ukraine after the visit in 1990 together with Metropolitan Kirill. During the celebration of the anniversary of the Baptism, Aleksii conducted a joint liturgy with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. All this makes 2008/2009 a certain milestone that I chose for this research. As pointed out above this research will analyse the ideology and principles which inspired foreign activities of the Russian Orthodox Church by examining the Ukrainian case in depth. As pointed out above this research will analyse the ideology and principles which inspired foreign activities of the Russian Orthodox Church by examining the Ukrainian case in depth. The choice to focus on the Ukrainian issue is due to the relevance of the factors presented above, but also to two other reasons. The first factor lies in the attempt to reach the roots of the religious crisis that erupted after the Maidan protests in 2014, and culminated with the

decision of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to break full communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate on 15 October 2018, presenting the events from the Moscow perspective. This should allow a better understanding of the development of relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and with the Russian State also in a more recent period than the one considered in these pages. Indeed, the analysis is conducted mostly from the Russian perspective, it reports mostly the Russian point of view and the Russian narrative of events.

The second reason for the choice of analysing Ukraine as case-study of this research, besides scientific relevance, follows from methodological reasons. Still today it is not possible to have access to the documents of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate. At the beginning of this research, an official letter with the request of consulting these documents in order to conduct a scientific work was sent through mail to the offices of the Department. The response clarified that access to the documents is denied to scholars. Moreover, during a research trip in Ukraine in 2020, I explored the possibility to have access to the Church documents of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate, and of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. In these cases, the requests were not addressed through official letters, but the denial was received by Patriarch Filaret during our meeting at his residency on 28 February 2020 (I met the Patriarch together with Sergei Chapnin), and by Mykolay Danylevych (deputy chair of the external church relations department in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church), during the meeting held on 3 March 2020 in his office at the Kiev Pechersk Lavra. The research in the archive was limited to the documents of the State Archive of the Russian Federation (hence after GARF), to the documents of the personal archive of Metropolitan Alexander Drabinko (today former Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate), Secretary of Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan), and of the Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine (CDAGOU) until 1991, and in part of the Central State Archives of the Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (CDAVOU). In the case of the Garf, the documents that proved most useful were those related to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, and those related to the Soviet Union. The research in the archives in Ukraine was devoted in particular to the fund 1 opis 32 of the CDAGOU and to the funds 4648 and 5233 of CDAVOU. In both cases, the material that proved most useful for this study has been that on the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and its relations with Moscow in the period before the fall of the Soviet Union (1988-1990). In the case of CDAVOU, since it is a state fund, the focus of the material collected is on church-state relations, and in fact the most useful documents have been those of fund 4648, concerning the requests for registration of Greek Catholic Churches. The most useful documents related to the exarchate and the anathematization of Philarete, were found instead in the scanned documents in the office of Metropolitan Drabinko, who, after our meeting for the interview, told me that there were some documents that in his opinion could be useful to my study. This means that these documents were not selected as a result of an archival search. References of archival documents are indicated by writing: title, number of the *fond* (фонд), *opis* (опис) number, *delo* (дело) number. If these references are not indicated, it means that they were absent.

The research conducted in the archives of Ukraine was certainly easier from the point of view of access to physical documents and the possibility to reproduce them. It was more complicated because of the lack of an electronic catalog that would allow the research to be carried out in advance and not necessarily in the archives. In the case of the Garf, the problem was exactly the reverse: the research phase was simplified by the possibility of using an electronic catalog, but it is made more complex by the length of the procedures to gain access to the physical documents and the possibility of reproducing them with photos or scans. The difficulties in finding my way in the mare magnum of documents in the archives in the Ukraine were greatly reduced thanks to the help of Professor Simona Merlo, whom I thank, and who, even before my departure, showed me which collections to focus on. It must be said that the same people in charge of the archival collections further suggested a list of collections that might be useful for my work. The research in Ukraine was carried out in the period during which the alarm related to the Covid 19 pandemic was in its initial phase, therefore the problems related to the closure of archives were felt only in the last days of my stay (beginning of March 2020). By contrast, in Moscow, the planned research work was not completed.

Since this study aims to analyze the external relations of the Russian Orthodox Church, and in particular its relationship with the Ukrainian Churches, the analysis of speeches, publications and reports of events published on the website of the Department of External Church Relations (mospat.ru), on the website of the Moscow Patriarchate (patriarch.ru) and in the "Official Bulletin of the Department" (Информационный Бюллетень Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата), published from 1965 to 2009, have been key references.

The limited possibilities of access to the sources did not allow me to write a systematic history of the Department; choosing to focus on a case study seemed to be a way to conduct a wider research not limited to what "offered" by Moscow, but which considered also sources "offered" from the other subject of the analysis in terms of interviews, archives, and journals.

The most reliable and complete source was certainly the latter, first of all because many speeches or reports of events were reported in complete form and not summarized as in the case of the versions (sometimes) available on the website, and then because, the "Bulletin" remains, along with the "Journal of the Patriarchate", the only non-secondary source that provides for reconstruction of the activities of the Department for that period. The journal "Church and Time" (Церковь и Время) has a different approach and it is important to know the views of the Russian Church and the Department on certain issues and events, but it did not provide the chronological developments of a given event or issue. As far as the websites are concerned, the problems are twofold: the limited chronological range - on the Moscow Patriarchate's site it is possible to conduct research starting from 2004, on the DECR's new site, in the archives section, the time range which can be selected is from 1997 to 2016. Selecting the archive section of the old site of the Department, old.mosp.ru, one is redirected to the archive of the new site, referred to above. On the other hand, by typing the request old.mosp.ru/archive into the google search function, one is directed to another archive, organized by years, whose

publications sometimes coincide, and sometimes in a more synthetic form, with those of the "Bulletin". A problem common to all sites is that it is not possible to find the basic documents in, especially in the analysis of the case of Ukraine, the "Bulletin" and the websites mentioned were insufficient to carry out a complete analysis. The preliminary analysis that was carried out on the reports published by the journals "Irenikon" and "Istina", and the research on databases, in particular Integrum, in fact allowed me to reconstruct a more complex temporal plot connecting the events narrated in the issues of the "Bulletin" with events within the Ukrainian context of which there was no trace in the "Bulletin", sometimes also when they involved the UOC-MP. Regarding the secondary literature, I will discuss it at the beginning of the first chapter.

In order to conduct this research, I conducted qualitative interviews. When selecting people to meet for interview, I used the snowball method. I started from a list of names I filled thanks to the help of Sergei Chapnin, Simona Merlo, Thomas Bremer, Tetiana Kalenychenko, Alexander Agadjanian. Then, I asked these people to recommend someone else I could consult. I concentrated on religious hierarchy in Ukraine, while it was not possible to do other already planned interviews in Moscow because of the Covid19 pandemic. All my interviews were done face to face, in Russian and in a semi-structured format. Since I started the interviews in Ukraine, I took care to speak to representatives of the UOC-KP, the UOC-MP, and of the new established autocephalous Church. I did not meet with members of the autocephalous Church which existed till 2018. Moreover I met with a representative of the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine. When speaking to them, I aimed to capture their orientation and values towards the relation of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Kremlin, its involvement in the Ukrainian religious crisis, their position on the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and their ideas on which had been the main steps in the relations of Churches in Ukraine both among them and with Moscow.

Other important sources had been, under consultation of Alicja Curanovic and Anastasia Mitrofanova, Integrum and Eastview databases, which through a query language provide access to a large digital archive of the most influential sources of information of Russia, Ukraine and other Post-Soviet States .

Regarding terminology, the biggest issue regards the Russian Orthodox Church to which I often refer using the acronym ROC, according to accepted usage. With the use of this term, I refer to the Russian Orthodox Church which recognises the Moscow Patriarchate as spiritual head. While, with the use of the term Moscow Patriarchate I refer to the administrative structures of the ROC as departments, or synod in charge of bureaucratic functions. I use Moscow Patriarchate and Russian Orthodox Church as interchangeable concepts, however they both refer to the formal Church. The same I can say with regard to the use of the terms Vatican, and Roman Catholic Church.

Regarding the acronym DECR with reference to the Department for External Church Relations, again following the common usage I did not add the extension of the *Moscow Patriarchate* and sometime I refer to it only with the term *Department*.

Most of the translations from Russian in this work are from my own, sometimes in notes I provide the original text. It was a choice not always adopted, but only pursued when I considered that statements contained in a document, or a declaration, held a particular significance and the original text might help to better understand its relevance.

Regarding transliteration, I used that adopted by the Library Congress, deviating from this when an alternate popular usage is widespread enough (i.e Yeltsin instead of El'tsin, or symphonia, instead of symphoniia). For reasons of simplicity and coherence, the names of Ukrainian cities, regions, politicians, church hierarchs are stated in their Russian version throughout these pages. This choice is not intended to express a pro-Russian bent.

Acknowledgements

Finally, I want here to thank my supervisors Professor Stefano Calabrese, and Professor Alberto Melloni, for all their suggestions, insights and advices. Many thanks go to Taraneh Wilkinson whose support has been invaluable in the phase of linguistic revision. I thank the library staff of the Andreyevsky Monastery for their kindness, and Professors Marcello Garzaniti, and Adriano Roccucci, for their help in this study. I express my sincere gratitude to Professor Alexander Agadjanian for his or their valuable guidance throughout this research, and wise counsel. I thank Professor Marina Bondi and all the staff of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia who provided me with the scientific tools that I needed to choose the right direction and successfully complete my dissertation.

Thank you.

1.

Russian Orthodoxy's changed trajectory in the Post-Soviet period

1.1 Review of the literature on Church-State relations.

<<Abandoned the social ghetto and once again becoming a powerful spiritual, constructive and unifying force in society, Russian Orthodoxy takes back in the life of the people the place that in the course of a millennium of Homeland history belonged to it by right. Orthodoxy was a determining force in the Constitution of state ordinances, in the formation of national culture and the spiritual character of the people. And we are pleased to note that the Russian Orthodox Church even today is an important component of contemporary state construction³⁴>>.

From 1988 Russian Orthodoxy witnessed a deep process of reorganization in its structures, leaders, relations with the State and the civil society. After the failure of Communist Soviet ideals, the State was committed to the important duty of reconstructing a national identity and doing this it turned its gaze to the past³⁵. The idea of Russia as an Orthodox nation has a long history that, as highlighted by Alexander Agadjanian³⁶, ties in with both official definitions and popular perceptions, and is the core of geopolitical discourses aimed to delimit the idea of Russia and of the meaning of Russianness. The Church reintroduced in the life of the country the Slavic, Russian values, defending them in the *near abroad*, home to millions of Russians and Russophones, and put under its wing Orthodox residents of other countries, all considered children of the Holy Rus³⁷, whose origin trace in prince Vladimir baptism in 988. This self-perception of being a big imperial community went hand in hand with the ambition of being a guide for the other Orthodox nations, bypassing with the force of numbers, the weight of the canonical law that declared the Patriarch of Constantinople *primus inter pares*.

It is from 1989 that this research moves towards the analysis of the changes and issues that distinguished the Russian Orthodox Church's path in post-communist reality. The formation of identities remains central: that of the State devoted in rebuilding its historical and geo-political role on the external stage, that of the Russian Orthodox

³⁴ Morozzo della Rocca Roberto, "Nazione e religione in Europa orientale prima e dopo il 1989" edited by Roccucci Adriano, *Chiese e culture nell'Est Europeo. Prospettive di dialogo*, Milano: Paoline, 2007 pp. 37. My translation.

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 33-38.

³⁶ Agadjanian Alexander, "Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia", in *Religious Diversity in the Russian Federation*, ed. by Koenig Matthias, International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), 2:2, 2000, pp. 97-124.

³⁷ Sviataia Rus '. the term was used from the time of Prince Kurbskii to the present. It conflates two groups of notions: russkii (accent on the ethnic component) and rossiiskii (accent on the civic component); Rus ' (medieval Russia) and Rossiia (modern Russia). See: Suslov Mikhail, "*Holy Rus*": *The Geopolitical Imagination in the Contemporary Russian Orthodox Church*, Russian Politics and Law, 52:3, 2014, pp. 67-86.

Church devoted to regain the freedom of proclaiming their faith and to attend places of worship without the danger of punishment and claim, and the thorny interrelation between being a Russian citizen and being an actively practicing Orthodox. In this situation Russian Orthodoxy appears as a particular asset, very important in the processes of legitimization, self imagination and forming of identity both inside and outside the country³⁸.

“Religious identities will remain strong because they are the basis of the national ones. It will not be possible to disregard them as long as Russian means Orthodox, Polish means Catholic, Serb means Orthodox, Croat means Catholic, Bosnian means Muslim and so on. Then, it should be important, while attending the aim of living together, not of fading them but seeking mutual acceptance”³⁹.

As one looks at the history of Russian culture, one can not ignore impact of Eastern Christendom. Orthodox Christianity created the first distinctively Russian culture, providing a “sense of unity, for its scattered people, higher purpose for its princes, and inspiration for its creative artists”⁴⁰, providing the basic forms of artistic expressions and a framework of belief for modern Russia. Besides, the Russian Orthodox Church has always considered itself guarantor and architect of Russian people. Moreover, the Orthodox Church played an essential role in the centralization of the state through the creation of a parallel structure that fulfilled functions that was not strictly religious as the establishment of schools and center of arts, and the development of written language. It was the connection point between the Rus’ and Constantinople, and also fulfilled political functions acting as mediators in the disputes between the prince and the vassals or between particular claiming to the throne. These circumstances contributed in strengthening the privileges of the clergy and the position of Church as institution. Andranik Migranjan and Aleksander Cipko, at the time of the debate on the approval of the 1997 federal law on freedom of conscience and religious organizations, published an article designed to the defence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the strengthening of national identity of Russian Federation: “For millions of Russians, actually for the large part of the inhabitants of the Russian Federation, only through the initiation into the traditional religious cult of the ancestors is an initiation into Russianness possible in the current situation. Today the restoration, albeit partial, of the former influence of the Orthodox Church on the way of life offers a possibility for the formation of a new Russian national self-consciousness, the revival of Russian identity”⁴¹. They considered Orthodoxy as the “core of Russian culture, of Russian State and of Russian self-awareness”, as testified by the choice of political power to call to the Church in order to find the support

³⁸ Curanovic, *The Religious Factor*.

³⁹ Morozzo Della Rocca, *Nazione e religione in Europa orientale prima e dopo il 1989*, pp. 30

⁴⁰ Billington James, *Ikona i topór. Historia kultury rosyjskiej*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2008, pp. 69.

⁴¹ Roccucci Adriano, “La chiesa Ortodossa Russa nel XX secolo” in *L’Ortodossia nella nuove Europa. Dinamiche storiche e prospettive* edited by Pacini Andrea, Torino: Edizioni della Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2003, pp. 256. My translation.

lost after the crush of other ideologies⁴².

The meaning, peculiarities and balance of Church relation with the Russian State are currently strongly debated. There are several ways of approaching the indisputable restoring of Church-State collaboration. Take, for instance, a seminar held on October 2014 at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, on the topic "The State and the Church: Is Symphony between Them Possible Today?"⁴³.

According to the Byzantine tradition, Church-State relations may be understood on the basis of the symphony between the two powers. As John Meyendorff states: "The great dream of Byzantine civilisation was a universal Christian society, administered by the emperor and spiritually guided by the Church"⁴⁴. According to this vision, the empire was the reflection of Christ's kingdom and was considered the kingdom which would last forever, without any competitor on earth to its political and religious domination. Both the church and the state are called to collaborate in achieving the sublime destiny of people under their jurisdiction, without any conflict between the means employed by the Church or the State to reach it. On the basis of this principle, *symphonia* promotes equality and an intimate relationship between these two institutions, however with different priorities and methods of operating consistently with their purposes. According to Orthodoxy, the emperor, considered the thirteenth apostle or equal with the apostles (*isapostolos*) who fought for the 'right' faith, had a special place in the spiritual and material world as the chosen leader, "similar to God, who is over all, for he does not have anyone higher than himself anywhere on earth"⁴⁵. The concept of *symphonia* acquired a stronger dimension during the reign of the emperor Justinian, who set out some aspects of the relationship between church and empire in the systematization of the civil law. In the 529 *Edict to the People of Constantinople Concerning the Faith*, he stated:

"We believe that the first and greatest blessing for all mankind is the confession of the Christian faith, true and beyond reproach, to the end that it may be universally established and that all the most holy priests of the whole globe may be joined together in unity and with one voice may confess and preach the Orthodox Christian faith, and that every plea devised by heretics may be rendered null and void"⁴⁶.

Furthermore, according to the *Justinian's Sixth Novel*, the classical text which indicates the boundaries of the priesthood and imperial offices, both spiritual power of the Church (*sacerdotium*) and secular power (*imperium*) are two blessings offered by the same God's

⁴² Ibid, pp. 256.

⁴³ The conclusion of the seminar was that some patterns of symphony from the Byzantine or medieval Russian past are possible even today when "the state does not interfere in the management of the Church, and the Church does not try to impose something unusual on the state", and "mutual respect for competencies". See: Фома, *Государство и Церковь: возможна ли сегодня их симфония?* [*The State and the Church: is their symphony possible today?*], foma.ru, 2014, <https://foma.ru/gosudarstvo-i-tserkov-vozmozhna-li-segodnya-ih-simfoniya.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁴⁴ Meyendorff John, *Byzantine theology: Historical trends and doctrinal themes*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1974, pp. 283.

⁴⁵ Pelikan Jaroslav, *The Christian tradition: A history of the development of doctrine. The spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*. Chicago, IL/London: University of Chicago Press, 1974, pp. 168.

⁴⁶ Ure Percy, *Justinian and his age*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979, pp. 122.

will. They are complementing each other in the single diarchy, meant for mutual accordance (*symphony*):

"...There are two major gifts which God has given unto men of His supernal clemency, the priesthood and the imperial authority – hierosyne and basileia; sacerdotium and imperium. Of these, the former is concerned with things divine; the latter presides over the human affairs and takes care of them. Proceeding from the same source, both adorns human life. Nothing is of greater concern for the emperors as the dignity of the priesthood, so that priests may in their turn pray to God for them"⁴⁷.

Justinian's model was further developed in the ninth century in a document titled *Epanagoge*, that most probably was written by Patriarch Photius. According to this document, "the temporal power and the priesthood relate to each other as body and soul; they are necessary for state order just as body and soul are necessary in a living man. It is in their linkage and harmony that the well-being of a state lies"⁴⁸. Although it was not officially adopted by the State, it was widely circulated in Orthodox territories and influenced the further legislation outside Byzantium.

Adriano Roccucci⁴⁹ considers crucial the understanding of the issue of the empire and of its heritage in present Russia in order to grasp Russian geopolitical reality. Through the analysis of historical and sociological studies, Roccucci showed that the Russian nation is the nation of the empire by its very nature and with a huge geographical extension, and this should allow a comprehension of the nation as a supranational structure⁵⁰. It is this supranational conception of the state, of space, of its multiethnicity and of its role in the world that, together with the religious factor, have had a central role in defining the character of Russia. Konstantin Zazulin, a prominent politician and nationalist expert, writes:

"Православный мир не выживет без сильной России, а Россия не сможет вернуть себе статус самостоятельной мировой силы, не возглавив православный мир, не решив опереться на свою главную и единственную силу - Православие. Эти аксиомы должны быть усвоены и политической элитой России. Православный мир - не только церковный, культурный, но и политический проект.... Именно Русская Православная

⁴⁷ Vassiliadis Panos, "Orthodox Christianity". In *God's rule: The politics of world religions* edited by Neusner Jacob, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003, pp. 99.

⁴⁸ Leustean Lucian N., *Orthodoxy and political myths in Balkan national identities*, National identities, 10: 4, 2008, pp. 424.

⁴⁹ Roccucci Adriano, "Impero e ortodossia nel mondo russo" in *Chiese e culture dell'est europeo*, ed. Roccucci Adriano, Milano: Paoline, 2007, pp. 397-419.

⁵⁰ The expression supranational structure refers to the Russian expression *sverkhidea*, that indicates an idea, an ideology, to integrate a multinational, multi-confessional society. According to the philosopher Ivan Solonevich: "Однако, в отличие от национальных государств остального мира, русская национальная идея всегда перерастала племенные рамки и становилась сверхнациональной идеей, как русская государственность всегда была сверхнациональной государственностью, — однако при том условии, что именно русская идея государственности, нации и культуры являлась, является и сейчас определяющей идеей всего национального государственного строительства России". "However, in contrast to nation-States of the rest of the world, the Russian national idea always outgrew the tribal framework and became the supranational idea, like the Russian state has always been a supranational state, but, on the condition that the Russian idea of statehood, nation and culture was, and is still now the defining idea of all the national and political construction of Russia". My translation. See: Solonevich Ivan, *Народная Монархия [People's Monarchy]*, Moscow: Feniks, 1991, pp. 27.

Церковь - не Содружество же независимых государств - все еще объединяет и скрепляет это пространство. Тот факт, что с распадом Советского Союза не распалась Русская Православная Церковь, сегодня возбуждает не только сторонников, но и противников этого единства..⁵¹.

Indeed the Russian Church is well aware of its role in the Post-Soviet space, its revival, that as said above, is taking concomitantly with and against the background of searching a new national idea for the regime in power, marked a process of de-secularization understood as the return of religion into the public sphere and the assertion of its political and identitarian claims⁵², peculiarities that represents the distinctiveness of the situation in Russia compared to other scenarios, primarily the West. As Vyacheslav Karpov explained in his paper "Desecularization: a conceptual framework"⁵³ "the ongoing religious resurgence in Russia is a clear-cut case of de-secularization precisely because it has developed as a reaction to forced secularization under communism"⁵⁴. This resurgence should be considered from the perspective of its "societal impact"⁵⁵ instead of its "nature and social origins"⁵⁶ as in Peter Berger's thesis, thus linking the outcomes of Russia's religious resurgence to its prevailing pattern that Karpov called de-secularization "from above"⁵⁷.

A review of literature

Literature on Russian Orthodox Church and political space is representative of several approaches; proceeding from the above framework, we will gather them in three broad perspectives: the first group includes studies on the Church from the perspective of conservative ideology and state-led nationalism, the second is more focused on foreign

⁵¹ "The Orthodox world will not survive without a strong Russia, and Russia will not be able to regain the status of an independent world power without leading the Orthodox world, without deciding to rely on its main and only power - Orthodoxy. These axioms should be assimilated by the political elite of Russia as well. The Orthodox world is not only a church, cultural, but also a political project.... It is the Russian Orthodox Church - not the Commonwealth of Independent States - that still unites and consolidates this space. The fact that the Russian Orthodox Church did not disintegrate with the collapse of the Soviet Union today arouses not only supporters, but also opponents of this unity... ". My translation. Zatulin Konstantin, *"Москва - Третий Рим" - не только метафора, но историческое задание для России* ["Moscow Third Rome" is not only a metaphor, but a historical task for Russia], Russkaya narodnaya liniya, 2004, https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2004/02/12/moskva_-_tretij_rim_-_ne_tol_ko_metafora_no_istoricheskoe_zadanie_dlya_rossii/, (last accessed October 2021).

⁵² Codevilla Giovanni, Graciotti Sante, *Chiesa e impero in Russia: dalla Rus' di Kiev alla Federazione Russa*, Milano: Jaca Book, 2011; Rousselet Kathly, "La Chiesa ortodossa russa nello spazio sovietico post-sovietico dagli anni sessanta ai giorni nostri" in *Crisi e rinnovamento dal 1958 ai giorni nostri* ed. by Aubert Roger, Mayeur Jean Marie, italian edition by Riccardi Andrea, Roma: Borla, Città Nuova, 2012; Agadjanian Alexander, *Turn of faith. Search for meaning. Orthodox Christianity and Post Soviet space*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014; Kazmina Olga, "The Russian Orthodox Church in a new Situation in Russia", in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of identity and otherness. Values, Self-Reflection, Dialogue*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 219-231; Codevilla Giovanni, Caprio Stefano, *Storia della Russia e dei paesi limitrofi. Chiesa e impero. Vol. 4: La nuova Russia (1990-2015)*, Milano: Jaca Book, 2016.

⁵³ Karpov Vyacheslav, *Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework*. pp. 232-270.

⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 236.

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 238,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Karpov Vyacheslav, *Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework*.

activities of the Church, the last one explores its social role and influence on the attitudes of citizens towards religion.

In *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics*, Irina Papkova⁵⁸ explores precisely “what is the real place of Orthodox Church in Russia’s federal politics, posing the problem of the implications of this evolution for Russia’s “future political trajectory”⁵⁹, of Russian Orthodoxy’s political position, and of the extent to which these political preferences has been transformed into political outcomes meant as the “concrete policy outcomes”⁶⁰ on federal level since the fall of the Soviet Union. Indeed the book approaches the Russian Orthodox Church as a political actor during the time frame 1995-2008, years of the simultaneous change in both political and ecclesiastical leadership. According to Papkova, by the middle of 1990s it became possible to chart out three different Orthodox factions, two of which overlapped in significant areas but still distinctive in their political views and in their impact on the Church. The identified factions are: the traditionalist group, which is in favour of a political ideology of Orthodox statism, fundamentalist, clearly xenophobic and nationalist in its orientations; and the liberal one, markedly pro-Western and supportive of liberal ideology. The analysis reveals that the formal assumptions about the political ideology of the Russian Orthodox Church do not fit the evidence. Actually the ideology of the Moscow Patriarchate is neither inherently antidemocratic nor illiberal. The examples explored by Papkova - the debate on the 1997 law on freedom of conscience, the Church-state interplay on education, the campaign against electronic identification and the case of the Общественный Комитет за нравственное возрождение Отечества (Social Committee for the Moral Renaissance of the Fatherland) - clearly show that, since 1991, the Moscow Patriarchate claimed for itself the most important voice of Russian society based on the perception that the Church can be viewed as representing the Russian people in its entirety.

Nevertheless, not only is it not possible to treat the ROC wholesale as a unitary actor, the position of the Church in this system should be considered very fragile. The frequent joint appearances of politicians and high-ranking clergy, the remarkable visibility of the ROC in the secular media, the generally benevolent attitudes toward the Church in the army and the Patriarch’s role in the presidential inauguration ceremonies since the Putin’s first term, are all false evidence, in face of the reality that the “existing legislation would easily allow a future, unfriendly government to suppress the ROC as an institution, for example, by simply accusing its leadership of religious intolerance and fomenting interreligious hatred”⁶¹. Indeed in terms of church building and political outcomes on the federal level – with the exception of the 1997 law - the Church has been singularly unsuccessful.

⁵⁸ Papkova Irina, *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics*, Washington, New York: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Oxford University Press, 2011.

⁵⁹ Ibid. pp. 4.

⁶⁰ Papkova explains that the expression refers to the Church being able to gain by “successfully lobbying the state through legislative and executive channels”. The church’s ability to inform state ideology, ROC’s influences on voters and in regimes and political parties attitude toward Orthodoxy, and the Church’s ability to mobilize parishioners to vote on issues in a way that this favourable to the position of its interests.

⁶¹ Ibid. pp. 189.

Moreover, according to Papkova, Church's influence on political orientation, limited in his extent, to the clergy and a small portion of active laity⁶².

Further interrelations between Orthodox Christianity and politics with regard to Russian Federation can be found in the work of Anastasia Mitrofanova, *The Politicization of Orthodoxy*⁶³, that provides a seminal research on political Orthodoxy in all their diversity, "from fundamentalism to religion-impacted versions of communism"⁶⁴. The expression politicization of Orthodoxy dates back to Eric Voegelin's book *Die politischen Religionen* (1938)⁶⁵, where the author defines political religions, the totalitarian ideologies such as Communism, Fascism and National Socialism. In Voegelin's definition, deification is a simply metaphor, and political religions are religions only in a figurative sense. Mitrofanova's usage of the term understands political religion as "worldview which claims to be the absolute truth and which is not compatible with existing religious traditions"⁶⁶. It closely resembles with which Juan Linz⁶⁷ defines as theocracy stressing that "politics are used for religious purposes and not vice versa"⁶⁸.

With regard to Russian Orthodox world and Orthodox civilization, "political Orthodoxy"⁶⁹ embraces five variants: political fundamentalism, contemporary Pan Slavism, Neo-Eurasianism, Orthodox communism and nationalism. All of them descend from political ideologies such as Pan Slavism and Eurasianism. According to Mitrofanova, contemporary political Orthodoxy in Russia includes two competing trends: on the one hand, the political Orthodox community becomes in many respects a closed political subculture; on the other hand, we see attempts by Orthodox religiopolitical movements to break the limits of their subculture and to impose their ideologies on the rest of society. Only the fundamentalist-nationalist segment of political orthodoxy seems to have become politically successful: indeed they managed to attract highly motivated people capable of direct political action, gradually building their social influence (they are in charge of all charity and catechization programs related to the Russian Orthodox Church, of various organizations of military patriotic activities for children and youth).

Along with fundamentalists, nationalists have managed to build relatively wide networks, particularly in small cities. Like fundamentalists, they also recruit young people through various militarized sport clubs, military sport camps and so forth, combining "fighting, shooting and survival with indoctrination (studying of Slavic philosophy and customs)"⁷⁰. Although the topic has yet to be considered as the subject of through critical analysis,

⁶² In my opinion this can be considered an example of what Zoe Knox called informal influence of the Church on civil society and political arenas. See: Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church. Religion in Russia after communism*, London and New York: Routledge Cuzon, Taylor&Francis Group, 2005.

⁶³ Mitrofanova, *The politicization of Russian Orthodoxy*.

⁶⁴ Ibid. pp. 13.

⁶⁵ Voegelin Eric, Opitz PeterJ., *Die politischen Religionen*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1993.

⁶⁶ Mitrofanova, *The politicization of Russian Orthodoxy* pp.21.

⁶⁷ Linz Juan, "Der religiöse Gebrauch der Politik und/oder der politische Gebrauch der Religion: Ersatzideologie gegen Ersatzreligion" in *"Totalitarismus" und "Politische Religionen": Konzepte des Diktaturvergleichs*, ed. by Hans Maier, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1996, pp.130.

⁶⁸ Ibid, pp.138.

⁶⁹ Ibid, pp. 37.

⁷⁰ Mitrofanova, *The politicization of Russian Orthodoxy* pp. 198.

Mitrofanova showed that within the “last ten years”⁷¹ (1995-2005) political Orthodoxy, namely fundamentalists and nationalists, have been able to influence several moderate political organizations and to infiltrate them thus contributing to the Orthodoxization of the political discourses. Indeed, if interviews conducted by Papkova showed that the Patriarchate has a limited influence on the political attitudes of Russian population, patriotism continues to be an important marker indicating the adherence to political Orthodoxy. This kind of approach is what Papkova termed *pravoslavnaia derzhavnost*, a strong Russia based on the renewal of Orthodox values in the society. “In this conception, the government must be Orthodox, not in any theocratic, formalistic sense but above all imbued with Orthodox spirituality and mentality. Not surprisingly for Russian tradition, *pravoslavnaia derzhavnost*’ centres on the concept of symphonia, which may be described as a model of governance in which the Church and state are engaged in an active partnership aimed at achieving the best possible material and spiritual conditions for human development. In today’s Russia, the focus of Orthodox thinkers on *pravoslavnaia derzhavnost*’ can be understood as an effort to restore symphonia as a central element of Russian social and political life after the devastations wrought by centuries of rule that was secular at best and militantly atheistic at its worst”⁷².

Mobilized by this rhetoric, the Church participates actively in patriotic activities; it is highly visible “in the patriotic education programmes organized by the state”⁷³, and in the representation of Russia as a “country in combat”, where Orthodoxy is at the heart of patriotism and the Church is raised to the role of “guardians of traditional values”⁷⁴. The *Базисные ценности — основа общенациональной идентичности* (The *Basic Values: the Fundaments of National Unity*), issued by the World Russian People’s Council on May 26, 2011, and prepared by the Synodal Department for Church-Society Cooperation, provided a series of 17 values⁷⁵. The document clearly shows that from the perspective of the ruling elites, Russia should commit itself to the defence of “Homeland, Family and God” in this exact order. From the perspective of the Kremlin, religion is important simply as “integrative element of tradition and as source of moral norms”⁷⁶. This Church in the service of the fatherland not necessarily questions the status quo, although often it is

⁷¹ Ibid. pp. 204.

⁷² Papkova Irina “The Freezing of Historical Memory? The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church and the Council of 1917”, in *Religion, Morality and Community in Post-Soviet Societies* ed. by Steinberg Mark D., Waneer Catherine, Bloomington & Indianapolis: IN, Indiana University Press, 2008, pp. 55-84.

⁷³ Rousselet Kathy, *The Church in the Service of the Fatherland*, Europe. Asia Studies, 67:1, 2015, pp.

51.

⁷⁴ Curanovic Alicja, *The guardians of traditional values. Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church in the quest for status*, Transatlantic Academy, 1, 2014-15, pp. 1-22.

⁷⁵ Values the document provides are: faith; justice (meaning “the rightful place of a nation in the international community”, i.e. status); peace; freedom (limited by moral obligations); unity (of different ethnic groups, social classes, political groups); morality; dignity; honesty; patriotism (defined as love for homeland, nation, culture, respect for history; readiness for self-sacrifice); solidarity; mercy; family; culture and national tradition (characterized as respect for one’s own culture and the tradition of others); prosperity (material and spiritual); diligence; self-limitation (resignation from consumption); and devotion (to the homeland and nation). Curanovic Alicja, *The guardians of traditional values*, pp. 9.

⁷⁶ Ibid, pp. 9-10.

very critical towards Russian economic and political situation after all, the marriage between Orthodox religion and patriotism has been one of the main features of Post-Soviet Russia.

The revival of the fatherlands passes also through the moral reconsideration of Bolshevik policy and of the martyrs of Soviet Union, generally depicted as national heroes and viewed by the Church as moral models and canonized saints. A clear example is the case of the imperial family. Soon after his election as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (June 6-7, 1990), Aleksii Ridiger announced his wish to reconstruct the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, symbol of "Russians' willingness to die for their country"⁷⁷, illustration of continuity in Church-State relations from the Imperial to the Post-Soviet area, thus demonstrating in this campaign all his diplomatic and organizational skills in gaining state approval. The Patriarch supported the idea of reconstructing the Cathedral to favour the establishment of the Church as a permanent force in the society, linked with military and patriotic feelings. Indeed, forging a good relation with military and rehabilitating the Church from the Soviet past has been the two priorities of Aleksii's patriarchate. The Garrards identify in Patriarch Aleksii, who guided and shaped the resurgence of Russian Orthodoxy, the person who cemented the Post-Soviet relationship between Church and State. The experience in the KGB (from Russian Комитет государственной безопасности, Committee for State Security) of the new Patriarch contribute to smooth his relation with President Putin, and to fight for the return of Church real estate, art, relics, buildings from the Church. This forged a relationship in which the Church is not subjecting itself to state control, and in succeeding his plan of doing the church a "partner with the state but (that) stay within the spiritual sphere not becoming a department of the State"⁷⁸.

Knox and Mitrofanova⁷⁹ in part disagree with this assumption, and underline the importance of taking a closer look at the influence of "different factions within the Church and the concessions to those promoting a more exclusive understanding of Orthodox tradition"⁸⁰. This complex and evolving political environment, was largely inspired and legitimized by the Orthodox tradition. It follows that the major challenge for the Church was to preserve this unity of purpose from the attempts to "coopt Russia's religious tradition"⁸¹. Although the Church in the period following the collapse of communism was able to translate its place in the public sphere into concrete policy initiatives and since 2000 it started advancing into the educational system and the Army, spheres previously reserved most notable to the State. Knox and Mitrofanova believe to minimize the importance of the Church's increased independence as a political, cultural and social actor since the collapse of communism. Authors put the attention not only on the occasion of alliance among the two institutions, such as in the cases of Aleksii's

⁷⁷ Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*, pp. 87.

⁷⁸ Ibid, pp. 243.

⁷⁹ Knox Zoe, Mitrofanova Anastasia, "The Russian Orthodox Church" in *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the twenty-first century*, ed. by Leustean Lucian N., London and New York: Routledge, Taylor&Francis Group, 2014, pp. 38-66.

⁸⁰ Ibid, pp. 43.

⁸¹ Ibid, pp. 44.

condemnation of the coup against Gorbachev in 1991, of the Patriarchate's support to President Eltsin in 1996 and of the process that led to the 1997 law on religion. They look also at the instances where this alliance has been broken, such as in the matter of Orthodox education, developed in a discourse of unconditional loyalty and adherence to a particular historical model. In the new millennium, the position of the Russian Orthodox Church can be defined neither as the "handmaiden of the state"⁸² nor as "junior partner in Church-State affairs"⁸³. It is rather, an independent institution that, despite tensions between social activism and outreach and those between dependence and authority, that have the potential to bring serious and long standing changes to church politics and structures, is carving out its social, political and cultural role. This independence is certainly "more vociferously than at any time in Russia's modern history"⁸⁴ and might be regarded as both sources of stability and change. Indeed, although the Russian Orthodox Church will continue to be a key component defining Russian identity, there will be an increased confidence in the Church's dealings with the Russian state and in its interactions with Russian politics⁸⁵.

The *Основы социальной концепции Русской Православной Церкви - 2000* (*Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church - 2000*) sent a clear signal that the Moscow Patriarchate considers itself free from the "fetters" of the Orthodox tradition as well as from its subordination to the state. As Katja Richters illustrated in her book,⁸⁶ the Moscow Patriarchate's ambitious role of revolutionising its relations with the outside would pose a further discrepancy between theory and practice, both with society and with the state. The choice to not expose the document to public scrutiny before publication, suggested that the Russian Orthodox Church would assert its independence from secular authorities and would refuse to submit to state pressure. Richter put attention on the complexity of the relation: indeed after its publication, the aim was not realized in practice and, although Metropolitan Kirill, chairman of Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, which had an important role in the preparation of the document, did not directly contradict its official position on the monarchy and civil disobedience, he did announced that these two points did not have any practical meaning, by adjusting in part its theory to suit the state's wishes. This may be considered as the sign that during Putin's first presidential term, secular rulers occupied a more prominent role in ROC's political agenda⁸⁷, than what would have happened after, when the Patriarchate indicated its fundamental objections to

⁸² Ibid, pp. 58.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church. Politics, Culture and Greater Russia*, London and New York: Routledge and Taylor and Francis Group, 2013.

⁸⁷ Rickters' study selects six cases that deal with different aspects of the Moscow Patriarchate's interaction with the state and society with the aim of offering a varies and different picture of Church's political culture intended as perceptions of history and politics not only as subjective but as something shared by the majority of a given group.

Medvedev's proposed modernization⁸⁸ when he referred to the *Bases of the Social Concept*. Furthermore, the Church did not share Russia's position on modernization plan also with regard to relations with West, whereas the reducing of anti-western elements in Medvedev rhetoric showed his detachment from the political culture promoted by the ROC. The analysis suggests that the ROC's political culture⁸⁹ shares more features with the first presidency of Vladimir Putin than with Medvedev's Kremlin, as happened with regard to the understanding of the Soviet Union and Russia's place in the world. Moreover, Richters' study of how the ROC approaches the tradition and non-Orthodox religious organizations, showed that the Moscow Patriarchate and the Kremlin take a different approach to the wealth, and to poverty reducing measures. In addition to this, the case had an important influence on the provisions stipulated by the *1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience*, and on religious education in Russia's public school until 2009, when has been launched the *Основы религиозных культур и светской этики* (*Foundations of religious cultures and secular ethics*) project.

Richters identifies another element of difference in the Russian Orthodox Church foreign relations with Estonia, Ukraine and Belarus. This cases have largely showed that, with regard to these countries, the Moscow Patriarchate, due to its institutional interests, needs to operate in a different political culture to that of the Kremlin, and to differentiate between religious norms and secular legislation if it wants to defend its institutional interests and remain attractive to Orthodox believers and clerics. Conversely, Richters subdivided similarities into three areas in which Orthodox and secular authorities share a common political culture: a) how the Russian state is run, b) its interaction with other states c) interpretations of history. They concerns mostly the vision of "Russia's rightful place in the world"⁹⁰, and the idea of "Greater Russia"⁹¹, the management of pluralism and the memory of the URSS as a "flawless state"⁹², and the respect of the pre-Soviet past as one in which Russia achieved important military success and pursued adequate cultural policies. Another important point is the relation with the West, portrayed as "Russia's other"⁹³. The issue concerns the wider debate on modernity and traditional values, and the role of Russia on international stage, as far as its voice in international and European organizations. Indeed the *Social Concept* on the one hand shows the intention to become a more modern and relevant country and to cut off the cultural isolation of the Russian Orthodox Church, a kind of Eastern Orthodox version of "aggiornamento"⁹⁴. On the other hand, with a closer approach to the text, one would find an opposite

⁸⁸ The programme was launched since 2009, and was aimed at modernizing Russia's economy and society. Its main purpose was decreasing the dependence of the country on oil and gas revenues, and created a diversified economy, based on innovation and high technology.

⁸⁹ The term refers to thoughts, and mental attitude, terms of political knowledge and loyalty which are the product of the specific experience of a groups, of a nation. See: Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 3.

⁹⁰ Ibid, pp. 152.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ In the context of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) the term was used to describe the process of change the Church had to undertake in order to adapt itself to the challenges of a new historical era.

perspective.

Kristina Stoeckl⁹⁵ has highlighted that in the Orthodox context the term “modernism” continues to qualify different things at once: Western liberalism, individualism and capitalism, a modern Russian society and a “westernized” Orthodox theology. Apart from the *Social Concept*, she considers *The Russian Orthodox Church’s Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights* (henceforth: *Human Rights Doctrine*), the other main document of 2008 in which lay out the Russian Orthodox Church’s position on a variety of socio-cultural phenomenon connected with modernity, encompassing a whole range of issues from human-rights, to bioethics, to Church-State relation and secularism. The work of Kristina Stoeckl demonstrated that in order to understand the Russian Orthodox Church’s position on modernity is important proceed from the theory of multiple modernities, in the formulation conducted by Shmuel Eisenstaedt, who argued that the Western trajectory of modernization must not be considered as the only pathway to modernity, instead, in the world we found a multiplicity of continually evolving modernities, each of which realizes a particular institutional and ideological interpretation of a cultural programme that responds to specific cultural prerequisites. Since Eisenstaedt sees the multiple modernities rooted in the earlier Axial Age civilization, he doesn’t consider religion as the main factor of their emergence. The Orthodox criticism against human rights can indeed be interpreted as a form of resistance to a deeper cultural and political integration between Western Europe and Orthodox East. Looking more precisely to the current debates on religious-secular and the Russian Orthodox Church, Stoeckl showed that religious/secular conflict oscillate between civilizational borders and ideological secularist-religious fault lines. This double confrontation allows Stoeckl to interpret the documents from a comparative-civilization angle and from a post-secular multiple modernities perspectives. This means that, both documents *construct* modernity rather than actually *document* it: they should be read as a support of the viewpoint that the Orthodox Christianity “does indeed spell out a specific kind of modernity”⁹⁶. What comes to the fore is the political nature of both this documents, that depict the multiple modernities theory and the idea that confrontation between the two context leads to a re-definition of Western modernity: this evidence shifts the paradigm of comparative civilizational understanding of multiple modernities into a post-secular approach. Following this interpretation, Stoeckl concludes that from a comparative-civilizational perspective, the Russian Orthodox Church is other from the West, but from a post-secular perspective we can affirm that Orthodox is undergoing a process of modernization that implies “both a redefinition of its place inside the societies where it is traditionally represented, as well as of its position in the larger European religious pluralist landscape, European integration”⁹⁷. Indeed, the inadequacy of the Western human rights discourse

⁹⁵ Stoeckl Kristina, *Modernity and its critique in 20th century. Russian Orthodox thought*, Stud East Eur Thought 58, 2006, pp. 243-269; Stoeckl Kristina, *European integration and Russian Orthodoxy: Two multiple modernities perspectives*, European Journal of Social Theory, 14: 2, 2011, pp. 217-233; Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church and human rights*, London and New York: Routledge and Taylor Francis group, 2014; Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur*, Religion, State&Society, 44:2, 2016, pp. 132-152.

⁹⁶ Stoeckl, *The Russian Orthodox Church and human rights*, pp. 223.

⁹⁷ Ibid, pp. 230.

outside the Western world has been well grasped by Stoeckl's theory of the Russian Orthodox Church as a "moral norm entrepreneur"⁹⁸. Her main point here is that in the period 2000-2008 the discourse of the Moscow Patriarchate with regard to human rights changed, evolving from an outright rejection of human rights as a western invention, to endorsing the human rights as a concept, utilizing it in a way that is opposed to the liberal and egalitarian idea of human rights dominant in international system. This change was the result of the traditionalist camp's defeat inside the ROC on purpose of the fundamentalist who rejected any engagement with this topic. The opposition of this kind of rights' diffusion occurred on the basis of Article 29 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which allow the Church to position itself as "the vanguard of a more original understanding of human rights...an understanding which emphasizes the importance of morality, duties and community"⁹⁹. Follows that the ROC acts as moral conservative norm promoter at the international level, through creating "traditional values" in response to the liberal and egalitarian evolution of the international human rights system¹⁰⁰.

Tradition has been the central concept of the entire textual corpus produced from 2000 to 2015. In a narrow and ecclesiastical canonical discourse, tradition means *predanie* (in Greek *paradosis*), the term signifies "the inherited sum of texts, ideas, norms and customs"¹⁰¹. In a broader and secular discourse, it is associated with morality, and it comes to indicate the presence of the Church in the public debate. The Post-Soviet period has been a "cacophony" of moral argumentation and questioning, and religion has become one of the central social areas in which this debate has taken place. In this sense contemporary Russia can be considered a place of *multiple moralities* where various sacred, moral, ethical and secular discourse have become central issues. The critical response to discourses that in late-Brezhnev years showed a constant concern for the immorality of Soviet youth and of the negative effects of Western materialism that publicly expressed sexuality was considered to be only a return to traditional Russian and Soviet family values. The same is for the *Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*, conceived as a response to the breakdown of morality in the early 1960s¹⁰². It is unquestionable that religion is a major factor in the definition of the popular ethos, not only for those who regularly practice and observe religion, but also for a significant part of the non-religious population. In Russia there is a pro-Orthodox consensus based on the assumption that Russian Orthodoxy is a major part of national identity and cultural idiom. In this sense, Russian Orthodoxy is a "vicarious religious" which serves as a reference for

⁹⁸ Norm entrepreneurship is a term used in international relations to describe the "normative agency of actors in transnational regimes". Norm entrepreneurship creates norms by calling attention to issues that have not been interpreted yet, Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur*.

⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 136.

¹⁰⁰ Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church and human rights*.

¹⁰¹ Agadjanian Alexander, *Tradition, morality and community: elaborating Orthodox identity in Putin's Russia*, Religion, State & Society, 45:1, 2017, pp. 41.

¹⁰² Zigon Jarrett, *Multiple moralities and religions in post-Soviet Russia*, New York-Oxford: Berghhn, 2011.

all¹⁰³. According to Agadjanian, the late Soviet ethos, which Russian Orthodoxy tries to coopt in terms of continuity was largely conservative in its spirit and is in line with which Anatoly Vishnevsky called the “conservative modernization”¹⁰⁴ of the Soviet Union. Making a tentative list of norms which constituted this moral programme, Agadjanian includes: the rhetoric of the “solid Soviet family”¹⁰⁵ as the basis of a stable society, in spite of, and in contradiction with, the high rates of divorce and abortion; a tacit inequality of gender roles, in spite of official propaganda to the contrary; an emphasis on responsibilities rather than rights; an emphasis on intra-collective social control and solidarity (both as a mechanism of power and an accepted ideal); an emphasis on the priority of the ‘spiritual’ over the ‘material’; sexual (self)restraint; homophobia; and the subjugation of individual interests and expressions to the collective good. The Russian Orthodox Church has given to all these elements a “Christian sacred canopy”¹⁰⁶ under the name of “traditional values” but with a new interpretations and emphasis. Therefore, the Soviet moral legacy has been “selectively sacralised”¹⁰⁷ and subsumed into a longer continuity of Russian history, which has been anachronistically associated with both the “pre-Revolutionary imagined Gemeinschaft”¹⁰⁸ and the “Soviet collectivistic conservatism”¹⁰⁹. One of the main “missions” the Russian Orthodox Church conducted on the International stage has been the fight for protecting tradition. *The Russian Orthodox Church and Human Rights* perfectly grasped the ROC’s activism in putting into practice the main concepts of its spiritual/moral/ideological agenda into domestic and international sphere. The topic of international relation and foreign policy of ROC has been largely explored not only in relation with promotion of its own agenda in international organization but also with regard to coordination to state foreign policy. Alicia Curanovic has widely analyzed the “religious factor” in Russia’s foreign policy. In her book, she investigates the concept of religious diplomacy described as “state activity consisting of the use of the religious factor in foreign policy, that is, the whole set of mechanisms of the state’s cooperation with religious associations in the pragmatically defined national interest, use of the international activity of religious institutions, ideas and religious symbols (appropriately interpreted for realization of current political aims) and so on”¹¹⁰. This mechanism is strongly pragmatic, this means that the use of a religious factor does not necessarily imply that the actor implementing it, personally profess any belief. The process does not imply a sentimental relationship to the given belief, but can be used in foreign policy “regardless of the decision-makers’ attitude to

¹⁰³ Agadjanian Alexander, “Exploring Russian Religiosity as a source of morality today” in *Multiple Moralities and Religions in Post-Soviet Russia*, edited by Zigon Jarrett, New York-Oxford: Berghhn, 2011, pp. 16-26; Sulsov Mikhail, *Digital Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet World: The Russian Orthodox Church and Web 2.0*, Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Vishnevsky Anatoly, *Modernization and Counter-Modernization in Russia, Russia in Global Affairs*, 2, 2006, pp. 8-23.

¹⁰⁵ Agadjanian Alexander, *Tradition, morality and community*, pp. 43.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, pp. 44.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*, pp. 141.

transcendence¹¹¹". Therefore the religious factor's role in foreign policy is situated between "response for action" and "assets" which can be instrumentalized for specific purpose¹¹². In this asset, an important aspect to be kept in mind is that the state has a dominant position and in case of divergence is the religious institution which adapts to the Kremlin and not vice versa. In this case, the Russian Orthodox Church is viewed as an important element in the (re)construction of Russian identity and of the key elements of Russia's mission. The relationship between the two institutions is of mutual influence and co-dependency.

Although the use of religious factor in foreign policy has a long history in Russia, its contemporary is motivated by the necessity of ensuring "spiritual security". The *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation (2000)* stated: "Ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation also includes protection of the cultural, spiritual and moral legacy, historical traditions and the norms of social life, the preservation of the cultural wealth of all the peoples of Russia, the formation of government policy in the field of the spiritual and moral education of the population, and the imposition of a ban on use of air time in electronic mass media for distribution of programs propagandizing violence and exploiting low instincts, along with counteraction against the negative influence of foreign religious organizations and missionaries"¹¹³. Among the priorities of the Moscow Patriarchate there are the integration of the Russian diaspora and the strengthening of Russian influence in the "near abroad"¹¹⁴, in particular in Belarus and Ukraine, considered central in maintaining the Russian cultural space in Eurasia. This cooperation moreover is important for the opportunity of providing the requisition of Russian properties lost during Communist period, and for allowing the two institutions to expand their influence throughout the world¹¹⁵. An important part of Russian religious organizations' foreign policy is dedicated to the peace building process and international initiatives that proclaim "dialogue of civilizations", motivated by the idea of "Orthodox civilization", in defence of which both the Russian State and the Church have interest in cooperating beyond their borders. Church-State interplay in international activity had a part in forming the new image of Orthodox civilization, through the construction of the concept of Russkiy Mir and therefore widening the network of connection of the Russian diplomacy.

Moreover, the new foreign policy supported the revival of the concept of canonical territory of Holy Russia, which determines who has spiritual oversight of Orthodox people of a particular area, and that over the years has become a controversial topic in relation with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and of its recognition as primus inter

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2000, https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk8B6BZ29/content/id/589768, (last accessed October 2021).

¹¹⁴ The term refers to all the former Soviet republics with the exception of the Baltic states.

¹¹⁵ Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Russian Foreign Ministry: Collaboration or Cooptation?*, Journal of Church and State 52:4, 2010, pp. 712-727.

pares. As Kathy Rousselet and Alexander Agadjanian¹¹⁶ demonstrated, with the fall of Soviet Union and the identification of Orthodoxy with Russianness, the concept of “canonical territory” took on a transnational character. It was no longer limited to the territory of the former Soviet Union, or even of the Russian Empire, rather it was tied to the very idea of Russian identity, thus making the claim that the Russians in the world were under ecclesiastic jurisdiction¹¹⁷. Speaking of the concept of “canonical territory”, it is important to note that, it is associated with ethnicity rather than territory, it goes beyond ethno-national borders to include non-Slavic countries and ethnic groups. In this sense, from a geopolitical point of view, it should be considered a key partner of State authorities in plans for the politicization of the Russkiy Mir, that “consists of a “core” (or “backbone”)—namely, “Holy Rus” and a diaspora, which are united by three factors: the Orthodox Christian faith, the Russian language, and a shared historical memory”¹¹⁸.

The historical and spiritual value of Holy Rus arises not only from a geopolitical, but also from a societal perspective that relate to society so differently from many of Church’s hierarchs. The concept envisages the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in religious education, in promotion and defence of religious heritage and of its social work¹¹⁹. Thus, as used by the State, the term is typically political or cultural. As used by the Church, it has a religious significance: the Moscow Patriarchate, like the Russian Government, is actively concerned about developments outside of Russia, and about the potential implications of these developments. This concern is focused on the near abroad but not limited to it at all. This collaboration signals the endorsement of the Russian Orthodox Church and of the Russkiy Mir as a lever of soft power in the pursuit of foreign policy’s objectives¹²⁰.

The idealized image of Holy Rus exhibited by the Orthodox tradition, is the point of departure for the understanding of the special status of Kiev, the *mother of all Russian cities* and the holy ground of the so-called three members community: “one nation of one faith in one Orthodox Church, speaking one language, with one history and a common future”¹²¹. The special bond between Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians is emphasized both by nationalists and contemporary pan-Slavists, although the first emphasized the artificial nature of the separateness of their western neighbours, who, sooner or later

¹¹⁶ Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, “Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy,” pp. 29-57.

¹¹⁷ Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security*.

¹¹⁸ Suslov Mikhail, *Holy Rus’*; Bremer Thomas, *How the Russian Orthodox Church Views the “Russian World”*, Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe 35: 3, 2015, pp. 43-49.

¹¹⁹ Burgess John P., *Holy Rus’. The rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017.

¹²⁰ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy: the Growing Influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Shaping Russia’s Policies Abroad*, 33 U. Pa. J. Int’l L. 363, 2011, pp. 363-460; Petro Nicolai, *Russia’s Orthodox Soft Power*, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, 2015. (https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/articles_papers_reports/727), (last accessed October 2021); Freeze Gregory, *Russian Orthodoxy and Politics in the Putin Era*; Ponomarev Alexander, *The Visible Religion: The Russian Orthodox Church and her Relations with State and Society in Post-Soviet Canon Law (1992-2015)*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017.

¹²¹ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*, pp. 126.

must return to Russian identity, their one true. On the other hand, the latter accentuate above all the closeness of the three Slavic nations, that are called to face the expansion of the West together¹²². Suslov says that Holy Rus, as a geopolitical project, is based on a “messianism of the covenant”¹²³, that, in contrast from the “messianism of the mission”¹²⁴, requires a “close attention to the past in order to observe the initial conditions of the nation’s “covenant” with the supreme power”¹²⁵. Interpretation of Holy Rus as the “core of identity”¹²⁶ of the people of “historical Russia”¹²⁷ and its accompanying image of a “Russian God”¹²⁸ imbues, both from the state and church view, a spatial ideological depth.

In the geopolitical construction of Holy Rus, Ukraine embodies the place of the historical path of Holy Rus. Indeed, in Patriarch Kirill’s concept the center of Holy Rus is Kiev and the core of Kiev is the Monastery of the Caves. The sacred value of this place is firstly connected to its special historical importance, this is the place where the Christian Enlightenment of East Slavic tribes began; secondly this is cradle of Holy Rus, the place from which “the Russian land went forth”¹²⁹, finally, it is the place where sacred and profane came together in the caves of the monastery. Therefore, in Patriarch Kirill’s imagination, Holy Rus is a space whose centers are located along the southern, western, northwestern, and eastern geographical periphery of “the historical Rus”, that includes Kyiv, the Crimea, Sviatogorsk, Pochaev, Great Novgorod, Karelia, Kolyma¹³⁰.

Of all the successor states of the Soviet Union, Ukraine is probably the country with the most complicated religious situation: in the last decades, Ukraine has been the core of inter-confessional tensions, in which the Moscow Patriarchate has been involved directly. Ukraine is a multinational country, home to more than forty nationalities, where religious problems overlapped with the complex identitarian issues that characterized the Ukrainian state. This is why, we usually refer not to “one Ukraine”¹³¹, but to “more Ukraine(s)”¹³², considering in this sense the classical division between territory at the right of the Dnepr (правобережная) and the ones of the left side (левобережная), but considering also the existence of other Ukrainians regions, as Galizia, Transcarpazia, Bucovina, Crimea. Moreover, in eastern and south Ukraine there is an important presence of ethnic Russians. Several million Russian speaking Ukrainians should be added to the 11 million ethnic Russians, that already represent 22% of the Ukrainian population¹³³. For all these reasons, in the case of Ukraine, the main problem has been the one linked to the definition of legitimacy of the existence of the Ukrainian territory, and of its separation

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Suslov Mikhail, *Holy Rus’*, pp. 70.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ ibid

¹²⁶ Ibid, pp. 71.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid, pp. 78.

¹³⁰ Suslov Mikhail, *Holy Rus’*, pp. 79.

¹³¹ Roccucci Adriano, “La chiesa Ortodossa Russa nel XX secolo” pp. 265. (my translations from italian).

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ ibid.

from the Russian state. Indeed, the main problem has been the one of the “appropriation” of the identity of Kiev, although “for Russians, that is a Russian city, as for the Ukrainians it is Ukrainian, and both sides are right, because Kiev is neither Russian nor Ukrainian, it is a Russian-Ukrainian city, in a living combination of both elements”¹³⁴. Such frame reveals why the Italian historian Adriano Rocucci talks of Ukrainian issue, where religious problems are one aspect of this muddled scenario. During the twentieth century, the rise of a Ukrainian national idea was always associated with the idea of the institutionalization of an Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The process viewed the involvement of both the political side, with the active participation of Ukrainian presidents in the several stages that led to the recent Unification council of the Eastern Orthodox churches of Ukraine, and of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, representing, in this perspective, reasons for the struggle over primacy in the Inter-Orthodox world. Besides politics and inter-orthodox relations, another important factor at stake is the confrontation with the phenomenon of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC). A Church that speaks not the Roman (Latin, Western), but the Byzantine ritual language, and that “remains a sphinx both culturally and theologically”¹³⁵. The term “Uniatism” has been considered by some scholars as derogatory, a tool that served to present the Uniates as traitors of the authentic Orthodox theology and spirituality, and as “non-Orthodox or even anti-Orthodox people who deceive the Christian world by simulating the appearance of the “true” Orthodox”¹³⁶. The dominant narrative of the events, traces the origins of the splits in the decision of Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko), who presided over the Orthodox Church in Ukraine from 1966 to 1992, of voluntarily leaving the Moscow Patriarchate and merging with most of the Ukrainian Autocephalus Orthodox Church (UAOC) which, in June 1990 the elected patriarch, aged Metropolitan Mstyslav (Skrypnyk) of Philadelphia (USA). The meeting between the two churches formed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP). According to this prevailing narrative, Filaret was angered by the lack of support for Ukrainian autocephaly both in Moscow and among a few of the bishops on the Kievan Church’s synod, and the schism was the result of his decision to withdraw his resignation. On his part, Filaret claims that the promise to resign, was the result of pressure from the Russian Orthodox Church and that he acted responsibly when he returned to Kiev in order to resume his Church and move it towards the autocephaly. The turmoil besides the competing versions of the events, raised questions about the legitimacy of clerical ordinations, baptism, and marriages performed in the Kievan Patriarchate and in the Ukrainian Autocephalus Orthodox Church. Moreover, it regards disagreement between the Ecumenical Patriarchate (EP) and the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) on who possess the authority on the resolution of the Ukrainian problem, as they both claim to be the legitimate mother of

¹³⁴ My translation.

«Ведь Киев для русских такой же русский город, как для украинцев он украинский, и обе стороны здесь правы, ибо Киев не есть ни русский, ни украинский, а русско-украинский город, в живом сочетании объединивший обе стихии», Zenkovsky Vasily, *Пять месяцев у власти [Five Months in Power]*, Regnum, 2011, pp. 312.

¹³⁵ Avvakumov Yury, “Ukrainian Greek Catholics, Past and Present” in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection*, edited by Krawchuk Andrii., Bremer Thomas, New York: Palgrave Macmillan Springer, 2014, pp. 23.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

the Kievan Metropolia. As we said above, the dispute spreads its tentacles within the global community of Orthodox churches, compromising the authority of the EP, as the Moscow Patriarchate's history of granting autocephaly to churches in the twentieth century places it on an equal ground with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Indeed the EP and the MP continues to disagree on the interpretation of the canons 28 of the Council of Chalcedon (451) that defines the mechanism for granting the autocephaly to an Orthodox church. Moreover, should be considered that the Moscow Patriarchate would lose millions of people and thousands of parishes were the Church in Ukraine to become completely and permanently autocephalous¹³⁷. Seen from Ukraine's perspective, there is a great deal at stake. After the wars of the twentieth century, the persecutions of the Soviet regime, the struggles for unity and independence in the Post-Soviet period, the country further witnessed the turmoil of the Orange Revolution, of the Majdan crisis, of the annexation of Crimea, and of the war in Eastern Ukraine. This caused divisions among people, disputes among the Ukrainian Churches, resentments in the Orthodox world, and difficulties in Church-State relations both in Ukraine and in Russia. At present, this scenario constitutes the microcosm of the current political and religious crisis and of the events that led to the claim for autocephaly.

The literature produced in the last period on the Ukrainian issue has been devoted mainly to trace the historical and ecclesiastical roots of religious splits and divisions, and their relation with national issue. A great number of studies have have outlined the difficulties of recognizing the legitimacy of an Ukrainian State separated from Russia, since Russians or people who culturally sees towards Moscow reside in these territories¹³⁸, other

¹³⁷ Data updated to 8 December 2020, Order of the Ministry of culture and information policy of Ukraine No. 1657 dated 14.04.2020: number of registered parishes of the new Autocephalus Ukrainian Orthodox Church: 7097, number of parishes of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate): 12410. See: Ministry of information policy of Ukraine, *Наказ Міністерства культури та інформаційної політики України від 14.04.2020 року № 1657 "Про річну статистичну звітність з питань державно-конфесійних відносин в Україні за 2019 рік (релігійні організації)"* [Order of the Ministry of culture and information policy of Ukraine No. 1657 dated 14.04.2020 "on annual statistical reporting on state-confessional relations in Ukraine for 2019 (religious organizations)], 2020, <https://www.mkip.gov.ua/documents/202.html?PrintVersion>, (last accessed October 2021); МКІП: число релігійних громад ПЦУ становить понад 7 тисяч, УПЦ (МП) – майже 12 з половиною [МКІП: the number of religious communities of the OCU is more than 7 thousand, the UOC-MP – almost 12 and a half], 2020, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-chyslo-relihiynyh-hromad/31023363.html>, (last accessed October 2021). Data updated to 1 January 2019 Number of registered parishes of the Greek Catholic Church: 3470 Razumkov Center. See: Ministry Of Education And Science Of Ukraine Kyiv National University Of Construction And Architecture, *Сучасні Проблеми Архітектури Та Містобудування* [Modern Problems Of Architecture And Urban Planning], 59, 1997; Razumkov Centre, *Держава І Церква В Україні-2019: Підсумки Року І Перспективи Розвитку Відносин (Інформаційні Матеріали)* [State And Church In Ukraine-2019: Results Of The Year And Prospects For The Development Of Relations (Informational Materials)], Kiev, 2019, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/article/2019_Religiya.pdf, (last accessed October 2021).

¹³⁸ Among others: Krindatch Alexei D., *Religion in Postsoviet Ukraine as a Factor in Regional, Ethno-Cultural and Political Diversity*, Religion State & Society, 31: 1, 2003, pp. 37-73; Plokhyy Serhii, "Kiev vs. Moscow: The Autocephalus Movement in Independent Ukraine" in *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* ed. by Plokhyy Serhii, Sysyn Frank E., Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2003, pp. 136-145; Tonoyan Lidya, Payne Daniel., *The Visit of Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in 2009 and its Significance in Ukraine's Political and Religious Life*, Religion, State & Society, 38:3, 2010, pp. 463-476;

scholars have focused more on the role that the interplay with governments and policy had on this long path towards autocephaly¹³⁹, stressing the strict connection existing among national independence and religious autonomy. Another field of studies analysed more the canonical dimension of the issue and the reality of inter-orthodox relations¹⁴⁰.

Jarzyńska Katarzyna, *Patriarch Kirill's game over Ukraine*, Center for Eastern Studies, 144, 2014, pp. 1-10; Plokhyy Serhii, *Ukraine and Russia: Representations of the Past*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014; Hovorun Cyril, "The Russian Orthodox Church and the Crisis in Ukraine; Interpreting the "Russian World"" in *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 163-171; Chibisova Anastasiya Aleksandrovna, *Концепция «Русского мира» патриарха Кирилла и попытки ее реализации на Украине [Patriarch Kirill's concept of the "Russian World" and attempts to implement it in Ukraine]*, Istorija, Politika, Kultur, 15, 2014, pp. 76-81.

¹³⁹ Bociurkiw Bohdan, "The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, 1920–1930: A Case Study in Religious Modernization," in *Religion and Modernization in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Dunn Dennis J., Boulder, CO: Westview; 1978; pp. 310-347; Vulpius Ricarda, *Nationalisierung der Religion. Russifizierungspolitik und ukrainische Nationsbildung 1860–1920*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005; Bociurkiw Bohdan R. "The rise of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1919-22." in *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*, edited by Geoffrey A. Hosking, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991, pp. 228-249; Kuzio Taras, *In Search of Unity and Autocephaly: Ukraine's Orthodox Churches*, Religion, State & Society, 25: 4, 1997, pp. 393-415; Plokhyy Serhii, *Church, State and Nation in Ukraine*, Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 19:5, 1999, pp. 1-34; Kazmina Olga, Filippova Olga, *Re-Imagination of Religion in Post-Soviet Society: Challenges and Responses (Russian and Ukrainian Case Studies)*, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 73: 4, 2005, pp. 1049-1076; Merlo Simona. *All'ombra delle cupole d'oro. La chiesa di Kiev da Nicola II a Stalin (1905-1939)*. Milano: Guerini e Associati, 2005; Sysyn Frank E., *Politics and Orthodoxy in Independent Ukraine*, *The Harriman Review*, 2005, pp. 8-19; Yelensky Victor. "Globalization, Nationalism, and Orthodoxy: The Case of Ukrainian Nation Building." in *Eastern Orthodoxy in a global age. Tradition faces the twenty-first century*, edited by Victor Roudometof, Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy", Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005, pp. 144-175; Mitrokhin Nikolay, *Orthodoxy in Ukrainian Political Life 2004–2009*, Religion, State & Society, 38:3, 2010, pp. 229-251; Mudrov Sergei A., *The autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church: a new dividing line for Ukraine?*, Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe, 27:2-3, 2019, pp. 271-277.

¹⁴⁰ Partykevich Andre, *Between Kyiv and Constantinople: Olexander Lototsky and the Quest for Ukrainian Autocephaly*, Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1998; Chibisova Anastasiya Aleksandrovna, *The Ukrainian question in the relations between Constantinople and Moscow at the beginning of the 21st century*, Vestnik PSTGU I: Bogosloviye. Filosofi, 55:5, 2014, pp. 25; Denysenko Nicholas E., *Chaos in Ukraine: the churches and the search for leadership*, International journal for the Study of the Christian Church, 14: 3, 2014, pp. 242-259; Bruening Alfons, *Project Ukraine under threat; Christian Churches in Ukraine and their relations 1991-2015*, Journal of Eastern Christian Studies, 67:1-2, 2015, pp. 103-142; Shishkov Andrey, *Church Autocephaly as Sovereignty: A Schmittian Approach*, St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 60:3, 2016, pp. 369–395; Brusanowski Paul, "Autocephaly in Ukraine: The Canonical Dimension" in *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 47-77; Chokalyuk Svyatoslav, *Kiev between Constantinople and Moscow: Geopolitics or devotion to the canons of the Church*, Trudy Kyivskoyi Dukhovnoyi Akademiyi, 18:190, 2018, pp. 330-349; Denysenko Nicholas E. *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine: A Century of Separation*, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018; Mureșan Coriolan, *Complex Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical Dialogue Following the Ukrainian Tomos of Autocephaly*, Review of Ecumenical Studies Sibiu, 11:1, 2019, pp. 120-127; Krawchuk Andrii, *The Orthodox Church of Ukraine on the inter-Orthodox agenda at Amman: the dynamics of ecclesiastical recognition*, Canadian Slavonic Papers- Revue Canadienne des Slavistes, 62: 3-4, 2020, pp. 463-476; Yakovlev Aleksandr, *Кризис в отношениях между Константинопольским и Московским Патриархатами в контексте мировой политики XX-XXI веков [The crisis in relations between the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow in the context of World politics of the XX-XXI centuries]*, Institut vostokovedeniya Rossiyskoy akademii nauk (RAN), IV, 2020, pp. 26-66.

1.2 The Soviet legacy in Russian Orthodox Church's External Relations. The Church under Communist Control before 1988-1991.

From the beginning, the Soviet authorities interpreted the freedom of religion very narrowly. Although the constitution of the Russian Republic (RSFSR) of July 10, 1918 (art. 13) and May 11, 1925 (Art. 4) guaranteed “freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda”, Bolsheviks never considered equals opportunity for Marxism and religious teachings. The first post-revolutionary period was characterized by a sharp and hard struggle against the Churches, particularly the Russian Orthodox Church, viewed as an ally of the former ruling classes¹⁴¹. This conception of religion is reflected also in international relations where, prior to World War II, the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church was slight. Indeed, during the first decade of Soviet rule, the impact of religion on Soviet foreign policy was quite negative. Over the Civil War, which erupted immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, a significant portion of Russian Orthodox Church joined the White forces allowing the foreign armies to count on the support of the Church in their conquest of areas not under the control of the Bolsheviks. Metropolitan of Moscow Tikhon (Belavin), elected Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia immediately after Bolsheviks' seizure of power, and initially hostile to the new government, after 1919 had to dissociate himself from the Anti-Bolshevik cause in the Civil war. It is worth remembering that in his Epistle to the archpastors of the Russian Orthodox Church on 25 September 1919 he said: <<никто и ничто не спасет Россию от нестроения и разрухи, пока праведный Господь не предложит гнева Своего на милосердие, пока сам народ не очистится в купели покаяния>>.¹⁴² These words, important for both fighting sides, did not interrupt his embroilment in the controversy and, despite Patriarch Tikhon's abandonment of a policy of hostility towards the Soviet regime in favour of a more neutral approach, in several instances the clerics who fled the country with the collapse of the White armies, threatened to involve the mother Church in anti-Soviet initiatives, causing considerable trouble to the Moscow Patriarchate. In December 1921, a group of émigré churchman met in Karlovtsi, Yugoslavia, and appealed to the European Economic Conference in Genoa for an intervention on religious grounds in Russia. Patriarch Tikhon immediately dissociated himself from these activities. Nevertheless the indiscretion from the side of the Karlovtsi group that the Church utilized its considerable store of valuables for overthrowing the government, confirmed in the eyes of the regime the

¹⁴¹ The close relationship of Church and state that is specific of Russian state of affairs (but not only), found its expression particularly in the close relationship of the Church with the Tsarist autocracy. The basic law of the Empire required the Emperor heir to the throne and their wives to be member of the Orthodox Church. The Church raised the Emperor by “holy coronation” far above the mass of the faithful. From his part, the Emperor accepted the role as “chief defender and maintainer of the dogmas of the ruling faith and preserver of Orthodoxy”. Infact the Emperor was sometimes referred to as “head of the Church” without posing any clerical rank according to the canon law. Gerarhad Simon, *Church, State and Opposition in the USSR*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974, pp. 4.

¹⁴² <<no one and nothing will save Russia from disorder and devastation, until the God turns His anger into mercy, until the people themselves are cleansed from the font of repentance. his long-term ulcers, otherwise he will not be spiritually reborn>> My translation. Osipov Aleksei, *Революция Вышла Из Семинарии* [The Revolution Came Out Of The Seminary], Pravoslavie.ru, Революция вышла из семинарии / Pravoslavie.ru (pravoslavie.ru), 2017, (last accessed October 2021).

counterrevolutionary position of the Church. In fact the government in the wake of the Civil War, at that time was facing a catastrophic famine. At that time the State had already initiated the campaign of expropriation of Church's valuables in order to address famine and, in the meanwhile, reducing the properties and the popular influence of the Church in Russia. In August 1921 Patriarch Tikhon formed a Committee for the aid of the starving, appealing to religious leaders in the West for contributions. This Committee was declared superfluous by the State that, after a short time, rejected the Vatican's offer to provide cash subsidies in lieu of confiscation of consecrated religious articles. The painful campaign of sequestering Churches which followed seriously weakened their position within the country. Meanwhile, the so called Renovationist movement emerged, establishing in May 1922 a State-supported schism which had very serious consequence in the Soviet republic. A few months later, Patriarch Tikhon was placed under arrest and the State began to prepare its forthcoming trial. Vigorous protest arose in the West, so intense that it was probably for this reason that the regime decided to release the Patriarch. Thereafter in 1923 he signed a confession in which he declared himself not an enemy of the Soviet Government, and admitted that there was sufficient ground to warrant juridical action in his case. Moreover, he precluded any future involvement of the Church in international initiatives against the USSR, finally dissociated himself from White Guard counter-revolution actions. This act was no longer sufficient to deter the hostility of the regime against the Church when Patriarch Tikhon passed away in 1925. Tikhon's designated successors were imprisoned one after another: the danger of total destruction of Church's central administration became serious. Accordingly, when Metropolitan Sergei (Stragorodskii) – in normal circumstances the third of Tikhon successors, who inherited the leadership when the others two senior to him have all been incarcerated – decided to radically transform the policy of the Church. In 1926 he started working on his Declaration, which was published the following year, whose main aim was preserving the functioning of the Church within Soviet society as well as maintaining normal relations with the State in the interest of the people and of the clergy¹⁴³: for this reason, he promised full loyalty to the State. Nevertheless, this recognition of gratitude to the State for his внимание к духовным нуждам православного населения¹⁴⁴ caused indignation and embarrassment among both laity and clergy. “За что благодарить? — писали митрополиту Сергию киевские священники. — За неисчислимые страдания последних лет? За храмы, попираемые отступниками? За то, что погасла лампада преподобного Сергия? За то, что северная наша обитель стала местом непрекращающихся страданий? За эти мучения, за кровь митрополита Вениамина и других убиенных святителей?”¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴³ Бессмертный-Анзимиров А. Статья «Третьего не дано. О полемике между отцом Виктором Потаповым, профессором Д. Поспеловским и Д. Шумариным» Компьютерная машинопись [Bessmertny-Anzimirov A. Article “The third is not given. On the controversy between Father Viktor Potapov, Professor D. Pospelovsky and D. Shumarin “Computer typescript], Garf, фонд 10170, описи 1, дела 51, 1-13.

¹⁴⁴ his attention to the spiritual needs of the Orthodox population. My translation.

¹⁴⁵ “Thank you for what? - the Kiev priests wrote to Metropolitan Sergius. — For the incalculable suffering of the last few years?” For temples, trampled the apostate? For the fact that the lamp of St. Sergius was extinguished? For the fact that our northern monastery has become a place of incessant

It is worth noting that Sergei's position offered only political support; other aspects of Church life as liturgy, tradition, canon law, were to remain independent. The international ramifications of this policy were immediately apparent. On 9 September 1927, the Council of Bishops in Karlovtsi rejected the Declaration, that in their opinion cannot be considered ecclesiastical and canonical, but only political¹⁴⁶. The Council declared a formal break of relations with Moscow church authorities and recognized as chief of the Russian Church Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy, at that time imprisoned. Nevertheless, the Council did not consider the foreign part of the Russian Church as spiritually separated from its Mother Church or autocephalus¹⁴⁷. Relations with the Karlovtsi Synod were terminated in 1934, on 5 January 1935 Feofil (Pashkovsky) was declared removed from the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church in America¹⁴⁸. The rise of antireligious campaigns in the late 20s corresponded to greater protests in the West against the persecutions that the Russian Orthodox Church seemed to be experiencing. In particular the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England were very vigorous in their protests, probably for this reason. On February 1930 Metropolitan Sergei inexpertly gave an interview to foreign journalists in Moscow in which he denied charges denounced by foreign churchmen:

Вопрос: Действительно ли существует в СССР гонение на религию и в каких формах оно проявляется?

Ответ: Гонения на религию в СССР никакого не было и нет.

suffering? For these torments, for the blood of Metropolitan Benjamin and other murdered saints?". My own translation. See: Russian Orthodox Church, *«Строят будут после меня». К 75-летию со дня кончины Патриарха Сергия (Страгородского)* ["They will build after me." On the 75th anniversary of the death of Patriarch Sergius (Stragorodsky)], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 10 July 2019 <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5468664.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

¹⁴⁶ Послание митрополита Сергия, не архиерейское и не церковное, а политическое и потому не может иметь церковно-канонического значения и не обязательно для нас, свободных от гнета и плена богоборной и христоненавистной власти <...> Такое постановление не может быть признано законным и каноническим». The epistle of Metropolitan Sergius, not archpastoral and not ecclesiastical, but political, and therefore cannot have ecclesiastical canonical meaning and not necessarily for us, free from oppression and captivity of the God-fighting and Christ-hating authorities <...> Such a resolution cannot be recognized as lawful and canonical". See: Synod of Bishops Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, *Окружное послание архиерейского собора русской православной церкви за границей. От 27 августа/9 сентября 1927 г.* [The district message of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad. From August 27/September 9, 1927], sinod.ruschurchabroad.org, OCR Document (ruschurchabroad.org), 1927, (last accessed, October 2021).

¹⁴⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей* [Russian Orthodox Church Abroad], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2416490.html>, (last accessed, October 2021); Протоиерей Лев Лебедев. Статья «Диалог Русской православной церкви за границей с Московской Патриархией: для чего и как?» Ксерокопия компьютерной машинописи [Archpriest Lev Lebedev. The article "Dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with the Moscow Patriarchate: Why and How?" Photocopy of computer typing], Garf, фонда.10170, описи 1, дела 56, pp. 1-10.

¹⁴⁸ See: Metropolitan Theophilus (Pashkovsky), orthodoxcanada.ca, [https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Theophilus_\(Pashkovsky\)](https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Theophilus_(Pashkovsky)), (last accessed October 2021).

Вопрос: Верно ли, что священнослужители и верующие подвергаются репрессиям за свои религиозные убеждения, арестовываются, выселяются и т.д.

Ответ: Репрессии, осуществляемые Советским правительством, в отношении верующих священнослужителей, применяются к ним отнюдь не за их религиозные убеждения, а в общем порядке, как и к другим гражданам за различные антиправительственные деяния

Вопрос: Как вы относитесь к недавнему обращению Папы Римского?

Ответ: Считаю необходимым указать, что нас крайне удивляют недавнее обращение Папы Римского против Сов. власти. ...Мы считаем излишним и ненужным это выступление Папы Римского, в котором, мы, православные, совершенно не нуждаемся.

Вопрос: Как вы относитесь к выступлению архиепископа Кентерберийского на Кентерберийском церковном соборе?

Ответ: Нам кажется вообще странным и подозрительным внезапное выступление целого сонма... разного рода церквей. ... трудящиеся люди Лондона расценивают выступление Кентерберийского как выступление, "пахнущее нефтью"¹⁴⁹.

Other opportunities to demonstrate loyalty to the State in foreign affairs were scant in the thirties. In 1931 Metropolitan Sergei rejected the proposal for an ecumenical Council with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This Patriarchate had granted jurisdictional recognition to those in the Russian Orthodox emigration who refused to pledge loyalty to the Soviet government, and was engaged in negotiations with the Church of England, that, as has been said above, was one of the first protesters against Soviet religious policy. Moreover, in 1935, shortly after the Russian Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris participated in

¹⁴⁹ Question: Does the persecution of religion really exist in the USSR and in what forms is it manifested? Answer: There has never been any persecution of religion in the USSR and is not present.

Question: Is it true that priests and believers are being repressed for their religious beliefs, arrested, evicted, etc. Answer: The repressions carried out by the Soviet government against religious clergymen are applied to them not at all for their religious beliefs, but in general order, as well as to other citizens for various anti-government acts. Question: How do you feel about the recent address of the Pope?

Answer: We consider it necessary to point out that we are extremely surprised by the recent appeal of the Pope against the Sov. authorities. ... We consider this speech of the Pope to be superfluous and unnecessary, which we, the Orthodox, absolutely do not need. Question: How do you feel about the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Canterbury Church Council? Answer: In general, it seems strange and suspicious to us the sudden appearance of a whole host ... of various kinds of churches. ... the working people of London regard the Canterbury performance as a performance that "smells of oil". My translation. See: Istorychna Pravda, "Гонений на религию в СССР нет" - интервью митрополита Сергия. 1930 год. Ответы митрополита Сергия (Страгородского) на пресс-конференции с представителями советской печати о положении православной церкви в СССР 15 февраля 1930г. ["No persecution of religion in the USSR" - interview with Metropolitan Sergius. 1930. Answers of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) at a press conference with representatives of the Soviet press on the situation of the Orthodox Church in the USSR, February 15, 1930.], istpravda.com, 2010, <https://www.istpravda.com.ua/blogs/4ccb2a4e3427a/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Anglo-Russian prayers for the persecuted Russian Church, he issued a decree (указ) with which he condemned the theological work of S. Bulgakov, member of the Institute, concerning the Divine Wisdom.

The beginning of the Second World War marked a radical change: in August 1939 Soviet Union signed a treaty of non-aggression with Germany, on the basis of a secret protocol was decided that Poland was to be portioned. On 17 September the USSR announced its entry into Eastern Poland, fact that gave a clear opportunity to the Church to be highly useful in supporting Soviet efforts among the predominantly Orthodox population present on that territories. When Eastern Poland and Baltic States came under Soviet occupation, Russian Orthodox Church dispatched there two of the remaining four active bishops. More importantly, due to the crisis the war created, Soviet regime found itself in critical need of support wherever it might be found. Indeed the antireligious campaign was abruptly terminated, and the energetic services of the Church in support of war efforts were gratefully accepted. Soon a wide area of activities were opened up, in particular in the field of propaganda concerning German war crimes, the regime's propaganda against the Catholic Church, and in support of resistance behind the German lines, in Romania, Bulgaria and elsewhere¹⁵⁰. On 4 September 1943 Sergei and his two chief subordinates, Nikolai and Aleksii met Stalin in a private audience: on that date the informal concordat between Church and State was ratified. That meeting represented the basis for Church-State relations in the Soviet Union from that time onward. In 1943 responsibility for church affairs passed from the NKGB (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)¹⁵¹ to the newly established Council for Russian Orthodox Church affairs (CROCA) (Совет по делам религий)¹⁵², to which in 1944 was added the Council for Religious Cult Affairs -CRC (Совет по делам религиозных культов). Both established within the Council

¹⁵⁰ Gerarhad Simon, *Church, State and Opposition in the USSR*; Curanović Alicja, *The Religious factor*; Dunn Dennis J., *Religion And Modernization In The Soviet Union*. London: Routledge, 2019; Pipes Richard. *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. On the topic of Russian Orthodox Church during the period the Revolution see among others: Bociurkiw Bohdan R. "The shaping of Soviet Religious Policy." *Problems of Communism*, 32: 2, 1973, pp. 37-52; Kenworthy Scott, M. "Rethinking the Russian Orthodox Church and the Bolshevik Revolution." *Revolutionary Russia*, 1-23, 2018; Pospelovsky Dmitry. *A history of Soviet atheism in theory and in practice, and the believer*, 3 vol., Hampshire and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988; Pospelovsky Dmitry, *Русская Православная Церковь в XX веке* [The Russian Orthodox Church in the XX century], Moscow: Respublika, 1995; Pospelovsky Dmitry, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime 1917-1982*, vol. I and II. Cres twood , NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984; Ramet Sabrina Petra. *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993; Roslov Edward E. *Red Priests. Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002; Tsyin Vladislav, *История Русской Церкви (1917–1997)* [History of the Russian Church (1917-1997)], Izdatel'stvo Spaso-Preobrazhenskogo Valaamskogo monastyrya, 1997; Ellis Jane, *The Russian Orthodox Church. A Contemporary history*, Oxford: Keston College, 1986; Anderson John, *Religion, State and Politics in the Soviet Union and Successor States, 1953–1993*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, Shevzov Vera, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

¹⁵¹ Народный комиссариат внутренних дел.

¹⁵² In 1943 was created the Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs (CROCA), then in 1944 the Council for Religious Cult Affairs (CRCA). Both were established within the Council of the National Commissariat of the USSR (NKGB). After Vatican II, on December 8 1965, the two bodies would be united in the one Council for Religious Affairs.

of the National Commissariat of the USSR (Совет народных комиссаров СССР), these were the first governmental bodies with specific responsibility for religion since the dissolution of the Central Standing Commission on Religious Question in 1938¹⁵³. Although the most important decisions concerning religious policy were made by the Politburo and the Central Committee of the CPSU, the role played by the established institution for religious policy was of extreme importance. Direct contacts with religious organizations, and the eventual communication of their point of view to the State, the providing of synthetic vision of the various elements affecting decisions on religious policy, the information on which decisions and their implementation were based, were all prerogatives of the Councils. Stalin's intention to change the nature of Church-State relations spurred the formation of these agencies dedicated to implementing the government's new ecclesiastical policy. Their functions, status and names were determined by Stalin himself before his meeting, on 4 September 1943, with Georgii Karpov, a colonel in the secret police. Karpov was chairman of the CROCA and in this capacity he participated in Stalin's conversation with the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church that took place late in the evening of the same day. When Karpov suggested the creation of such an agency under the auspices of the Soviet State, Stalin disagreed. The latter preferred a special committee or Council for Russian Orthodox Church under the direction of the Council of People's Commissars (SNK)¹⁵⁴. Stalin defined the Council as the "link between the government and the Patriarch"¹⁵⁵ and as a body that "itself will not make decisions. Its envisioned role was to report everything to the state and pass on government decisions to the Church on the state's behalf"¹⁵⁶. Basic functions and tasks of the Council were defined in *Regulations for the Council of Russian Orthodox Church Affairs* approved by the Sovnarkom with the decree No 1095 issued on 7 October 1943. The importance of the event was highlighted also by the publications of the news of the meeting in the *Известия (Izvestija)*, the main daily newspaper of Soviet Union: the fact that one of the principle print agencies of the Bolshevik regime announced that a Council for the election of a Patriarch would be convened soon and that Stalin was agree on this, marked the importance of the meeting. This new system of Church-State relations based on the Council for Religious affairs' activities saw the Church not only as the object of passive persecution of the State but also as an interlocutor: it offered the Church a space that, although very limited, was an improvement over the harsh persecutions of the 1920s and 1930s. Within this system and according to its rules, the Church had to look for the space of liberty and find a way to guarantee its survival. Anna Dickinson underlined that behind the meeting held at the Kremlin there are two main reasons: the appreciation of the Church as an instrument in foreign policy¹⁵⁷, and "the calculated elimination of a

¹⁵³ Постоянная центральная и местная комиссия по рассмотрению религиозных вопросов.

¹⁵⁴ Совет народных комиссаров, Совнарком.

¹⁵⁵ Chumachenko Tatiana A. *Church and State in Soviet Russia. Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Krushchev Years*, Armonk, NY, London: Sharpe, 2002, Hayward, pp. 15.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ William Fletcher underlined that Soviet foreign policy may be summarized under three major headings. The first and most obvious are the normal, traditional channels of international diplomacy (corps of foreign service officers, diplomatic missions, Soviet foreign trade, foreign aid programmes as well as military and arms aid). The second major channel is to be found in indirect relations beyond the normal boundaries of trade, aid and diplomacy (fraternal and cooperative relations with local and national

potential enemy – or, at best, a source of uncontrolled and independent values – by the cooptation of apparently trustworthy elements of the church in order to control believers and eliminate counterrevolutionary threats from religious communities”¹⁵⁸. The Church remained an element extraneous to the system, but the evolution of the regime and of Stalinist policy made its presence acceptable. Hosking and Roccucci noted that the patriotic climate and the sense of continuity with the Russian past that characterized the regime moved the patriotic narrative from the messianic atheism to a traditional neo rossijskij¹⁵⁹. During the Tsarist and the Soviet period, Russian identity was not founded on a secularized ideology but mainly on a religious and parareligious (or quazi-religious) ideology that had the empire as its natural form of expression. These are exactly the purposes of imperialistic expansion and geopolitical plans, that help us to understand the main reasons of change in Stalin’s policy. The defense of security and a conception of the international reality based on the systemic opposition between the communist and the capitalist world was the last inspiration of this policy. Indeed, the questions that Stalin made to Karpov before the meeting of September 1943 with the three metropolitans, concerned above all the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in protecting the Churches in the Balkans and in guaranteeing religio-confessional uniformity in the Slavic lands of the Soviet Union. In a report presented by Karpov to the Central Committee on 12 November 1946 the local Council of 1945 was indicated as the date of starting of Moscow Patriarchate’s international activities. In the report was highlighted that several representatives had expressed the need to move to Moscow the ecumenical center of Orthodoxy because the Russian Orthodox Church was, among the Orthodox Churches, the most numerous and the most rich. From 1945 the Council for Religious Affairs recommended three priorities in the international policy of the Moscow Patriarchate: the return of ecclesiastical institutions abroad under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, friendly relations with Churches of Eastern countries, strengthening relations with Orthodox Churches and the growth of Russian Church’s influence on international religious issues. This resulted in a complementarity between Church and State policies in directing Eastern Orthodox Churches to a positive relations with Soviet government of their countries. The first result of the compromise offered by Stalin was the end of Renovationist activity in the Russian Orthodox Church. Vvedenskii, the leader of the movement, launched an active process wherein renovationist clergy and whole parishes returned to the patriarchal church. During a meeting with Karpov, he petitioned for the opening of new churches in Moscow and for appointing and reassigning

communist parties throughout the world, the apparatus for international espionage and intelligence activities, relations aimed at the acquisition and development of technical processes). The third aspect is the contribution which can be made by public opinion throughout the world (development of methods for the modern propaganda, and particularly since 1950s, image building process, through the use of a vast array of non-propaganda activities designed to elicit a positive reaction to the USSR). Religion’s role in Soviet foreign policy falls into the third of the above categories: indeed the great and majority of services rendered by institutional religion come in the field of image building and propaganda. See: Fletcher William C., *Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy 1945-1970*.

¹⁵⁸ Dickinson Anna “A Marriage of Convenience? Domestic and Foreign Policy Reasons for the 1943 Soviet Church-State ‘Concordat’”, *Religion State & Society* 28:4, 2000, pp. 337-346.

¹⁵⁹ In Russian language the term “Russian” is translated with two adjectives: *russkii* refers to etnical identity, *rossijskij* refers to political identity.

renovationist bishops throughout the country. Starting from 1943 Moscow Patriarchate actively renewed its ties with foreign Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe and other Eastern Orthodox patriarchates. This was confirmed by the level of participation of foreign Orthodox Church at the National Council of the Russian Orthodox Church that met from 31 January to 2 February 1945. Honored guest at this Council included the participation of leaders of churches from Alexandria, Antioch, and Georgia, representatives of the patriarch of Constantinople and Jerusalem, delegations from the Serbian and Romanian churches. The official agenda of the council consisted of two items: the acceptance of the *Regulation for Administration of the Russian Orthodox Church* and the selection for a Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (Patriarch Sergei died on 15 May 1944). From the government's perspective the National Council was supposed to show representatives of foreign Orthodox Churches the growing power of the Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR. They were to see both political and financial power gained thanks to government support, which was supposed to be decisive when the financially needy Eastern Orthodox patriarchs set their political priorities. In addition, the National Church Council was to demonstrate the unity of Orthodox Churches to the international community as well as the reality of claims of leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate to the Orthodox world¹⁶⁰. Another meeting between Stalin and the leaders of the Moscow Patriarchate devoted to the work of the Russian Orthodox Church in foreign policy was held on 10 April 1945. It was attended by people directly in the field of foreign relations. For instance, attendees included Metropolitan Nikolai Larushevich who, since spring 1945, headed the newly formed Department of External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate¹⁶¹, Protopresbyter Nikolai Kolchitskii, head of Patriarchal Affairs, and Molotov as head of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. The Russian Orthodox Church's involvement in foreign policy officially started in spring of 1945: delegations from the Moscow Patriarchate visited Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Romania; in May Aleksii, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia traveled on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Moreover, starting from the spring 1945, the Moscow Patriarchate implemented the Soviet

¹⁶⁰ The Sobor of 1945 was a great foreign policy achievements for the Soviet Union. The overwhelming majority of churches of the Orthodox world acknowledged the Moscow Patriarchate and the Patriarch of Moscow as legitimate representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church. This recognition had several, important consequences: 1) the role of the Moscow Patriarchate in the Communist regime has been indirectly recognized; 2) a moral blow was dealt the foreign opposition which recognised the Moscow Patriarchate only to varying degrees; 3) the nearly universal recognition of the Moscow Patriarchate forced the satellite countries along the road of complete dependence on the Communist power, broadening the Communist regime's power to exert influence through the Moscow Patriarchate upon the Orthodox World; 4) world public opinion took this act as a guarantee of liberal changes in the Communist system. This combination of foreign and internal advantages push the government to undertake a further expansion of the religious NEP.

¹⁶¹ Отдел внешних церковных связей Московского патриархата (ОВЦС). Founded by a decision of the Holy Synod of April 4, 1946. It is the oldest synodal institution of the Russian Orthodox Church. The DECS is among the executive bodies of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod. Its status and tasks are defined by the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Statute of the Department. The Department is accountable to His Holiness the Patriarch and the Holy Synod, which annually approve the program of its activities. The chairman of the Department for External Church Relations has the status of a permanent member of the Holy Synod. See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Department*, mospat.ru/en, <https://mospat.ru/en/department/> (last accessed October 2021).

Government's plan to liquidate the Greco-Catholic Church¹⁶² in western regions of Ukraine and in the Carpathians. In April 1945 Metropolitan Slipy, five bishops and other clergy of the Uniate Church were arrested for their support to the German occupation forces. Following these arrests, Fr. G. Kostelnik, Fr. Mikhail (M. Melnik), and Fr. Antonii (A. Pelvetskii) formed an initiating group within the Uniate Church that declared its break with the Vatican and called for Uniate clergy to rejoin Orthodoxy. Resolution adopted by Church Council held in Lvov in March 1946 ended the church formed by the Union of Brest in 1596. The Uniate Church ceased to exist legally in the USSR as a consequence of the political measures implemented between 1946 and 1949.

Advances in Church-State relations reached their peak by 1948, when the climate started changing and a new era seemed to be on the horizon. The chill in Church-State relations was caused by a set of real causes: the fundamental reason was connected to the impact of the church's international activity, in particular to the failure of the specific plan for creating an Ecumenical Orthodox Center in Moscow. The plan failed: claims of the Moscow Patriarchate to the role of the "Third Rome"¹⁶³ were rejected from Eastern patriarchates that declined the invitation to an all Orthodox Council, stating that only the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople held the authority to convene an Ecumenical Council. This position of the Eastern Churches clearly reflected the political orientations linked to the Cold War climate and the growing influence of America and Great Britain over the Eastern Churches. Moreover, the conference for leaders of Orthodox Churches held in 1948 in celebration of the 500th year anniversary of Russian Orthodox Church's autocephaly did not have a political significance for Soviet leaders: the Eastern European Orthodox Churches that were already in the Kremlin's sphere of influence and control participated in the conference, and thus could not strengthen Moscow Patriarchate role in the international arena. The nature of Church-State relations was also impacted by

¹⁶² the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (in some historical cases referred to as Uniates) is a Byzantine Rite Eastern Catholic Church in full communion with the Catholic Church. It appeared in 1596b with the signing of the Union of Brest between the Ruthenian Uniate Church represented by Michael Rohoza and the Holy See.

¹⁶³ According to this idea, Moscow had a unique religious and political mission as successor to Rome and Byzantium. In fact the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 was considered by the Russian ideologists to be a punishment from God for the treachery at Florence, and justification for Muscovy's stance. The earliest surviving formulation of the concept of "Moscow Third Rome" is probably formulated in a letter of the monk by the monk Filofei (Philotheus), the elder (*starets*) of Eleazarov monastery in Pskov, written in 1511, and addressed to his Tsar, Vasily III. He wrote: "The Church of old Rome fell because of the impiety of the Apollinarian heresy; the Church of the Second Rome, Constantinople, was smitten under the battle-axes of the Agarenes; but this present Church of the Third, New Rome, of Thy sovereign empire: the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church...shines in the whole universe more resplendent than the sun. And let it be known to Thy Lordship, O pious Czar, that all the empires of the Orthodox Christian Faith have converged into Thine one empire. Thou art the sole Emperor of all the Christians in the whole universe... For two Romes have fallen, and the Third stands, and a fourth shall never be, for Thy Christian Empire shall never devolve upon others". See: Duncan Peter J.S. *Russian Messianism. Third Rome, revolution, Communism and after*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 11. See also: Lotman Jurij, Uspenskij Boris, *Il Concetto di "Mosca Terza Roma" nell'ideologia di Pietro I*, *Europa Orientalis* 5, 1986, pp. 481-494; Poe Marshall, *Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a "Pivotal Moment"*, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 49:3, 2001, pp.412-429.

pressure from ideological elements in the Party, that started showing dissatisfaction towards religious liberal policy¹⁶⁴.

A draft resolution on *Measures for Strengthening Propagation of Scientific-Atheistic Knowledge* was prepared at the start of 1949, and after the Saratov Affair¹⁶⁵ a series of militantly antireligious articles and administrative measures was taken against the clergy and laity. Yet another draft resolution emerged as result of the investigation into the episode: the Department for Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop) developed a proposal on *Mass Observance of a Religious Rite on the Church Holiday of the Epiphany in the city of Saratov* that placed practically all the blame for the events happened in Saratov on the Council and on Karpov, its chairman. The matter ended on May 1949 when, on the first page of the materials attached to the draft resolution for *New Regulations for the Council* appeared instructions from J. Stalin not to adopt the decisions related to changes in the sphere of activity and structure of the Council. This decision should be considered as a rejection of the attempt to revise church policy in the USSR. Qualitative change of duties, structures, and functions in the years that followed, reflected the same ideological fate. In July 1949 the Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs was attached to the newly formed Cultural Bureau of the Council of the Ministers of the USSR. From this time forward, the Council's activity moved out of the sphere of control of governing organs into the ideological control of the Agitprop. This change in the Council's status was indicative of a change in church-state relations that veered away from previous positions based on constitutional law and steered toward ideology. A new dimension of Soviet foreign policy was already developing, one in which the desire for peace should be conceived as anti-Western instrument. The peace offensive led the Moscow Patriarchate away from the trend that so clearly was indicated before 1948. The main reason was that the peace campaign was primarily used to influence the fluctuating liberal circles of western democracies, and the formula of setting the Orthodox East against the Protestant and Catholic West was inappropriate for achieving new goals. The Communist peace campaign was mainly offensive rather than defensive, its aim was the demoralization, disintegration and disarmament of the Western enemy: "in order to reach these circumstances, Communism must be international as broad as possible. Our duty is to proclaim that universal Christianity is not identical with Western civilization, which is receding ever further from its principles"¹⁶⁶ declared the *Appeal to All Christians for the defense of Peace* of 23 April 1949 at the first World Congress of Supporters of

¹⁶⁴ As a result of the implementation of state decrees, the economic and political positions of the Russian Orthodox Church strengthened significantly after the war. This will represent a problem able to change Church-State relations in post-stalinist period.

¹⁶⁵ In the city of Saratov, on January 19, 1949, on the Orthodox holiday of the Epiphany in accordance with the age-old tradition took place a ceremony called a Procession to the Jordan River for blessing the water. Clergy and the majority of believers returned to town at the end of ceremony. A group of 300 people (according other sources were actually 500) stayed behind and began to plunge into the ice, blessed water over the course of thirty-five to forty minutes (other source talked of five hours). The event gave room to a series of administrative measures and antireligious articles. Chumachenko Tatiana A. *Church and State in Soviet Russia*, pp. 97, 98.

¹⁶⁶ Alexeev Wassilij, *The foreign policy of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1939-1953. Materials for the History of the Russian Orthodox Church in the U.S.S.R.* II New York City: Research Program on the U.S.S.R., 1955.

Peace in Paris. This concept should be compared with the one formulated in the appeal, under an identical title, of the Moscow Conference of Heads and Representatives of Orthodox Autocephalous Churches on 17 July 1948¹⁶⁷. In 1949 the World Peace Council was formed: this organization became the leading force of an institutionalized propaganda campaign which would serve in the following years for the implementation of the Soviet foreign policy. From its inception the Russian Church made an important contribution to the peace campaign. In addition, the movement could serve to extend the influence of Soviet oriented organizations beyond the circle of Communist countries and, with contribution of the Church, by attracting Western churchmen and by mobilizing the deep stream of pacifism throughout the support of Christian world. The peace campaign came into its own with the beginning of the Korean War in 1950. Since in that war US forces were directly engaged while the USSR was involved only indirectly, possession of a mobilized, functioning agency for propaganda was of immense benefit to Soviet foreign policy. One particular and important contribution which the Church was able to make to the peace propaganda was the involvement of Western Churches in the general narrative of guilt. Among the aggressors in Korea were leaders of Christian organizations and, among them, the Roman Catholic Church was a perennial target of Soviet propaganda. The specific service rendered by the Church was a narrative of the concept of pacifism which presented the specific approach of the Soviet to the term as the only genuine aspiration for peace. Nevertheless, by the mid-fifties the peace campaign fell into decay: the unrestrained invective of Stalinist propaganda swiftly made obvious that the propaganda was not disinterestedly working for peace but instead was promoting the particular form of peace that the USSR advocated. Moreover, with the end of the Korean War, attention to the problems of peace and war was supplanted by other concerns. Finally, with the rise of Khrushchev, Soviet foreign policy experienced a radical transformation. With its advent, Stalin's ideological and totalizing attitude to foreign policy was modified into a more pragmatic approach. The fundamental change that occurred was the transformation of the country from a continental to a global power thanks to the expansion of Soviet dominance's physical borders into immediately adjacent areas, and thanks to its influence through China, North Korea and the attempt to acquire South Korea. This policy did not give up confrontation, particularly regarding ideology, but it started to adopt more quickly adaptable instruments and forms of action, so as to widen its influence beyond the Soviet bloc, in Third World countries and in some parts of the Western World. Adriano Rocucci has noted that while foreign policy was marked by this pragmatism, religious policy lacked the pragmatism displayed by Stalin after World War II. Religious policy was again marked by antireligious postulates, by the policy of attacking remnants of religion within an ideological scheme¹⁶⁸. This new ideological frame also impacted Church-State relations: the normalization of the relations needed in the conditions of War had led to a strengthening of the position of the Church's role. Meanwhile Karpov's position within the CROCA became weaker: on 21 February

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Rocucci Adriano. "Russian Observers at Vatican II. The "Council for Russian Orthodox Affairs" and the Moscow Patriarchate between Anti-Religious Policy and International Strategies" in *Vatican 2. in Moscow (1959-1965) : acts of the Colloquium on the History of Vatican 2.*: Moscow, March 30-April 2, 1995 ed. Alberto Melloni, Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1997, pp. 45-73.

1960 he was replaced by the *apparatchik* of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee, Vladimir A. Kuroedov, former secretary of the party in Sverdlovsk, executor of the ideological anti-religious struggle which had been affirmed within the Central Committee. This change of direction included a new perspective also in the field of the international Church activity, with regards to which Kuroedov expressed great dissatisfaction. He accused the Metropolitan Nikolaj of ineffectiveness and asked for his resignation as chairman of the Department for External Relations of the Patriarchate. Nikolaj, who openly opposed the new religious policy of the party, gave clear signs that he did not want be responsible of foreign activity in the changed conditions of Church-State relations. On 21 June he resigned as President of the Department, and in September he was also removed from his ecclesiastic seat as Metropolitan of Krutickij Kolomenskij; he died less than a year later. Metropolitan Nikolaj was replaced by the Bishop Nikodim (Rotov), who had been requested as President of the Department of External Relations both by Nikolaj in his talks with Kuroedov, and by the Patriarch. With Nikodim the concept of how to conduct the Patriarchate's foreign policy has radically changed: if Nikolaj was an executor of state indications in foreign policy, Nikodim was a Soviet man, intelligent and well educated, he considered foreign policy a Church activity and saw value in coordinating such foreign policy activities with those of the Soviet State. He considered the external activity of the Church as a chance to strengthen the prestige of the Church itself in the eyes of the state, in order to prevent further persecutions¹⁶⁹.

Krushchev's revision of the ideological schema that postulated the world in two blocs, socialist and capitalist camps, also increased the Church's sphere of possible operations. The major and successful example of the expanded role of religion in Soviet foreign policy was the Prague Christian Conference (CPC), instrument of Soviet influence to Christianities of the Third World. Held in 1958 and attended by some 40 delegates from Eastern Europe and West Germany, the conference directed its greatest efforts to the revitalization of the propaganda for peace (inconsequential after the middle fifties) and had frequent delegations to Asia, Africa, and South America. The third meeting of the CPC held in 1960, was attended by 120 delegates, and 4 working groups. Messages were sent to the leaders of the 4 great powers, to the United Nations and All Christian in generals. At these meetings plans were ratified for the convocation of an All Christian Peace Assembly (ACPA) in Prague the following year. A more immediate results of the CPC was to be a counter-weight to certain operations in act at that time: in the less rigid environment of the Soviet foreign affairs, the Church in the East started to give up the hostility to Western Churches, which had been characteristic of the earlier period. The Russian Orthodox Church reconsidered the ecumenical movement as an opportunity, and fifties negotiations was taken heed which would lead to its admission to the World Council of Churches in 1961. It is worth to keep in mind that during the negotiations for rapprochement, Metropolitan Nikolai noted that "the contact of Western Christians with the church life of Orthodoxy has made an indelible impression on many"¹⁷⁰, by

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ "соприкосновение западных христиан с церковной жизнью Православия оказало на многих неизгладимое впечатление". See: Митрополит Николай, Речь на Всемирном Конгрессе народов

emphasizing that for the Russian Orthodox Church the main meaning of rapprochement and participation in the ecumenical movement lay in the ecumenical "Orthodox witness", thereby establishing the historical connection of the outlined rapprochement with the "Orthodox ecumenism" of 19th - early 20th centuries in the spirit of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and Resolutions of the Moscow Council of 1917-1918¹⁷¹. A more relevant function of the CPC regarding Soviet foreign policy was the contribution to the extensions of Soviet influence in the non aligned world. The CPC made a great effort to attract members from underdeveloped countries, despite the latter's traditional orientation to look towards Western parent Churches for guidance. Soviet attempts to exercise an influence in the Third World did not exhaust with the CPC. On the contrary, the measures used to add a religious dimension to Soviet influence in these areas were broader than the specific approaches suggested by the Conference. Activities of Churches in Africa had been vigorous but limited: Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Madagascar all received Russian delegations and exchange visits. Otherwise Christian Churches maintained a cautious role with regard to the various crisis on the African continent. As an exception, in 1969 a delegation of Christians from Nigeria was received from the Moscow Patriarchate. By contrast, Church attempts to gain influence in South America have been far more cautious, reflecting the general major degree of reserve that marked Soviet foreign policy in South America until its representatives were able to help define lines of action on pragmatic and theoretical grounds. One of the principal roadblocks in the implementation of this policy was Cuba, where the influence of Church was all but negligible, although churchmen from the USSR as well as their counterparts from Hungary and Czechoslovakia visited the country. Elsewhere in Latin America, except for Argentina where Orthodox influence was quite natural thanks to the presence of a large number of Russian émigrés, the Churches of the USSR had no effective opportunities for interchange. Countries which did not have diplomatic relations with USSR remained outside the sphere of contacts of the Moscow Patriarchates, and countries as Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, which recognized USSR continued to maintain closer contacts only with Russian Churches. Certainly, the overwhelming predominance of Catholicism should be considered the chief factor inhibiting any energetic use of religious influence in South America. The same Soviet policy of hostility to Rome was an obstacle to any significant activity of the Russian Church in South America. As far as concerns Asia, the competition for influence was in the sphere of Buddhism and Islam; this factor, together with the ties of Christian minorities with Western Christian missionary efforts, represented a problem for the activities of the Christian Churches of the USSR. Undoubtedly the major opportunity for increasing Soviet influence in the Far East had been the conflict in Vietnam, not only through the efforts conducted by the CPC, but also through telegrams to heads of State, protests to international organizations and appeals to Christian Churches, that had been ubiquitous in the Moscow Patriarchate's

мира в Стокгольме [Speech at the World Congress of the Peoples of the World in Stockholm], ZhMP, 1958, No. 8. pp. 30.

¹⁷¹ Find more details on this and for an exploration of the steps of the Russian Church towards the participation in the ecumenical movement see: Православие и экуменизм [Orthodoxy and Ecumenism], predanie.ru, <https://predanie.ru/book/83546-pravoslavie-i-ekumenizm/#/toc2>, (last accessed October 2021).

conduct of foreign relations throughout the war. Moreover, the Church was able to make some small contributions in welcoming secular visitors from North Vietnam and some aids to the North Vietnamese and to the National Liberation Front. At the close of the decade, other countries of the Far East were beginning to appear in the foreign affairs of the Russian Churches: after the Baptist World Alliance meeting in 1970, the Russian delegation made a tour of the Far East visiting Christian communities in Bangkok and Rangoon. Russian Churches did not neglect opportunities for exercising a presence in Japan: Russian Orthodox clerics visited the country many times, a large Soviet delegation participated in the World Conference on Religion and Peace held in Kyoto in October 1970, earlier in 1970 the Moscow Patriarchate initiated a major realignment of its relations with the Japanese Orthodox Church (from pre-revolutionary Russian Orthodox missions). Highly beneficial to bilateral relations was the agreement according to which, if the US Metropolia received autocephaly, any American jurisdictional relations with the Japanese Orthodox Church were ended and the latter became an Autonomous Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. This allowed the Japanese Church to gain a major level of freedom in the regarding its structural organizations, and allowed Moscow to look forward in increasing its influence on Orthodox minority in Japan. Middle Eastern Church activities resumed their importance dating back to Patriarch Aleksii's visit in 1945, and the activities of the sixties were preceded by a second visit in 1960, when the Patriarch visited Damascus, Beirut, Jordan, Jerusalem, Cairo and Alexandria and he concluded it unlike the previous one done in 1945, with a conference with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul and a visit to Athens before returning to Moscow. The tour had two scopes: it was motivated by pan-Orthodox considerations, and served to inaugurate a deepest Soviet presence in the area. Jerusalem was the recipient of much more attention. The Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem received much support. In 1964 the first Russian Orthodox Eastern pilgrimage to the Holy Land in fifty-five years took place. In 1966 a Russian delegation visited a monastery in Sinai, at that time part of the UAR. In addition, the issue of Russian properties in Jerusalem, some of which were under the possession of the hostile Synod Abroad of the émigré Russian Church, was raised infrequently. Soviet policy efforts during the Six Day War between Israel and Arab States were considerable in June 1967. By contrast, the Church remained quite silent on the crisis, silence that prevailed throughout the Churches of Eastern Europe and the USSR. Utilizing the Churches in a support campaign of defeated Arabs might have risked contra-productive effects, both because of the equation between Christianity and pro-Israeli sentiments and for possible attacks to Jews in Eastern Europe and in USSR. The Churches were brought into the dispute in a tangential way. On 4 July the Working Group of the CPC that met in Zagorsk issued a statement supporting the Soviet position on the events in Middle East. In November, Hromaska and others admitted CPC's failure to devote more attention to the issue. On 22 February 1968 Nikodim (Rotov) generated a small amount of publicity against Israel by sending a telegram to the President of Israel in which he protested against the incidents compromising Russian properties, and by answering to the telegram in which these incidents were denied with a letter, sending copies to the World Council of Churches leaders giving specifics.

From the inception of the Soviet State, Islam became the first of the world's religions which figured in the planning and discussion of Soviet foreign policy. In 1918 a Union for the Liberation of the East was established. In September 1920 a week-long conference of representatives from Eastern countries was held in Baku, where a number of Muslim dignitaries were invited. During these years a debate concerning the Muslim world animated Communist circles. At the end of the 1920s, Soviet policy turned inwards and for the next decade Islam played no important role in Soviet foreign policy. As happened with all other religions, the Soviet regime engaged in a massive effort to eradicate the influence of Islam in the country. The situation radically changed with the advent of World War II. In need of support, the Soviet government welcomed the service of Muslim religious leaders, and clergy began to participate in the preparation of foreign propaganda in support of Soviet war effort. Soviet Muslims participated in the preparation of foreign propaganda in support of Soviet war efforts, Soviet Muslims participated in numerous visits to Muslim countries to propagate Soviet views in this part of the world. Muslim made two contributions to the execution of Soviet foreign policy: 1. broadening the range of contacts open to the Soviet Union in Muslim countries, and 2. shielding the USSR from possible reactions to policies applied to Muslim domestically. This happened in 1954 when a group of Syrian scientists, who had visited the USSR during the peak of attacks on religion, brought back reports touting the freedoms enjoyed by Soviet Muslims. After the rupture with the People's Republic of China, when the Sino-Soviet rupture became public, the Soviet Regime used to occasionally mention Chinese maltreatment of Muslims in its propaganda arsenal. With the development of the Sino-Soviet schism, the USSR found itself in secondary position in Indonesia. Relations with Indonesia were nevertheless strongest in the area of the Western Pacific, and as early as in 1956 President Sukarno was granted an audience with Chief Mufti of Central Asia and Kazakstan. At the time of his visit in Tashkent, Soviet participation in Muslim gatherings in Indonesia was vigorous. Relations between Soviet and Indonesian Muslims weakened after the putsch in 1965, with the general collapse of Soviet relations with the country, and a sceptical attitude lingered long thereafter. The range of Soviet activities in the Muslim field extended beyond the normal propaganda and the diplomacy of personal visits: in the early 1950s Soviet Muslims sent monetary aid to the needy in the wake of the Suez crisis and of floods in Pakistan. In 1959 an edition of the Koran (5000 copies) was published in Tashkent and made available to foreign Muslims on numerous occasions. Soviet leaders have always been careful to send New Year greetings to the Islamic world. In 1966 Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny sent a telegram of greetings to Nasser, and Kosygin and Podgorny sent a New Year greetings telegram to Algeria, the UAR, the Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Mauritania, Tunisia, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Somalia, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The annual hajj was of particular significance both for propaganda value and for providing special occasion of visits: the first group who did the pilgrimage with aircraft provided by the Soviet government did so in 1944. Soviet Muslims have also devoted great energies to participation in international conferences. Muslims from the USSR have frequently served at general conferences such as those on Disarmament, the World Congress Religions in Delhi in 1958 or the World Conference on

Religion and Peace held in Kyoto in 1970. Soviet Muslims were among the 120 delegates at the Sixth World Islamic Congress in Mogadishu.

In contrast to Islam, Buddhism has not played so extensive a role in Soviet foreign policy. Buddhism's role has been more sporadic, and Buddhist appeared in international arena more infrequently. The main determinant in Soviet foreign policy considerations has been the non-Communist West, in which the Churches of USSR and Eastern Europe have participated widely. Indeed, the most basic of all services which Eastern Churches rendered was to assist in the image-building process. From the beginning of the Stalin era and amid awareness of the importance of public opinion, the USSR has devoted much attention to creating a favourable impression among Western people, by allocating resources to mass media, undertaking cultural and tourist exchanges and engaging in numerous activities whose purpose was to enhance the country's image in the West. As has been said above, an illustration of this process may be found in the relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Baptist World Alliance, the Prague Christian Peace Conference, and the CPC.

One of the most important aspects in contemporary foreign affairs of Russian Orthodox Church are the attempts of rapprochement with the Roman Catholic Church. From the very foundation of the Soviet State, the Vatican, according to Soviet diplomats, held a hostile position towards the USSR. On various occasions Pope Pius XII pronounced declarations against the Soviet Union and socialist countries. Although tactics changed under the new Pope John XXIII, the prevalent anti-communist orientation of the Vatican did not appear to change. Closer relations with the Vatican would have great significance for several reasons: the situation in South America, the role played by Catholicism in Eastern Europe and in the USSR itself, where the strong presence of Byzantine rite and the Uniate showed that Catholic sentiments refused to disappear in western regions even after decades of complete suppression. Therefore, any rapprochement with the Vatican offered considerable benefits to the Soviet States in maintaining control of its own domain. Rome raised massive protests against persecutions of religion in Russia, and Soviet State reciprocated with a strong propaganda against the Catholic Church. At the end of World War II, Pope Pius XII excommunicated the Communists and their collaborators, while Soviet propaganda against the Vatican remained strong. It was only with the transformation of Soviet foreign policy after Stalin's death and with the election of a new Pope that tensions began to relax. John XXIII initiated this process. The Vatican's blanket condemnation of Communism was abandoned in favour of a more charitable attitude. Khrushchev himself expressed appreciation for the Pope's new approach to the changes, and the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* received continuing and eminently favourable publicity in the Soviet press. Nevertheless, prior to the convocation of the Second Vatican Council, during the pan-Orthodox consultation at Rhodes in 1962, it was agreed that the Orthodox Churches would not send observers to this event. However, immediately before the Council, Mgr. Willibrands who, in 1960, would succeed to leadership of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, visited Moscow, and when Vatican II opened, two observers from the Moscow Patriarchate, the priest Vitalii Borovoy and the Archimandrite Vladimir Kotlyarov were in attendance. The Russian Church thus became the only

Orthodox Church to be represented at the Council. Andrea Riccardi wrote: “the Russian observers’ presence in the Vatican II was the result of something more than an agreement. It represented the meeting between two convergent historical processes within two [...] For the Catholics it was clearly the result of the opening of Pope John XXIII and of the Vatican Council II. Within the Eastern Orthodox panorama, the Russian Church represented the widest community strongly rooted in the people. Beyond this the Moscow Patriarchate was for the Vatican an important way to reach the Soviet capital. For Russian Orthodox the relationship with the Holy See was a part of the strategy of opening of the 1960 and gained increasing value, also thanks to Nikodim’s personal interpretation”¹⁷².

At the time of Khrushchev’s reign, apparently as a result of an agreement reached privately during Vatican II, the Soviet State made the concession of releasing the long imprisoned leader of the Uniate Church, Metropolitan Slipiy, who arrived in Rome early in 1963. Khrushchev’s son-in-law’s visit to the Pope provided official proof that hostility was broken. Nevertheless, a degree of ambiguity persisted in the attitude of the Russian Church towards Rome. In 1964 Cardinal Heenan of Great Britain was invited to Moscow, and the following February Nikodim expressed full support for the dialogue with Rome. However the picture was complicated by the initiatives taken by the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, this on the basis of the resumption from the Russian side of the competition for primacy¹⁷³ in the Orthodox world. In January 1964 for example, Patriarch Aleksii expressing approval of the meeting between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem, took care to emphasize that any actions taken by the Ecumenical Patriarch are of significance for that Church alone, and do not necessarily have any relevance for other Orthodox Churches. The same position was reiterated two years later by Nikodim who in a TASS interview stated that the Ecumenical Patriarch’s withdrawal of the ancient anathemas against Rome was not necessarily representative of the entire body of Orthodoxy. In 1967 the President of the USSR Podgorny, on an official visit to Italy, met the Pope. The event attracted great publicity because it marked the first instance in history of direct, personal contacts between the government of the USSR and the Pope. Contacts between Rome and the Russian Church accelerated rapidly. In December 1967 Willibrands was invited to Moscow by Patriarch Aleksii to discuss theological issues. Nikodim reciprocated by visiting Rome in October 1969, and in 1969 and 1970 consultations were held with US Catholics. This movement towards rapprochement was confirmed by the vigorous relations with Rome that, especially in the sixties, were initiated both by the Church and by the state in the Catholic area of Eastern Europe.

¹⁷² Roccucci Adriano, “Russian Observers at Vatican II”, note pp. 68.

¹⁷³ When in the 11th century the schism occurred between Rome and Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which had always been the second, took the first place in the family of the Orthodox Churches. Primacy is determined in conformity with the tradition of sacred diptychs and represents primacy in honour. This tradition can be traced back to the canons of Ecumenical Councils (Canon 3 of the Second Ecumenical Council, Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and Canon 36 of the Sixth Ecumenical Council) and has been reconfirmed throughout church history in the actions of Councils of individual Local Churches and in the practice of liturgical commemoration whereby the Primate of each Autocephalous Church mentions the names of those of other Local Churches in the order prescribed by the sacred diptychs. The Russian Orthodox Church has never regarded this primacy as the primacy of power or jurisdiction.

Inter-orthodox relations, on the other hand, have not been marked by such a quest for harmony. Participation of the Moscow Patriarchate in pan-Orthodox meetings was not completely free of reluctance, in particular because of the traditional identification of the pan-Orthodox movement with the zeal for unity of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Relations with the Orthodox churches of the Russian emigration had always been difficult. The Soviet State regularly attacked this Church in its propaganda and the Patriarchate shared the State's disdain in this regard. At the pan-Orthodox meeting in Geneva in 1968, Nikodim referred to a strong objection that the Moscow Patriarchate made in 1965 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate because his bishop, Metropolitan Emilianos conducted a joint liturgy with the Synod's Archbishop Antony and warned the other Orthodox Churches not to have anything to do with this Church. In May 1967 Aleksii sent a telegram to Athenagoras warning him to avoid all contacts with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Metropolia of America during their projected visit to the Middle East and three months later lodged a complaint against the presence of bishops of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the ordination of a bishop of the US Metropolia. During the 1960s it became increasingly evident that the competition with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the desire for pre-eminence in Orthodoxy was being revived in the conduct of the foreign affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. Efforts to erode the position of the Ecumenical Patriarch took diverse forms, ranging from Moscow's continuing refusal to accede to pay a fraternal visit returning Aleksii's visit to Istanbul in 1960 to a number of actions aimed to alter the balance of power in the Orthodox World. Among these episodes we can mention the resistance of the Moscow Patriarchate to Greek annexation with regard to the Cyprus dispute, the episode that took place with the Church of Antioch in 1966, the announced unilateral decision to offer limited intercommunion to the Roman Catholics, and the consultations with the Russian Metropolia in the US in order to grant the latter autocephaly¹⁷⁴.

From the end of the seventies and till the mid 1980s Soviet religious diplomacy decreased because of the outbreak of war in Afghanistan. Relations with western and Muslim countries noticeably decreased during this time. Representatives of Soviet Churches sought to occupy a leading position in international peacekeeping and anti-war conferences (International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Christian Peace Conference, All Christian Peace conference). So, in 1968 Metropolitan Nikodim became representative of the Committee for the continuation of Christian Peace conference's works, and in 1975 one of the Presidents of the Conference. With the complications on the international scenario brought by the Cold War and with the efforts of the USSR for establishing relations with Europe during the Helsinki process, leaders of the USA started using the issue of violations of human rights as the weak link of Socialist countries with the aim of undermining Soviet international relations. Therefore, the publication of the 1976 *Appeal to members of Christian Churches of the USSR* (*Обращения членов христианских церквей СССР*), drawn up and signed by Soviet religious dissidents, caused serious

¹⁷⁴

Agreement became effective in 1970.

worries among Soviet leadership. Reducing negative consequences of the publication, as well as of the discussion about the critics denounced in the letter at the World Council Assembly raised by one of the representative of the illegal Evangelical Christian Council,¹⁷⁵ required serious efforts to the Council for Religious Affairs, to the Minister for foreign Affairs and to the embassies. The Council for Religious Affairs met directors of departments for religious affairs of Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, in order to develop a common line of conduct during the WCC assembly. In addition, the Council held meeting with representatives of the clergy of Eastern Europe. Statements of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in which the use of religious situation in USSR by representatives of Western countries was defined tendentious. Moreover, clergy, bishops and faithful all sent letters to the WCC. These letters contained protests against the falsification of data regarding the position of believers in the USSR. These measures led to a resounding diplomatic victory for the USSR. Significantly, during the WCC assembly, critical discussion of human rights' conditions in Soviet Union was not undertaken and the documents presented by church leaders were not considered. The main aim of Soviet leadership was to present a favourable image of USSR on international arena. The result was reached thanks to renounce of the same clergy to denounce the conditions of believers in the country. And thanks to the empathy with socialist model created thanks to speeches about the problem of mass poverty in the South, the importance of Social Christianity, the issue of unfair distribution of resources, aggressive policy of the USA and problems of gender and racial discrimination. In addition, representatives of Soviet Churches joined the Helsinki process, consistently focused on the issue of social justice. Indeed, peacekeeping activity had a fundamental meaning both for Soviet State and international authorities. In 1982 Patriarch Pimen was even invited to New York because the Russian Church was included in the list of non-governmental organizations, whose representatives received the right to give a speech in front of participants in the second special session of the general Assembly on disarmament. Another example of active participation of church diplomats in peace-loving policy of the Soviet State can be considered the conference *Религиозные деятели за прочный мир, разоружение и справедливые отношения между народами* (*Religious leaders for lasting peace, disarmament and right relations among nations*), held in Moscow in 1977, attended by almost 600 influential religious leaders from 107 countries, that adopted a declarations on the right of the Palestine people to establish its own state and affirmed the need for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied territories, condemned racism, apartheid and dictatorial regimes in Latin America. In 1980 the Church was involved in the propaganda campaign against the deployment of American missiles in Western Europe. In order to develop this political line, party structures were ready to strengthen further international contacts among the Russian Church and the Vatican despite complications linked to Polish events. Peacekeeping activities of the Russian Church were positively evaluated by Soviet politicians. For example, at the meeting of the First Deputy Chairman

¹⁷⁵ Unrecognized by the Soviet leadership, the association of unregistered communities of Evangelical Christians-Baptists had by the mid-1970s. channels of transmission of information about the persecution of co-religionists, which were often condemned Soviet courts for the dissemination of information discrediting the Soviet system.

of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, V. V. Kuznetsov and the head of the Department for External Church Relations DECR, Metropolitan Filaret in 1983 held after the conference *Religious Leaders for saving the sacred gift of life from a nuclear catastrophe* (*Религиозные деятели за спасение священного дара жизни от ядерной катастрофы*), Soviet leader noted that abroad the voice of Russian Church was more influential than the voice of politicians¹⁷⁶.

1.3 The Post-Soviet revival, the evolution of Church-State relations

"[...] Русская Православная Церковь, всегда разделявшая судьбы своего народа, являла здесь великие примеры своего подвижнического служения Родине, к которому она призвана своими богозаповеданными традициями. Отсюда вышел навстречу врагам Отчизны духовно вскормленный Митрополитом Алексием и благословленный преподобным Сергием новопрославленный ныне Церковью святой благоверный князь Димитрий Донской. Здесь под покровом Церкви соиздавалось единство Великой Руси. Здесь, в Кремле, чувствуешь особое сопереживание радости за наше Великое Отечество, за наш народ, и в эти высокотожественные для нас дни невольно повторяешь слова Митрополита Киевского Илариона, произнесенные им через семь десятилетий после Крещения

¹⁷⁶ Fletcher William C.. *Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy 1945-1970.*; Chumachenko Tatiana A. *Church and State in Soviet Russia*; Fletcher G. William *Religion and the Soviet State. A Dilemma of Power*; Kirby Dianne. *Religion and the Cold War*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; Roccucci Adriano. *Stalin e il Patriarca*; Riccardi Andrea, *Il Vaticano e Mosca, 1940-1960*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1992; Belyakova Nadezhda Alekseyevna, *Религиозная дипломатия на службе советского государства в годы холодной войны (в период Н.С. Хрущева и Л.И. Брежнева)* [*Religious diplomacy in the service of the Soviet state during the Cold War (during the period of N.S. Khrushchev and L.I. Brezhnev)*], Kontury Global ' NYKH Transformatsiy 11:4, 2018, pp. 130-149; Vasil'eva Olga Jur'evna, *Русская Православная Церковь и Второй Ватиканский Собор: факты, события, документы* [*Russian Orthodox Church and Second Vatican Council*], Moscow: Lepta, 2004. (On religious diplomacy of the Soviet Union see also: Vasil'eva Olga Jur'evna, *Русская Православная Церковь в политике.*; Curtiss John Shelton, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State 1917-1950*, Boston: Peter Smith Pub Inc, 1953; Gorodetsky, Gabriel, "Geopolitical Factors in Stalin's Strategy and Politics in the Wake of the Outbreak of World War II", in *Russia in the Age of Wars*, ed. by Romano Andrea, Milano: Feltrinelli, 2000; Morozzo della Rocca Roberto, *Le Chiese Ortodosse. Una Storia contemporanea*, Bologna: Studium, 1997; Volokitina Tatiana V., «Власть и церковь в Восточной Европе. 1944-1953. Документы российских архивов». [*Power and Church in Eastern Europe. 1944-1953. Documents from Russian archives*] in Volokitina Tatiana V, Murashko Galina Pavlovna. P., Noskova Albina Fedorovna, *Власть и церковь в период общественных трансформаций 40-50-х годов XX века: Очерки истории* [*Moscow and Eastern Europe. Power and the Church in the Period of social transformations of the 40-50s of the twentieth century: Essays on History*], Rosspen: Moskva, 2008; Vassilij Alekseev, *Неожиданный диалог* [*Unexpected dialogue*], in *Agitator* 6. 1989, pp. 41-44; Lughterhandt Otto, "The Council for Religious Affairs" in *Sabrina P. Ramet, Religious policy in the Soviet Union*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 55-83; Hebly J. A., "The state, the church, and the oikumene: the Russian Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches, 1948-1985" in *Ramet Sabrina P., Religious policy in the Soviet Union*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 105-122; Bociurkiw Bohdan R., *Church and State in the Soviet Union*, *International Journal*, 14:3, 1959, pp- 182-189; Pospelovskij Dimitrij V., "Stalin e la Chiesa. Il "Concordato" del 1943 e la vita della Chiesa Ortodossa Russa alla luce di documenti d'archivio" in *La notte della Chiesa Russa* ed. by Kirill di Smolensk, Averincev Sergej S., Bobrinskoy B., Comunità di Bose: Edizioni Qiqaiion, 2000, pp. 51-86.

Руси о том, что живем мы не "в слабой и безвестной земле....но в Русской, о которой знают и слышат во всех четырех концах земли [..]"¹⁷⁷.

Celebrations of the second Millennium of the baptism of Rus' in 1988 affirmed the close interrelation among Russian identity and Orthodoxy. Pictures of the Russian president Boris Eltsin next to Patriarch Aleksii II became the symbolic representation of a new relationship between Church and State based on a renovated perception of national identity.

To understand how this new relationship developed, it is important to consider not only the meaning of the byzantine symphonia between secular and religious powers, but also data collected in 1991, 1993 and 1996 regarding the overlap between Orthodoxy and national identities. A survey conducted by Kimmo Kääriäinen and Dmitrii Furman reported that when asked the question:

Without any connection with your church attendance, do you consider yourself to be an adherent of any particular denomination?

People who answered "yes" in 1991 were 34%, in 1993 were 43% and in 1996 were 36%. Correspondingly the percentage of people who defined themselves believers were: 23%, 32%, 34%, that means that for many Russians it was possible to be an adherent of a certain faith without being a believer. Indeed, the survey found that 7% of Orthodox believers attended church services once a month, 19% several times a year, 29% once a year or less and 45% never. When those who identified themselves as adherents of a denominations were asked which denomination, the majority replied Orthodox, in 1991: 80%, in 1993 and 1996: 91%. However non-Orthodox was the reply of representatives of different ethnic minorities, mostly Muslims. The survey was conducted again in 1999. This time Kimmo Kääriäinen and Dmitrii Furman¹⁷⁸ asked:

Do you consider yourself an adherent of Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism, or other confessions, or an unbeliever? (they did not ask before if respondents identify themselves as adherents of any confession). With this formulation, 82% of all Russian respondents called themselves Orthodox, 3% called themselves non-believers and 13% replied that they don't know. A survey conducted by the Levada Center showed that when answering the question: In which measure, from your point of view, do the President and the following State organs, social movements and organizations deserve your trust?, in 1999 the percentage of people that fully trusted the President was 2%, 8% replied the

¹⁷⁷ Слово Святейшего Патриарха Пимена в Московском Кремле [The word of His Holiness Patriarch Pimen in the Moscow Kremlin], ZhMP, 88/9, pp. 31.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which has always shared the fate of its people, has shown great examples of its ascetic service to the Motherland, to which it is called by its God-confessed traditions. From here came out to meet the enemies of the Fatherland's spiritually nurtured by Metropolitan Aleksii and blessed by the Monk Sergius the Holy Prince Demetrius of Don, now newly restored by the Church. Here, under the cover of the Church, the unity of Great Russia was created. Here, in the Kremlin, you feel a special empathy for joy for our Great Fatherland, for our people, and in these days of high dignity for us, you involuntarily repeat the words of Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev, uttered by him seven decades after the Baptism of Russia, that we do not live in a weak and unknown land....but in the Russian land, which is known and heard in all four corners of the earth. My translation.

¹⁷⁸ Kääriäinen K., Furman D., *Orthodoxy as a Component of Russian Identity*, East-West Church Ministry Report, 10: 1, 2002 pp. 12-13.

Government, 36% the Church and religious organizations, and 34% the army. No one replied the State Duma¹⁷⁹.

These surveys showed that in the years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church not only was the most trusted organization compared to other community and government institutions, but that this trust was ideological because in reality only a small number of Russians had real contacts with the Russian Orthodox Church as an institution. Data confirmed the close connection that in Russian mind existed between Orthodoxy and national identity: indeed, dislocation of Communism and of Soviet Union, and the socio-economic crisis was accompanied by a crisis of identity, and by the search of new points of reference. From the start of perestroika a new model corresponding to the existence of a diversity of faiths was enshrined in the new legislation (1990 law), but soon this model was contested and regarded as utopian, not in keeping with Russian tradition that recognises the ethnic and religious dimension of national identity. Here Orthodoxy came to the rescue not only as religion but as the symbol of Russian spiritual worth, as the only interpreter of the national historical tradition and as the sole vehicle of the new post Soviet identity¹⁸⁰. In order to fully understand why Orthodoxy proved a potential resources for the restoration of a sort of “continuity” in Russian path, is important to examine the issues in historical perspective.

Roots of the conception of Russia as enlightened by the faith can be traced in Christening of 988, in the Byzantine conception of symphonia, in the idea of political space of Russian princes and tsars based on the identity triad “Religion, State People”¹⁸¹. This led to the gradual merging of two dimensions of Russianness: religious and ethnic. Christianization of Rus, the residents of which, en masse, voluntarily and spontaneously, converted to the new faith after prince Vladimir, who was christened in 988 following the footsteps of his grandmother Olga, was seen as the sign of the conversion of the Rus. The story is supplemented by the legend according to which the Kiev’s ruler, looking for a new religion for his state, invited the representatives of various confessions and, among Judaism, Islam, Western and Eastern Christianity, the ones that were presented to him, he chose Christianity of the Greek rite for the beauty of their rite. Another motif linked to the “myth” of the Kievan Rus, is the full realization in its territory of the ideal symphony

¹⁷⁹ Levada.ru, *Институциональное Доверие [Institutional Trust]*, 24.10.2019, <https://www.levada.ru/2019/10/24/institutsionalnoe-doverie-5/>, (last accessed July 2021).

¹⁸⁰ This close connection has been defined a sort of “belonging without believing”: some people did not consider themselves believers at all but feel associated to a denomination for a sense of connection to historical and cultural tradition. According to Mikhail Mchedlov this phenomenon helps also to understand the tendency that in the 1990s saw that up to 50 percent of nonbelievers observed religious holidays, attended church services and even participated in religious sacraments and rituals. Davie talked of “vicarious religion”, common in all Western societies and present on a remarkable scale also in Russia due to the fact that the majority of population, although not actively participating in religious life, approves the small group of regular church goers, who perform religion on behalf of the rest. This happens because Orthodox religion serves as a synonym for Russian self-identification (See: Sulsov Mikhail, *Digital Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet World*; Mikhail Mchedlov, *О состоянии религиозности в современной России [On the state of religiosity in modern Russia]*, Natsionalnoe i Religioznoe, Moscow: Rossiiskii Nezavisimyi Institut Sotsialnykh i Natsionalnykh Problem, 1996; Davie Grace, “Vicarious religion: a methodological challenge”, in *Everyday religion: observing modern religious lives*, ed. by Ammerman Nancy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 21-37).

¹⁸¹ Agadjanian, Alexander, *Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia*, pp. 100.

between Church and State. Indeed *The Social Doctrine*¹⁸² mentions that Kiev, with regard to symphony, surpassed Constantinople because in the context of Byzantium “the Church was repeatedly subjected to caesarean-papist claims from the state authorities, which were essentially the demands that the head of the state, the emperor, should have the decisive say in ordering church affairs. Along with the sinful human love of power, these claims had also a historical reason. The Christian emperors of Byzantium were direct successors of the Roman pagan rulers who, among their numerous titles, had that of *pontifex maximus*, chief priest. The caesarean-papist tendency manifested itself most bluntly and dangerously for the Church in the policy of heretical emperors, especially in the iconoclastic era”¹⁸³. Indeed, next to the language, the most important determinant of identity for Kievan Rus, was religion. Identification with Orthodoxy was for the elite of Kiev, the source of their separateness from neighbouring pagan people, a representation of their belonging to the Byzantine commonwealth and the factor forming their unfavourable attitude towards Western Christianity. The acceptance of the baptism gave rise to the authority of secular power thanks to the source of legitimization provided by monotheistic religion. The prestige of their power was intensified by the splendour of the Byzantine rituals, by the strengthening of princes’ power against the council, by the canonization of the members of the royal family (Boris and Gleb, Olga and Vladimir the Great). The Orthodox Church itself played an essential role in the centralization of the state, creating parallel structures of which particular units that were not strictly religious, fulfilled other functions as the establishment of schools, and of centres of art, and the development of written language. Moreover, the Church was the main institution ensuring a connection between Kiev and Constantinople, in fact since around 1037, the bishopric in Kiev had been administratively subordinated to Constantinople. In this scenario, the direct dependence on Byzantium, where the Kiev metropolitan was the first and foremost a vassal of the emperor, meant at the same time a certain independence of Kievan Church from the prince’s authority.

The Church also fulfilled political functions. Often the metropolitan of Kiev was called an arbitrator between the prince and the vassals or between particular claimants to the throne. A particular form of privileges for the clergy in the economic-jurisdictional sphere was the statute on the tithes, courts and clergy issued by Vladimir the Great, and Sudebnik of Yaroslav the Wise, according to which the clergy was free from customs fees, and to the Orthodox Church was granted the right to one tenth of the prince’s income, and entire villages, together with their residents and financial burdens could be sold to monasteries. In addition, Episcopal courts had exclusive jurisdiction in examining not only disputes involving the clergy, but also matters involving secular authorities in the sphere of family and morals. This indicates that the Christian religion, and the institutions connected with it, fulfilled in the state of the Slavs the role of identity building, legitimization and creation of culture in a broad sense: state and Church served as the central political symbols. From the time of Vladimir’s baptism, until the Mongol invasion of 1240, the Russian Orthodox Church created a structure that included 16 bishoprics and more than 60 monasteries, and had at its disposal a strong clergy. In the fifteenth century, this myth of Orthodox Rus would be the point of reference of the rulers of the

¹⁸² Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/>, (last accessed October 2021).

See paragraph 1.3.2.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

new Russian State as it appealed to the tradition of the Golden age interrupted by the Mongol yoke. Moreover, the idea of Holy Rus was forged from cultural oppositions: to the Tatars (XIII-XIV century), to the Latins of the West (XI-XIII century), to pagan tribes (during the expansion of the Empire), to Jews (especially following the annexation of Poland at the end of the eighteenth century), etc¹⁸⁴. Besides anti-western sentiments, from the middle of the fifteenth century there also appeared an anti-Greek resentment among Russian clergy, mainly due to the Ferrara-Florence Union: from the Russian perspective, Greeks who made an agreement with Rome were guilty of the sin of heresy, and because of this had lost their legitimacy as leaders of the universal church, the fate of which from that moment was entrusted to the Slavs. This idea of Russian rulers' special mission entrusted to them by Providence was proclaimed for the first time in the fifteenth century by Pakhomy Logofet, a Serbian Monk from Mount Athos, who foresaw the rule of the Russian dynasty in the Byzantine capital and who called Moscow the "new city of Constantinople"¹⁸⁵. The Orthodox Church was transformed into an autocephalous national institution very soon (in 1448 there was the one page de-facto announcement of autocephaly and the selection of Jonah by the bishops as the metropolitan of All Rus without the sanction of Constantinople, in 1589 a ceremonial establishment of the patriarchate and the selection of Metropolitan Job as the patriarch of Moscow and all Russia took place). At the end of sixteenth century, Russia was the largest and strongest state ruled by Orthodox monarchs, and in which there existed a patriarchate. The concept of *translation imperii* (transfer of rule), derived from Byzantine tradition, created the ideological basis for embodiment of the empire. It found its reflection in the *Legend of the White Cowl* (*Повесть о белом клобуке*) according to which the titular white klobuk - symbol of the bishop's authority - confirmed the status of the Russian Church as the repository of Christian truth. With the establishment of the Patriarchate of Moscow and All Russia, the hierarchs demanded the third position in the Christian pentarchy, after Byzantium and Alexandria, and before Antioch and Jerusalem, although the latter two were historically older than the Russian Church, and of the understanding of the bishopric of Peter¹⁸⁶. This was a clear manifestation of the clergy's conviction of the Russian Church's assumption of the mission and glory of Rome by the will of God. The letters of the monk Philoteus to Prince Vasily III and his son Ivan the Terrible provided the first mention of a vision of the Russian state as the third and final Rome, which after the downfall of the first two embodiments of the empire, was to continue the history of salvation by keeping the Christian faith. Some researchers claimed that the Third Rome theory was mainly a reaction to the Ferrara-Florence Union, and that in his letters Philoteus was referring to succession of churches and not of states. According to other researchers, the author saw in a universal Christian empire a strength capable of unifying the lands of Rus under Moscow's authority. Regardless, his idea became a source of national-idealism that had a strong influence on the identity of the Russian state. Thus, the conception of Moscow as the Third Rome defined the Russian grand prince as the

¹⁸⁴ Garzaniti Marcello, *Il cristianesimo in Russia da Vladimir a Pietro il Grande*, Roma, Coletti, 1988.

¹⁸⁵ Riasanovsky Nicholas V., *Russian Identities: A historical survey*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 64.

¹⁸⁶ Uspenskij Boris A., *Царь и патриарх: харизма власти в России (Византийская модель и ее русское переосмысление)* [*Tsar and Patriarch: Charisma of Power in Russia (The Byzantine Model and its Russian Reinterpretation)*], Moskva: Shkola Yazyki Russkoy Kul'tury, 1998, pp. 475-476. The understanding of Peter as the first Roman bishop goes back to the end of the second and the third centuries. See among others: Kelly John N.D., *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, Oxford, New York, 1986.

successor to the Byzantine emperor and, at the same time, put him in a position that had no direct precedent in the Byzantine model. The eschatological conception of Moscow as the Third Rome saw the Russian monarch as head of the last Orthodox kingdom, endowed with a messianic role¹⁸⁷. This eschatological concept had an anti-Greek character, at the cost of awareness of belonging to a universal church. In a geopolitical perspective, the recognition of Russia as the Third Rome obliged the rulers to realize the ideal of the universal Christian empire, expanding its influence for the glory of God. The concept of the Third Rome and the idea of the monk Philoteus reflected the ambition of both the tsars and the patriarchs of the sixteenth century Russia in which religion fulfilled functions of identity, legitimacy, mobilisation and integration. This implied a whole system of cultural and legal norms whereby adherence to Orthodoxy was accorded a full civic value.

The role of the Orthodox Church as a key institution legitimizing the authority of the tsars and providing the empire with an integrating idea persisted also in eighteenth century, when secular authorities gained a growing predominance over the Orthodox Church. A symbol of the close cooperation between the state and the church was the activity of the Commission for the Newly Christianized created in 1731 in the Kazan guberniya which carried out a Christianization campaign in the Volga region. Moreover, the Orthodox clergy actively participated in the Russification of other ethnicities, by establishing schools, and promoting the Russian language where Orthodox churches were built, in regions such as the Caspian Sea, Siberia, and Kamchatka. Beyond this, rulers took care of ensuring the superiority of the Russian Orthodox Church over all other churches, an example is that all religious communities after issuing of edicts guaranteeing religious freedom still needed the approval of Orthodox clergyman in order to establish new temple, and that the ban on building churches, mosques and synagogues near an Orthodox Church was still in force. The Holy Synod, the supreme organ of the Church, since 1721 was part of the State apparatus and, at least from the 1830s other religions became specific responsibility of special bodies of the Ministry of the Interior¹⁸⁸. Religious philosophy played an important role in shaping the worldview of Russian society in the nineteenth century. A manifestation of this was Sergey Uvarov's triad: Orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality (Православие, Самодержавие, Народность¹⁸⁹), which emphasized the sacral nature of tsars' power, and the sacred union between the State, the Church, the Russianness and Eastern Christianity. The *Code of Laws* of 1832 affirmed the prominence of the Eastern Orthodox Church (art. 40), and that the autocrat in power

¹⁸⁷ For Byzantine religious life the emperor did not fulfill such a messianic role: Christianity and empire in Byzantium were connected but independent spheres, so that Orthodoxy could be considered separately from the Orthodox empire. Transferring the status of the Byzantine emperor to the Russian monarch necessarily led to rethinking its status, because in Byzantium calling the emperor "basileus" (tsar) referred to the imperial tradition, and to the texts in which God is called tsar. Conversely, in Russia, where the imperial tradition was not so relevant, calling a person a tsar had a mystical meaning[®] (Nota 36 p 82 di tsar and god) The Russian tsar acquired a special charismatic power for his subordinates: he was called the "righteous sun" (праведное солнце), an expression that in liturgical text refers only to Christ, and testifies the developing of this sacralisation. See: Uspenskij Boris, Zhivov Viktor, *Tsar and God and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics*, Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012.

¹⁸⁸ Curanovic Alicja, *The guardians of traditional values*; Rusak Vladimir, *История Российской Церкви [History of the Russian Church]*, Pravoslavnaia biblioteka, 1993, https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Istorija_Tserkvi/istorija-rossijskoj-tserkvi/9, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁸⁹ The slogan was created in 1832 by Count S. Uvarov, minister of Education in 1833-1849, that came to represent the official ideology of the imperial government of Nicholas I.

can belong to this Church alone (Articles 41 and 63). As regards people of other religion (иноверцы¹⁹⁰) the policy was of returning them to Orthodoxy, whereas, calling upon conversion of Orthodox believers to another religion was regarded as proselytism and was strictly forbidden¹⁹¹. Missionary activity of Orthodox clergy continued to be threatened as an instrument for widening the sphere of influence of the Russian State. In 1860 two institutions were created to coordinate all the missions of the Russian Orthodox Church: the Orthodox Missionary Society and the Society for the Restoration of Orthodox Christian Renewal in the Caucasus; in 1857 the *Code of Law* (Свод Законов) recognized the special status of Orthodox Church in the empire. In 1920 the Eurasianism movement integrated Orthodoxy into the Slav-Turkish formula of identity, linking it to the empire. Although the separation from the state, the Bolshevik regime endeavoured to embody certain elements of Holy Russia (the idea of a symbol of faith, the doctrine of Soviet people as the chosen people, and its messianic role in the new empire). Moreover, as we saw in the previous paragraph, Orthodoxy continue to be linked to Russian nationalism and patriotism, and the archetype of the Orthodox nation continued to be part of the symbolism of the regime in power¹⁹², and to be used for purposes of mobilization.

The clearest evidence of this symbolism may be seen in the national celebrations that took place in 1988 to mark the millennium of Christianization of Russia: the meeting between the last General Secretary of the Communist Party Mikhail Gorbachev and Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia signed the end of the state atheism's policy and inaugurated the advent of religious freedom. This anti-communism democratic project imposed the recognition of universal values and freedoms, and the guaranteeing of pluralism. The issue concerned also the compatibility between the project of a modern, secular Russia and the domination of an ethnic group. This model corresponded to the new legislation of 1990; however, a convergence of factors led to the resurgence of Russia as Orthodox nation and to the idea of Holy Russia as one of the variants able to mark Russian identity. Within the new Post-Soviet secularized context not only did the Orthodox Church try to discover a new *modus vivendi* and to restore its prominence and the pre-revolutionary variant of limited pluralism, but the State was also in search of a new legitimization, as society was trying to affirm a new cultural identity. The Russian Orthodox Church, fully aware of its historical prominence, naturally regarded itself as the

¹⁹⁰ Agadjanian pointed out that In the first article of the first chapter of the Muscovite Law Code (Ulozhenie) of 1649 ("Blasphemers and troublemakers in the Church"), "persons of other religions" are distinguished from "Russian men". With the time the word "inorodtsy" (person of foreign origins) ceased to be used to refer to Christian people. Agadjanian Alexander, *Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia*, note 5, pp. 100.

¹⁹¹ The rule was introduced in the decree on religious tolerance of Peter I in 1702 and was never rescinded.

¹⁹² For example, there was the state-sponsored movement to salvage and restore national monuments and artistic works extended to certain religious artifacts. Soviet celebrations of heroes and events closely aligned with the nation's religious history, as the state-sponsored festivities surrounding the inauguration of the monument to Prince Vladimir, canonized long time ago by the Church and now holding aloft the same cross that once topped the Novgorod monument dedicated to 1000 years of Russia. Literary works by Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, and lesser writers continued to feed religious themes to Soviet readers. Special mention in the field of literature and arts deserves also the symbol of babushka -- old grandmother, the basic source of primary bonding in Russia, where social psychologists find the most effective force in shaping personal character in the formative stages. Undaunted by official propaganda, babushka crossed herself, went to church, told her grandchildren old tales. See: Pankhurst Jerry, *Religious Culture: Faith in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, University of Nevada, Center for Democratic Culture, 2012, pp. 1-34.

sole interpreter of the national tradition and as the vehicle of the new Post-Soviet identity; for this reason the enlisting of Orthodoxy in the shaping of the new nation seemed quite natural, considering its dominant position and link with the dominant ethos. Yet, as we saw above, the difference was that if in the pre-revolutionary period Orthodoxy was mainly a religious reality permeating the whole society, in the present-day Russia, as confirmed by the surveys, it was mainly a cultural symbol, an ideological construct. Indeed, Russian nationalism has been a prominent feature of Russian policy since the dissolution of Soviet Union and, one of the main features of nationalistic view, has been the rehabilitation of Orthodox spirituality in the life of the country¹⁹³. To describe this loyalty to the idealised Orthodox nation, which is against pluralism, liberalism and individualism, we will refer to nationalism or ethnic formula of identity as Agadjanian, Knox and Mitrofanova¹⁹⁴ did, instead Verkhovsky, Kostiuik, Rock¹⁹⁵ talked of Russian Orthodox fundamentalism that draws on nostalgia for a past based on an Orthodox monarchy.

In the context of the ethnic model of nationhood it is possible to find a number of different variants that introduce the religious element.

Agadjanian mentioned that among the several variants of the ethnic model of nationhood that introduced a religious component into their formula of identity there is a variant that considers the Old Believers as the authentic expression of Holy Russia, another that stresses the Slav Orthodox unity which refers to the tradition of Tyutchev and Dostoevsky. It also includes the theory of the natural union of the “three fraternal people (Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian)”¹⁹⁶ that is acknowledged by Solzhenitchin, the literary nationalist, and that is marked by a nostalgia for a traditional, popular and Orthodox way of life, in line with the tradition of Ivan Kirievsky and Alexii Khomiakov and tending likewise towards Slavophilia. Close to these there are a large group of Orthodox organizations as the Sretensky (Hypapante) Monastery, the Radonezh brotherhood and the publishing house such as “The Russian House” and “The Russian Messenger” whose main ideological concern is the construction of a Russian Orthodox State, and groups which called for an Orthodox State in the form of Russian monarchy as the “Union for the

¹⁹³ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*; Roussellet Kathy J., *The Challenges of religious pluralism in post-soviet Russia*, The Challenges of religious pluralism in post-soviet Russia”, in *Religious diversity in the Russian Federation* ed. by Koenig Matthias, International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), 2:2, 2000, pp. 55-75; Billington James, *Ikona i topór. Historia kultury rosyjskiej*.

¹⁹⁴ See: Agadjanian Alexander, *Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia*; Knox Zoe, *Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism and Patriarch Aleksii II*, Nationalities Paper 33:4, 2005, pp. 533-545; Mitrofanova Anastasia, “Russian ethnic nationalism and religion today” in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015* ed. by Kolstø Pal, Blakkisrud Helge, Edinburgh University Press, 2016, pp. 104-131; Potts Richard D., *The triad of Nationality revised: the Orthodox Church and the State in Post-Soviet Russia*, University of Maine: Digital Commons, 2016, 1-55.

¹⁹⁵ See: Rock Stella, *'Militant Piety': Fundamentalist Tendencies in the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood Movement*, George Fox University: Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 22:3, 2002, pp. 1-18; Verkhovsky Alexander, *The Orthodox in the Russian Ultranationalist Movements*, George Fox University: Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 22:3, 2002, pp. 1-20; Verkhovsky Alexander, *The Role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Nationalist, Xenophobic and Antiwestern Tendencies in Russia Today: Not Nationalism, but Fundamentalism*, Religion, State and Society, 30:4, 2002, pp. 333-345; Kostiuik Constantin, *Православный фундаментализм [Orthodox Fundamentalism]*, Politicheskie issledovaniia 5, 2000, pp. 133-154.

¹⁹⁶ Agadjanian Alexander, *Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia*, pp. 112.

Moral Rebirth of the Motherland” or others who talked of Orthodox cosmism and of spirituality that can be promoted only by a strong authoritarian State¹⁹⁷.

Mitrofanova¹⁹⁸ examining ideology and practices of Russian ethnic nationalists, distinguished among true nationalists who seeks an ethnically homogeneous state of Russian people, and patriots, who are ready to sacrifice the special position of the Russian majority in the name of preserving the territory of the state. The political demarcation between nationalists and patriots have been accompanied by a religious demarcation. Statist patriots preserved their traditional orientation towards Orthodoxy, instead ethnic nationalists split in three different groups: Orthodox nationalists, who may belong to the Russian Orthodox Church or to un-canonical religious organisations, contemporary Slavic pagans (neo-pagans), secularists, as well as those who consider religious questions unimportant and do not advertise their religious affiliation. A starting point of Orthodox nationalists is the rejection of the contemporary world and the idea of the special mission of Russia and Russian people, considered as the katechon “(the one who withholds, keeping back the collapse of the world and the establishment of the rule of the Antichrist)”¹⁹⁹. Most nationalists are often against the official church, in particular because of its collaboration with the ruling regime. In fact Orthodox nationalists see the secular authorities as being against the Russian people and Orthodoxy. Pagan nationalists hold that Christianity is the religion of the weak, they believes that paganism is the best religion for the Russian people in order to protect themselves from foreigners²⁰⁰. Both Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin demonstrated their convictions that the Russian idea could provide a unifying concept for the nation: political and religious figures appealing to national identity frequently argued that Russia was culturally in opposition to the West²⁰¹. Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the Communist Party (KPRF), and Vladimir Zhirinovskii, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) in particular appropriated Orthodox rhetoric. Ziuganov presented the Communist Party as the party of patriots: in a 1995 interview he spoke of his frequent relation with Metropolitan Ioann of St. Petersburg, a high-profile anti-Semitic prelate, and of his support among Orthodox hierarchy, clergy and laity. Ziuganov also referred to the KPRF’s ‘respect’ for Orthodoxy, and of the need of protecting Orthodoxy, the Russian idea and the Church from foreign interlopers. Zhirinovskii put attention on religious issues in order to underline the need of defending Russia from foreigner values, and its national and international status²⁰². This rapprochement between Church and State is perfectly in line with the model we

¹⁹⁷ Agadjanian Alexander, *Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia*.

¹⁹⁸ Mitrofanova Anastasia, “Russian ethnic nationalism and religion today”.

¹⁹⁹ Dushenov Konstantin, ‘Выступление на открытии собрание верховажского отделения Союза Русского народа 25 марта 2006 года’ [Speech at an open meeting of the North-Western section of the Union of the Russian People on 25 March 2006], in *Poka my russkie* [While We Are Russians], film, directed by Konstantin. Dushenov, Russia: Pole Kulikovo, 2006 cit. in Rutland Peter, “The place of economics in Russian national identity debate” in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015* ed. by Kolstø Pal, Blakkisrud Helge, Edinburgh University Press, 2016, pp. 336–361.

²⁰⁰ Mitrofanova Anastasia, “Russian ethnic nationalism and religion today”.

²⁰¹ Knox pointed out that evidence of Boris Yeltsin’s conviction that the Russian idea could be a unifying concept was demonstrated when he announced a competition for a text formulating an “idea for Russia” on the front of the *Rossiskaia gazeta* in mid 1996, alongside a reproduction of a painting of Il’ia Glazunov, a nationalist artist. Later Putin linked the concept of the Russian idea to an organic unification of universal values with Russian traditional values. See: Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*. p.

139

²⁰² Ibid, p. 148.

described at the beginning of the section. Indeed, the model of an established State Church, never seriously considered, had been rejected in favour of the old conception of symphony between Church and State. The historian of the Church Anton Kartashev²⁰³ observed that in the Byzantine model, Church and State form a unique organism, where the subjects are materially and morally governed by two institutions that exercise their power in agreement: the monarchy and the clergy. Indeed, this type of cooperation in Russia can be considered an active collaboration, midway between the total dependence typical of the Synodal period and the complete independence, typical of the secular model. In the *Basis of the Social Doctrine of the Orthodox Church*, it was stressed that this privileged relationship did not mean that the Church is dependent on the State, but rather each institution should act within its own sphere of competencies²⁰⁴. The idea that the Church had to exercise an important influence on the State was confirmed in the Preamble of the *Law on Religious Freedom* of 1997. It is relevant that during the debate on the approval of the law, two important political scientists, Andranik Migranjan and Alexander Cipko²⁰⁵, in their article “Slabaya vlast', slabaya tserkov' i slaboye obshchestvo mogut byt' sil'nymi tol'ko vmeste”, defended the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the strengthening of national identity of Russian Federation. Orthodoxy was considered the heart of “Russian culture, of Russian state and of Russian self-awareness”²⁰⁶. The presence of the patriarch at the ceremony of establishment of President Yeltsin and at that of President Putin, testified to the importance of Church support for the State. The real meaning of this support laid in the legitimacy that the Church, as custodian of Russian tradition and Russian national history, can offer to the political power.

1.3.1 Formation of a new, Post-Soviet model of church-state relations in comparative and theoretical perspective. The Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations (1997 law): comparative analysis with the 1990 law and the 1993 Constitution*

The first years of the 1990s were characterized by neutrality of the State toward all religious organizations, by the intensive missionary activities of various religious organizations, by a sharp increase in proselytism, and by the growth of new religious movements²⁰⁷. All religious associations experienced a significant increase in

²⁰³ Kartashev Anton, *Вселенские соборы [Ecumenical Councils]*, Eksmo, 2006, https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Anton_Kartashev/vselenskie-sobory/, (last accessed July 2021).

²⁰⁴ See par. 1.3.3.

²⁰⁵ Migranian A., Tsipko, A., *Slabaya vlast', slabaya tserkov' i slaboye obshchestvo mogut byt' sil'nymi tol'ko vmeste*, *Nezavisimaja gazeta*, 20 August 1997, cited in Roccucci Adriano, “La chiesa ortodossa russa nel XX secolo”, pp. 256.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 256. (my translation from italian).

²⁰⁷ *see the appendix for a comparison of the texts. In 1990 there were 6650 registered religious associations. Five years later there were 21664. Numbers of religious organizations of the Russian Orthodox Church grew from 3342 to 11525, with an average of 1,7 per year from 2001. Number of registered Catholics organization, 1990: 32, 1994: 248, increased 5 times in the period 1990-1995, continued to growth till 2001, then began to decline. In the period 1995-2001 we see an important increase in the number of registered Protestant association (+185% per year), this dynamic became more moderate in the following period (+ 109% per year). The same happened as far as concerns Buddhist organizations, whose numbers increased 6 times from 1990 to 1995, then became negative. Conversely, numbers of Muslim religious organizations was constant (1990: 914, 2004: 3537).

membership: whether those that had existed for a long time, or those that were banned during the Soviet period, or even the new religious movements. In general, religious globalization and the individualization of belief accelerated the phenomenon of religious diversification. Indeed, in the early 1990s religions began to restore their position within the society, they acquired a new prominence within the social sphere and were perceived by the population as a fundamental social and cultural phenomenon. However, as data clearly show, the trend toward religious diversification should not be exaggerated. According to official sources of the Russian Ministry of the Interior, that refer to the period till January 2000, when new religious movements' membership figures from around 3 to 5 million, and about 150,000 to 200,000 foreign missionaries, whose denominational allegiance was not stated, arrived in Russia²⁰⁸. According to Marat Shterin, there were less than 40,000 active members belonging to new religious movements and most of them had probably no more than a few hundred members, perhaps a few dozens. Moreover, he noted that since 1995-1996 rates of these various movements have started to decline. In his opinion "their social significance goes well beyond their numerical presence [..]"²⁰⁹ because "after nearly two decades of legitimate existence they provide a wealth of material for further insights into and knowledge of the ways in which individuals and groups can create social space in which to adapt to social and cultural trends in Russian and global modernity"²¹⁰.

For its part, the State was confronted by a variety of problems connected to the management of this new religious diversity. It was called to define the separation between Orthodox Church and the State, the position to be adopted vis-à-vis globalization, and the search for a new national and political cement able to bind together the Post-Soviet society. The legal framework also favoured religious pluralism. With the adoption of new religious law, Russian society awaited full religious freedom as a step toward a total rupture with the Soviet past. The law written by Gleb Iakunin, one of the main exponents of religious dissent, was adopted in 1990²¹¹ in line with international conventions. The law lifted all restrictions on religious associations, asserted freedom of conscience and religion as an inalienable right of the citizen, proclaimed the equality of forms of religious belief and/or of the rejection of religions, permitted foreigners to

See: Nikol'skij Vladimir, *Основы религиоведения. Учебное пособие [Fundamentals of Religious Studies. Study guide]*, Moscow: Federal'noe agentstvo po obrazovaniju Moskovskii gosudarstvennyj industrial'nyj institut distantsionnogo obrazovanija, 2015.

²⁰⁸ Agence France-Presse, 26 January 2000 cited in Rousselet Kathy, "The Challenges of Religious Pluralism in Post-Soviet Russia", note 3 pp. 57.

²⁰⁹ Shterin Marat, "New Religious Movements in Changing Russia" in *The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, ed. by Hammar O., Rothstein M., New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 299.

²¹⁰ Ibid; See also: Kääriäinen Kimmo, Furman Dmitrii E., *Старые церкви, новые верующие. Религия в массовом сознании постсоветской России. Религия в массовом сознании постсоветской России [Old Churches, New Believers : Religion in the Mass Consciousness of Post-Soviet Russia]*, Moscow and Saint Petersburg: Letnij sad, 2000, pp. 150-181.

²¹¹ Consultant Plus, *Закон СССР от 01.10.1990 N 1689-1 (ред. от 04.06.1991) "О свободе совести и религиозных организациях" [The Law of the USSR of 01.10.1990 N 1689-1 (ed. of 04.06.1991) "On freedom of conscience and religious organizations"]*, 15-01-2021. (the document has been dowloded on February 2021, but today - October 2021- the word file is available only on request: <http://www.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc&base=ESU&n=3671#7ftjGoSkBSdy4tCy>).

become leaders of religious organizations, and affirmed the separation of Church and State. Moreover, the law granted religious movements the right to practise all religious activities and established a simple procedure for religious communities to register for the right to acquire the status of legal entity. Without any doubts this law was grounded of the ideas of cultural liberalization based on state's neutrality toward religious organizations, and the conception of religion as a private choice. Most importantly, the law diminished the connection between religion and ethnicity, a connection that had been a feature of Russia's history. Indeed, according to the new law, the ROC no longer enjoyed privileges with respect to other religious denominations. Instead the law places all religious organizations on a equal footing.

This model was contested from the outset. It was regarded as utopian, as not in keeping with Russian history, and tradition; a move to restore the old ties between religious and ethnicity as the two dimensions of national identity was rapidly undertaken. Public debate and disposition of population towards foreign religious movements reflected this trend. If in the early 1990s the population considered the activity of new religious movements in a positive light, in the following years there was an increasing hostility on the part of public opinion towards foreign religious groups. Indeed, according to a survey carried out by Levada Center²¹² in 1999, if in 1989 5% of the population thought that the attitude to adopt towards members of religious sects was to eliminate and ban them, in 1999 the percentage of people willing to adopt this attitude grew to 14%. At the same time, the number of people who considered it right to leave members of these sects to their own devices decreased from 57% to 29%²¹³. Moreover, although in Post Soviet Russia the liberal elite had a decisive influence on politics for a certain period, the State apparatus, in particular ministries concerned with law and order, maintained their conservative apparatus and was not willing to accept neither religious pluralism, nor economic and political liberalization, and market reforms. This opposition and the effective lobbying campaign undertaken by the Russian Orthodox Church since 1993 in order to have this law favourable to religious pluralism amended, led to the 1997 law.

Initially, movements towards the restrictions of the rights of religious minorities²¹⁴, started in the regions, where usually the liberals have had less influence than conservative forces. Moreover, in these regions the impact of international agreements on protection of human rights was less important than what happened at the governmental level. In fact in some of these territories religious freedom was always under serious danger. For instance, the law of Sakhalin declared that it was based on the fair of foreign missionaries. Further, the law of Tver explicitly forbade the accreditation to

²¹² Rousselet Kathy, "The Challenges of Religious Pluralism in Post-Soviet Russia", 2000, pp. 55-74.

²¹³ Sergeev Evgenij, *Стратегия новой индустриализации России: автоматизация, роботизация [Strategy for the New Industrialization of Russia: Automation, Robotization]*, Ekaterininburg: Litagent Ridero, 2016.

²¹⁴ New laws on religious freedom were adopted in different regions of Russia: Kaliningrad, Tver, Tula, Kalmykia, Ryazan, Vologda, Kostroma, Tatarstan, Udmurtia, Perm, Sverdlovsk, Kurgan, Tyumen, Khanty-Mansisky, Tuva, Amur, Khabarovsk, Sakhalin, Yaroslav, Ulyanovsk, Bashkortostan, Yamalo-Nenetsky, Buryata, Yakutia/Sakha, PrimorkyKrai. See: Uzzell Lawrence, *Les restrictions aux droits des minorités religieusesbau sein de la Fédération de Russie*, Istina XLII:4, 1997, pp. 349-351.

religious organization foreign to Russia. The same happened when in 1996 the Moscow Patriarchate proposed amendments to the 1990 law: the law of Tyumen forbade the religious dissension, and in Sverdlovsk it was possible to refuse the registration of a foreign mission if said mission was considered to be an insult towards believers of other faiths. Moreover, the procedure for the registration of religious organization was very onerous: the duration of the registration was limited to one year, and the cost corresponded to between 5 and 100 times the minimum average monthly salary. Once presented with the documents required, the passport of the director of the mission and a detailed description of the scope the religious organization pursued in that regions, the application was put under examination for three months. The reasons why it could be refused were numerous and varied accross regions: if the religious activities could cause psychological damage (Sverdlovsk), if it seemed to be against some citizens' rights (Tula), if it was against the accepted rules of conduct (Yaroslavl)²¹⁵. Later the situation started evolving also on federal level. On 10 December 1996 in Moscow, at the Parlamentskiy Tsent, a round table was held on the topic *Religious Security in Russia* organized by the Committee for international affairs of the State Duma. On the eve of the second reading of the law, the round table discussed the problem of sects²¹⁶, of new religious movements and of their threat to moral and social foundations of Russian society. In his speech a representative from the Minister for Internal affairs A. I. Chvili-Olintera talked of the well-known danger of the activity of sects as Aum Sinrike, and White Brotherhood, and of his disappointment in seeing that Russian legislation had not adjusted itself in order to address the problem, thus disregarding the history and culture of the country and its conception of religion. Therefore, he called for the protection of traditional religions and for the creation of a Council of experts capable of judging objectively the extent to which a particular sect may be acceptable for the society. In his speech, one of the Deputy Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, DECR, Archimandrite Theophan, outlined that new religious movements represented a threat to family, to the educational system of a society, to the economy, and also in the field of media and communication. He recalled Art. 9.2 of the *European Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms* according to which: "Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subjected only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of

²¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 350.

²¹⁶ The need to stop the spread of non-religious or sometimes criminal groups (the law regulating criminal actions considered extremist and totalitarian was issued on 25 July 2002 – federal law n°114, F-Z, "on Combating Extremist Activities -О противодействии экстремистской деятельности -), represented however the pretext for amend the law, not the main motivation. In fact, if some doctrinal aspects of new religious denominations that was spreading in Russia was alarming, as the Satanic sect Российская Церковь Сатаны founded by Kostja Lešij and Sergej Martin, established in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, or the Московская церковь сатаны established in Moscow, it is unquestionable that some religious denominations, different from the Russian religious culture, made feel threatened the Russian Orthodox Church, that identifie(d) with national identity of the country and feel obliged to defend his position with the help of the State. See: Codevilla Giovanni, "Laicità dello Stato e Separatismo nella Russia di Putin" in *Chiesa Cattolica ed Europa Centro-Orientale. Libertà religiosa e processo di democratizzazione*, ed. by Ghizzoniti Antonio, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004, pp. 137-236.

other”²¹⁷ in order to show that the defence of social stability was a matter that regarded different countries, not only Russia. At the end of their work, participants in the round table sent an appeal to the President of the Russian Federation entitled *On the dangerous consequences of the impact of certain religious organizations on the health of society, families, citizens of Russia*²¹⁸. This tendency was confirmed by Archipriest Chaplin who, during a conference on freedom of conscience held in 2015 affirmed:

“Today there are tendencies to unify the state policy of different countries in relation to religion, thus to deprive these countries of the opportunity to defend themselves from the destruction of external influences, to deprive them of their sovereignty, to make it impossible to determine which religious teachings are useful and which are not, which may be supported by the state, and which should be restricted[...]”²¹⁹.

The 1997 law was drafted under intense pressure from the Russian Orthodox Church and in a geopolitical scenario which has given way to the return of radical positions: in 1992 the Patriarch and the Holy Synod sent two letters to Ruslan Khasbulatov, President of USSR Supreme Soviet and to the Orthodox priest Vjačeslav Polosin, President of the Supreme Soviet’s Committee for Religious Freedom, where he affirmed: “today the problem of penetration in Russia of foreign religious organizations and the increase of their activities and influence became a political fact, because it destabilises the already tense situation in which our country and our society are living”²²⁰. On 14 July the Supreme Soviet approved the amendments with 75% of votes pro and 12% contra. This radically transformed the previous legislation, largely restricting the sphere of rights and freedom guaranteed. The new law was inspired by a protectionist criteria, and put Orthodoxy in a position of prominence compared to other religions. Any other religion, confession or foreign religious organization, lost its rights to do missionary, educative, editorial, productive and commercial activity, and to become a legal person (art. 14). The only way to operate in Russia was by obtaining a special registration from a designated ministerial commission. Nevertheless, although the intense lobbying of the Russian Orthodox Church, Yeltsin rejected the law and sent a message to the Parliament in which he underlined the contradictions between the law and the international agreements already signed by Russia. The contradictions raised by the President were corrected only in part by the Deputies who, on 26 August 1993, submitted a new draft that again the President rejected for the same reasons.

The following steps resulted from the work of an appointed commission directed by Viktor Zorkal’cev, former Chairman of the Committee on Public Associations and Religious Organizations, and formed among others by Andrey Yevgenyevich Sebentsov, deputy of

²¹⁷ Council of Europe, www.coe.int, (last accessed October 2021).

²¹⁸ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Обсуждение вопроса религиозной безопасности России [Discussing the Religious Safety of Russia]*, 1997/2, pp. 11-12.

²¹⁹ My translation. Сегодня появляются тенденции унифицировать государственную политику разных стран в отношении религии таким образом, чтобы лишить эти страны возможности защищаться от деструктивных внешних влияний, чтобы лишить их суверенитета, лишить возможности самим определять, какие религиозные учения полезны, а какие нет, какие могут быть поддержаны государством, а какие следует ограничивать. See: Grib Vladislav, «25 лет по пути свободы совести»: материалы научно-практической конференции [“25 years on the path of freedom of conscience”: materials of the scientific and practical conference], Moscow: Jurist, 2015, pp. 38.

²²⁰ Quadri Rosa M., *Ortodossia di Stato*, La Nuova Europa, 5, 1993, pp. 42.

the State Duma and a large team of lawyers of the Moscow Patriarchate, headed by then Metropolitan Kirill. The new law was issued by the Duma on 23 June, and on 4 July by the Council Federation, the vote was almost unanimous²²¹. Again, the law confirmed the special status of some religions compared to others, eliminated the principle of neutrality and secularism established by the Constitution of 1993 and left space for a special collaboration among the State and the dominant religions. Actually, the law presented again several incongruities that was raised both by the Russian and Western press²²²; its unconstitutional and anti-liberal character was raised also by President Yeltsin who, in a letter addressed to G. Seleznev, president of the Duma, again criticized the contradiction of the law with the international agreements signed by Russia (in particular article 2, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 28, 29 30, 54, 55, 59 and 62 of Constitution of the Russian Federation, art. 18 and 19 of Universal Declaration on human rights, art. 18 and 19 of International Covenant on civil and political rights, art. 9 and 10 of the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*)²²³, and its opposition to the principle of freedom and equality set off in the Constitution. Conversely, the communist and nationalistic wing of the Duma, and the Moscow Patriarchate together with the traditionalist supporters of Orthodoxy strongly criticized President Yeltsin's decision not to issue the law. Indeed, amendments added were only in part adopted in the final text issued on September, in particular thanks to the work of lobbying carried out by Andrej Loginov, member of the presidential staff, in order to favour the promulgation of the law, (although it remains essentially an ambiguous text that continues to contradict the constitutional and the international principles). In fact, compared to the Project, the new version of law put right only two of the violations of the Constitution: the modification of the Preamble, by recognizing explicitly the right of citizens to "freedom of conscience and freedom of religious profession" and not only to "freedom of choosing a conception of the world" and of the guarantee of the right of freedom of religion only to citizens of the Russian Federation (accordingly to article 3 of the Constitution)²²⁴. In its preamble the 1997 law affirms the "special role of Orthodoxy in the history of Russia", the dominant and historical religion of Russians, the religion that defines the national identity of the country. Then, it mentions Islam and Buddhism, Judaism, although the public debate was far from considering Judaism as part of the traditional group. The term Christianity covers the Christian denominations of West, yet remains ambiguous because of the distinction with Orthodoxy.

²²¹ Codevilla reported the critics raised by A. V. Pčelincev and V.V. Rjchovskij in *Religija i Pravo* (1997, n°1 p. 21) according to which the legislator by approving the law violate the procedural norms because, considered the important modifications introduced, that cannot be approved in second or third lecture as happened on 23 June, but only in first lecture through a separate project of law. See: Codevilla Giovanni, *Stato e Chiesa nella Federazione Russa. La nuova normative nella Russia postcomunista*. R.C., La Casa di Matrona, 1998, note 8, pp. 36.

²²² Letters of protest were sent by the Pope of Rome, by Senators of the United States, by President Clinton, by associations and people engage in defence of human rights as S. Kovalev, L. Alekseeva, L. Bogoraz, and also by some component of the Russian Church as Gleb Iakunin, who manifested his opposition also to the laws of 1993 in name of the independence and autonomy of the Church. See: Codevilla Giovanni, *Stato e Chiesa nella Federazione Russa*.

²²³ Codevilla Giovanni, *Stato e Chiesa nella Federazione Russa*, pp. 156. See also: *L'abrogation de la loi russe de 1990 sur la liberté de conscience*, Istina XLII, 1997, pp. 343.

²²⁴ Codevilla Giovanni, *Stato e Chiesa nella Federazione*, note 1 pp. 59; Codevilla Giovanni "Laicità dello Stato e Separatismo nella Russia di Putin", pp. 155, and Istina, *L'abrogation de la loi russe de 1990 sur la liberté de conscience*, pp. 343.

The law established that the terms “Russia”, “Russian”, and their derivatives may be used in official title only by a religious organization whose bodies have operated, on legal basis, for at least “50 years from the moment the organization in question submitted a request for official registration to the registration authority” (art. 8.5)²²⁵. This article reflects the equation between “Russian” and “Orthodox” which, as showed in the previous paragraph, is part of an ancient debate on the identity of Russia. The law presents remnants of the Soviet legislation, such as the treatments of “foreign religious associations” and the obligations posed upon “religious organizations unable to produce a certificate attesting to their presence for at least 16 years on the territory in question”, and the possibility of acquiring “legal personality providing that they are re-registered each year until they complete the stated period of 15 years” (Art. 27.3)²²⁶. The norms introduce the difference among religious associations and religious groups: Article 1 of the law refers only to religious associations: “This federal law regulates the legal relationships in the area of the rights of man and citizen to freedom of conscience and to freedom of creed, and also the legal status of religious associations” (Art 1.1)²²⁷. And Chapter three of the law (Art 15 – Art 24) regulates only “rights and conditions for the activity of religious organizations”²²⁸. It is clear that by shifting the basis of legal equality from religions to associations, it is constitutionally possible to differentiate among faiths, as the 1997 law clearly did.

The affirmation in law of the existence of a dominant religion has been accompanied by a concern with distinguishing religious sects from other religious movements. Such a classification has a long history which may be worth recalling. In the nineteenth century the *Svod Zakonov* (1832) divided the religions into four groups: 1) the Russian Orthodox Church whose dominant role was recognized (*первенствующая и господствующая*) – (art. 62) reaffirmed the principles according to which the emperor had to profess Orthodox faith, (art 63), because as Christian king, he was the supreme defender (*защитник*) and the guardian (*хранитель*) of the dogmas prescribed by the dominant faith, and the defender (*защитник*) of Orthodoxy and of each deanery (*благочиния*) in the Holy Church (ar. 64). In the act of succession to the throne of 5 April 1797, the emperor was named Chief of the Church; 2) the Christian foreign confessions, such as the Catholic, Lutheran, reformed evangelical and Armenian-Gregorian Churches, that were recognised, tolerated and protected; 3) Islam, Judaism, Karaimy, Lamaist Buddhism, Paganism, that were protected and tolerated (*терпимые*) but did not enjoy the same protections as the Christian religions did; 4) Old believers and the sects born from Orthodoxy that are not tolerated at all (*нетерпимые*). As we can see, according to the czarist legislation, religions that are tolerated are considered all traditional religions, notwithstanding dispositions that forbid proselytism and missionary activities. Indeed

²²⁵ Consultant Plus, *Федеральный закон "О свободе совести и о религиозных объединениях" от 26.09.1997 N 125-ФЗ (последняя редакция)* [Federal Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" dated 26.09.1997 N 125-FZ (latest edition)], N 125-ФЗ, 26-09-1997, [Федеральный закон "О свободе совести и о религиозных объединениях" от 26.09.1997 N 125-ФЗ \(последняя редакция\) / КонсультантПлюс \(consultant.ru\)](#), (last accessed October 2021).

The text analysed does not consider amendments and Additions of March 26, 2000, March 21, July 25, 2002, December 8, 2003, June 29, 2004, July 6, 2006, February 28, July 23, 2008. The last modification has been introduced with the law N° 407 FZ (December 2, 2019).

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

only with the decree of 1905²²⁹ the presence of Old Believers were recognized and accepted, and the Buddhism acquired the dignity of a cultural religion. During the Soviet period as well, authors of both popular works and scientific studies frequently divided religious groups into sects and churches considering the first more dangerous than the latter. In an arbitrary and contradictory manner, they included within the term “sect” very different kinds of groups: Baptist and Evangelical movements, the True Orthodox Church, religious monarchist groups, and sometimes even the movement of Old Believers. Such an approach was in contradiction with both the Soviet Constitution that prescribed equal rights for all religious groups and with the Leninist principle of struggle against all kind of religious distinctions, and perfectly in line with the policy towards the religious groups, that refused to be registered, classifying them only on the basis of their harmful character. There is no doubt that this criteria contributed to defining how religious movements and all religions were seen. The criterion of tradition, which made more explicit the former distinctions, was now added to these criteria. Indeed, another confirmation that the kind of tone and measure adopted with regard to “sectarian” groups during the Soviet period had resurfaced in the 1990s legislation can be found in a document of the Ministry of Interior of 23 October 1996, and more specifically in the paragraph setting out measures to combat organized crime where a number of foreign sect are defined undesired because considered a potential danger to social order. The document was drawn up on the basis of contributions from the Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Services of the Procurator General of the Russian Federation; it contained references to the True Orthodox Church, to Jehovah’s Witnesses, to the Unification Church and to the Church of Jesus Christ. The sects were accused of being asocial, of rejecting the constitutional obligations, and of endangering the moral and psychological health of citizens, by breaking up families as well. Besides accusations of espionage and the ones linked to the rejection of the identification between the Russian Orthodox Church and Russia itself, two other political lines of argument were also used: 1. the need for the State to control religious movements and 2. the “besieged citadel” argument based on the possible incursion of movements from abroad. Missionaries were still viewed as agent of the imperialism, and as destroyers of national unity; this found a new confirmation in a directive of the Minister for Education dating to 2000, which repeated the same kind of accusation against 700 foreign religious groups, including True Orthodox Church, Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Salvation Army, and requested greatest vigilance over the educational activities of these groups.

²²⁹ The privileged position of Orthodoxy is also confirmed by the *Ukazhenie* of 1845 and in particular in norms contained in section III of the “*Ob otstuplenii ot very i postanovleniji Cerkvi*” that clearly established a gradual protection in religious tutelage in relation to the religion or confession of belonging. At same time, the *Уставы духовных дел иностранных исповеданий* did not protect non-Orthodox religions from Orthodox proselytism and from availability of other confessions to accept their follows, but stated that if a person who professed a religion different from the Orthodox ones wanted to join Orthodoxy, no one could impede the realization of this wish. This classification was overcome thanks to the Decree on tolerance, *Об укреплении начал веротерпимости*, approved in 1905, although the process towards strengthening tolerance started already before 1905, leading for instance to the Manifesto of 26 February 1903 *О предначертаниях к усовершенствованию государственного порядка* which declared the need to defend the principles of religious tolerance as affirmed in the Fundamental Law of the Russian Empire that recognized not only the primacy of Orthodoxy but also the need to protect freedom of religion for all the subjects belonging to other religions or confessions. See: Codevilla Giovanni, *Chiesa e impero in Russia*, pp. 211-263.

This traditional perception of the so-called sectarian religious groups reflects a particular view of the relationship between the political and the religious spheres, of a model based on a strict relationship between the dominant national church and the State. Indeed the *National Security Concept 1997* stressed the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the defence of Russian spiritual values, and highlighted the destructive role of certain sects as dangerous to the country²³⁰. Moreover the agreements between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Federal Government regarding education, army, culture, health and prison welfare, the return of properties and places of worship, and the construction of new churches thanks to public funds, revealed the existence of a new state of affairs where the Orthodox Church acquired a major political role. However it seems that with the rejection of the Soviet system, the affirmation of freedom of thought and conscience became less and less marked, and it seems that there has been a transition from atheism, first to a secular state, then to a world where there is less space for non-believers. As already said above, several articles of the 1997 law are contrary to the Russian Constitution adopted on December 1993 and immediately entered into force. The first contradiction regards the issue of separatism between Church and State. According to article 14.1 of the Constitution, Russia is a “secular state (светское государство). No religion may be established as the State religion or as obligatory”²³¹. The issue recalls the debate on the meaning of secularization, de-secularization and post-secularism that, as well explained among others by Karpov, Berger and Stoeckl²³², in a discourse concerning religion in the Eastern world should be approached referring to different cultural categories compared to the ones we use talking of Church-State relations in the West. Nevertheless, by affirming the principle of a secular state, separated from the Church, the legislator implicitly accepted all the principles that may be corollary of these one, first of all the one concerning equality among religions (art 14.2)²³³, that is the principle that should avoid the possibility of affirming a special legislation regarding a particular matter. Indeed, analysing the Russian Constitution in comparison with the 1997 it seems that it reflects the absence of a comprehensive rule regarding “religious freedom”. Besides the distinction introduced in the preamble, another problem lies with the distinction introduced between religious associations and religious groups. As reported in the table in the appendix, religious freedom is directly and indirectly mentioned in Article 14.2, 15.4, 28, 29.2 and 55.3 of the law. If talking of religious freedom and of separation of Church and State, we intend to qualify a system where the State does not interfere in

²³⁰ If the text of 1997 stressed the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the defence of Russian spiritual values, the new version (2000) of the concept of national security stated that the “moral and spiritual education of the people” is a matter of State policy. Another difference emerged in the position taken towards religious sects: while the first text highlights the destructive role of certain kinds of religious sects” as a danger to the country, the new version speaks of “the harmful influence of foreign missionaries”. These views indicates an increased control of the State over the activities of religious organization and of federal authorities over the subjects relating to the Federation were also confirmed by the officials attending the Conference on Religious organizations in Moscow held on 13 July 2000. See: Rousselet Kathy, “The Challenges of Religious Pluralism in Post-Soviet Russia”.

²³¹ The Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993), constitution.ru, <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm>, (last accessed October 2021).

²³² Karpov Vyacheslav, *Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework*; Stoeckl Kristina, *The Impact of the Return of Religion on Theoretical Approaches to Democracy and Governance in the Social and Political Sciences*, *Sociology Compass* 4:6, 2010, pp. 354–364.

²³³ The Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993), constitution.ru, <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm>, (last accessed October 2021).

Church matters and vice-versa, and where to each religious associations is guaranteed the freedom of association and profession of faith, we should note that in the Constitution there is a problem of definition. That is, article 14.2 of the Constitution states that “religious associations” rather than religions and faiths are equal before the law. It follows that groups of believers do not automatically constitute an organization with legal personality. Since both the meaning of religious associations and religious groups is not defined in the Constitution, the power is left to the State to define, by enabling legislation, precisely what a religious association is as well as its distinction from a religious group. As we saw above, Article 1 of the 1997 law refers only to religious associations, and Chapter three of the law regulates only the activity of religious organizations. These observations do not aim to be critical toward the Russian Constitution, but instead wants to reflect upon the fact that, as well explained by Susanna Mancini in her last book, “neither constitutionalism nor religion can be fully grasped without a focus on their inescapable connections”²³⁴. And Russia’s history and reality show that the field of religion-state relations in Russia is multifaceted and full of contradictions, as after all the interpretation of state neutrality in Western World²³⁵. Indeed the problematic nature of Russia’s selective model of Church-State cooperation lies not only in the 1997 law, but above all in bureaucracy, ideologies, laws and policies. The system of recognition and registration is deficient primarily on the grounds of the judicial system and of the federal structure of the administration, which gives a lot of power to local authorities. Moreover, during the years, several laws that are not primarily aimed to religious associations have worked to the detriment of non-traditional religions²³⁶.

1.3.2 The Basis of the Social Concept – the model of relationships with the secular world

The Bishops’ Council organized in August 2000, marked for the Russian Orthodox Church the beginning of a new millennium thanks to the adoption of several important documents, and the making of significant decisions. Amongst them were the canonization of the late tsar Nikolai II and of his family, together with 1000 others persons who suffered the Bolshevik rule²³⁷. The Orthodox hierarchy adopted a new statute (...) that turned the Bishops Council into the ROC’s main decision making body, abolished the requirement stipulated in the 1988 statute to hold Local Council every five years, thus

²³⁴ Mancini Susanna, *Constitutions and Religions*, pp. 16.

²³⁵ Stoeckl Kristina, “Three models of church-state relations in contemporary Russia”, pp. 237-253.

²³⁶ For example, there were issues relating to the obtaining of land and to the continued denial to construction permits for houses of worship, and to conflicts related to discrimination in the transfer of properties, the use and the construction of religious sites under the law on Combating Extremist Activity, and the amendments to the 1997 Federal law to restrict missionary activity. Another example is the anti-terrorism package known as the Yarovaya Laws passed in 2016. See: Isaeva Anastasia A., *Registration of Religious Organization, Legal Restrictions and Prospects of Development*, Journal of Siberian Federal University, Humanities & Social Sciences 8, 2015, pp. 1580-1590; Sibireva Olga, “Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Restrictions and Challenges in 2015”, in *Religion in secular society – Reports and Analyses*, ed. by Verkhovsky Alexander, Sova Center for Information and Analysis, [Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Restrictions and Challenges in 2015 / April / 2016 / Reports and Analyses / Religion in secular society / SOVA \(sova-center.ru\)](https://sova-center.ru), (last accessed July 2021); Knox Zoe, *Jehovahs Witnesses and the Secular World : From the 1870s to the Present*, London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

²³⁷ Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*.

shifting the power to the upper echelons of the Church. Furthermore, the Council approved the text of the *Bases of the Social Concept* of the Russian Orthodox Church (*Основы социальной концепции Русской православной церкви*), along with a document about non-Orthodox Christians (See next paragraph). The Bishops Council of the Russian Orthodox Church already in December 1994 prioritized the development of a text that lays out its position on social and political questions, on issues concerning Church-State relations, and on problems posed by modernity in general. The Holy Synod was instructed to set up a working group to draft such a document committing itself to a following submission of the document for discussion in the bosom of the Council (*On the Relationship of the Church with the State and Secular Society in the Canonical Territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the Present Time*, par. 11). During the sessions held on 11 October 1996 and on 17 February 1997 the Holy Synod composed a committee for the composition of the text and decided the methodology the working groups had to follow in order to produce the *Social Concept*. Its authors included twenty-six people drawn from the Russian hierarchy, clergy, lectures at the theological academies, people who worked at the Synodal Departments²³⁸. The session of works started in January 1997, most of the meetings had to be shortened, without non-resident members, but the draft sections were distributed to them for suggestions and amendments. When necessary, experts in various fields of knowledge were involved. The Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate was responsible for organising the work of the group, led by the present Patriarch Kirill (Gundiaev), at that time head of the Department. In his speech before the Bishops Council held in August 2000, Kirill reported that all the thirty meetings of the working groups were characterized by a creative and constructive discussions, and difficulties to reach an agreement, due in particular to the participation in the meetings of scholars with very different backgrounds. The preliminary results of this work were discussed at the Russian Orthodox Church Theological Conference *Orthodox Theology on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (7-9 February 2000) and at a special symposium organised for this purpose, *Church and Society 2000*, held at the Danilov Monastery on 14 June of the same year with about 80 representatives of various churches, state and public institutions. The comments and suggestions made during these discussions were taken into account in finalising the draft *Social Concept*; the final version was approved by the Holy Synod on 19 July and then submitted to the Bishops Council. The title of the document, according Kirill, was to be understood in a broad sense: it included the analysis of the position of the Church on a variety of issues concerning the life of Christian in secular society. These issues were not considered from a holistic perspective, but with historical awareness, and with a theological reflection on the position of the Church in the

²³⁸

Institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church that work under the Saint Synod are: Publishing Council of the Russian Orthodox Church; Department for External Church Relations; Patriarchal Council for Culture; Synodal Biblical and Theological Commission; Synodal Library of the Moscow Patriarchate; Synodal Liturgical Commission; Synodal Commission for the Canonization of Saints; Synodal Committee for Cooperation with the Cossacks; Synodal Missionary Department; Synodal Department for Interaction with the Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies; Synodal Department for Church's Relations with Society and Mass Media; Synodal Department for Youth Affairs; Synodal Department for Monasteries and Monasticism; Synodal Department for Prison Ministry; Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Service; Synodal Department of Religious Education and Catechism; Department of Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate; The Training Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church; Financial and Economic Department of the Moscow Patriarchate. For the list in Russian: Russian Orthodox Church, *Организации* [Organizations], Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/organizations/30970/>, (last accessed October 2021).

modern, plural society. Indeed the *Social Concept*, a novelty in the world of the Orthodox Churches, constituted the Moscow Patriarchate's "response to religious illiteracy in post-communist Russia"²³⁹, characterizing itself as an institution whose teachings ensure that society acts morally and consequently receives salvation after death. The document contains sixteen chapters²⁴⁰: I. Basic theological provisions, II. Church and nation, III. Church and state, IV. Christian ethics and secular law, V. Church and politics, VI. Labour and its fruits, VII. Property, VIII. War and peace, IX. Crime, Punishment, Reformation, X. Personal, Family and Public Morality, XI. Personal and National Health, XII. Problems of Bioethics, XIII. The Church and Ecological Problems, XIV. Secular Science, Culture and Education, XV. Church and Mass Media, XVI. International Relation. Problems of the Globalisation and Secularism. This analysis will focus particularly on chapters I-V and on chapter XVI. It will confront with questions related to Church-State *symphonia* and Church involvement in political activity, considering also the polemics related to the approval of the document. It will analyse issues connected with the meaning of secularism for the ROC and with the critics and problems that the document leaves unsolved.

The thesis of the two natures operating in the Church constitutes the starting point of the illustration of Church's relation with world, culture and society:

"The Church is a divine-human organism. Being the body of Christ, she unites in herself the two natures, divine and human, with their inherent actions and wills. The Church relates to the world through her human, created, nature"

(Церковь есть богочеловеческий организм. Будучи телом Христовым, она соединяет в себе два естества — божеское и человеческое — с присущими им действиями и волениями. Церковь связана с миром по своей человеческой, тварной природе)²⁴¹

In its interaction with the world the Church is seen not as a purely mundane institution but as a sort of "mysterious plethora" (таинственной полноте), and it is thanks to its divine-human nature that "the Church makes possible the grace-giving transformation and purification of the world" (Именно богочеловеческая природа Церкви делает возможным благодатное преобразование и очищение мира)²⁴². To fulfill his redemptive mission, the Church goes through the process of "historical kenosis"²⁴³, and since she is called to act in the world "in the image of Christ"²⁴⁴ her service in the world is possible only as a "conciliar service" (служение соборное)²⁴⁵. In the next programmatic passage it

²³⁹ Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 22.

²⁴⁰ I will refer to the English version of the text reported on the website orthodoxeurope.com (last accessed 08-03-2020) and to the Russian text reported on patriarchia.ru, (last accessed on 08-03-2020), in fact since the Moscow Patriarchate web site has a new look (mospat.ru) when a visitor goes to the "Documents" page, all the documents are missing. At the moment documents are available only on the old website of the Department for External Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church: old.mospat.ru, (last accessed April 2021).

²⁴¹ *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, *Основы Социальной Концепции Русской Православной Церкви [The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/419128.html> (last accessed October 2021).

²⁴² I.2, *ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

is specified that since “It is inadmissible to shun the surrounding world in a Manichean way. Christian participation in it should be based on the awareness that the world, society and state are objects of God's love, for they are to be transformed and purified on the principles of God-commanded love. The Christian should view the world and society in the light of his ultimate destiny, in the eschatological light of the Kingdom of God”²⁴⁶. This means that in its mission to “save the world” the Church is called to cooperate with the State “even if it is not Christian, as well as with various public associations and individuals, even if they do not identify themselves with the Christian faith”²⁴⁷. It follows that the concepts of “kenosis”, variety of gifts that “creates various ministries”²⁴⁸, “creative co-work, synergy of the members and the Head of the Church body” helps to identify the main purpose of the whole chapter, which is to theologially legitimize the Church’s social involvement²⁴⁹.

In the second chapter, after outlining the biblical concept of the “chosen people”, draws a parallel between the hypothetical mono-confessional Orthodox community (nation) and the nation of Israel unified in the faith and their rootedness in the fatherland. Moreover, the chapter introduced the binary opposition between “universal” and “national” but, as highlighted by Igumen Venjamin²⁵⁰, the document did not clarify the balance of priorities in case of a conflict between universal principle and national interest. Conversely, it seems that this simple juxtaposition based on the need to reconcile the national with the universal, will always see the universal superseded by the easily grasped nation. This is confirmed by the reference to “Christian patriotism” that “should be active”²⁵¹ because the “Christian is called to preserve and develop national culture and people’s awareness”²⁵². Thus the document re-affirms the idea of the Church as the “soul of the nation” and by ignoring its position within a plurinational and pluridenominational context, it does not mention the universal values so often proclaimed at the end of the 1980s and at the start of the 1990s²⁵³. In his speech, held before the Bishop Council, Metropolitan Kirill affirmed that the section tried to offer a balanced perspective among

²⁴⁶ I. 3, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁴⁷ I.4, *ibid.*

²⁴⁸ I.3, *ibid.*

²⁴⁹ as reported by Agadjanian the controversy of Church’s involvement dates from the fifteenth century, with Iosif of Volokolamsk’s ecclesiastical strategy of social service opposed to the a-sociality put forward by the trans-Volga non Possessors. The controversy raised again during the Church reforms of the 1860s, in the Renovationist movement in 1905 and 1922 when the deep tension was revealed between white-parochial and black-monastic clergy. The issue of Church’s exposure in the society was central during the Local Church Council of 1917-18, and was certainly not new in the works of Orthodox philosophers as Vladimir Solov’ev and Sergei Bulgakov. One of the most immediate influences can certainly be considered that of Nikodim Rotov, an administrator looking for a compromises with the regimes. This pro-world strategy, considered indispensable in order to avoid the Church to became a sort of sect, caused ruptures within the ecclesiastical community which for long time had been deprived of any form of free expression. See: Agadjanian Alexander, *Turns of Faith, Search for Meaning*. pp. 139

²⁵⁰ Pavlov Innokentiy, *Вне Предания. Основы социальной концепции РПЦ стали архивным документом [Beyond Tradition. The basics of the social concept of the ROC have become an archival document]*, NG. Religii, 2002-06-19 NRL-N°. 004. https://www.ng.ru/ng_religii/2002-06-19/7_predanie.html, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁵¹ II. 3, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ Rousselet Kathy, “The Challenges of Religious Pluralism in Post-Soviet Russia”.

the idea of the Church as "heavenly fatherland"²⁵⁴, and Church's "earthly homeland"²⁵⁵, and specified that the Orthodox faith cannot be reduced to one of the attributes of traditional national self-consciousness, thereby legitimating "sinful phenomena as aggressive nationalism, xenophobia, national exclusiveness, inter-ethnic enmity"²⁵⁶. The attitude of the Moscow Patriarchate toward pluralism is confirmed also in the third section which spoke of the emergence of freedom of conscience as a legal principle, as a manifestation of "the fact that society has lost religious goals and values and become massively apostate and actually indifferent to the task of the Church and to the overcoming of sin. However, this principle has proved to be one of the means of the Church's existence in the non-religious world, enabling her to enjoy a legal status in secular state and independence from those in society who believe differently or do not believe at all [...]"²⁵⁷. The denial of freedom of conscience is considered by Igum Veniam the most significant contradiction of the *Social Concept*, considering that this principle is also declared fundamental by Article 28 of the *Russian Constitution*²⁵⁸. Regarding the relation with the State, in the third chapter it is explained that, since human beings followed God's commandments out of fear and devotion, in ancient Israel there was no need for an earthly ruler. In addition, the *Social Concept* specifies that an embryonic state was formed only when the population started questioning God's authority: this made it necessary to create visible power structures that used coercion rather than spiritual power in order to enforce rules. The *Social Concept* emphasized that God disapproved of this development but was obliged to accept it: this means that he only tolerated it.

"In ancient Israel before the period of Kings, there was genuine theocracy, i. e. the rule of God, which proved to be unique in history. However, as society moved away from obedience to God as the organiser of worldly affairs, people began to think about the need to have a worldly ruler. The Lord, while accepting the people's choice and authorising the new form of government, regrets their rejection of divine rule. 'And the Lord said unto Samuel. Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them... Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit solemnly unto them, and shrew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them' (1 Sam. 8:7,9) Thus, the emergence of the temporal state should not be understood as a reality originally established by God. It was rather God's granting human being an opportunity to order their social life by their own free will, so that this order as a response to the earthly reality

²⁵⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, *Об основах социальной концепции Русской Православной Церкви*. Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных сношений митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла [On the foundations of the social concept of the Russian Orthodox Church". Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations], 09-06-2008, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/422562.html>, (last accessed April 2021).

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ III.6, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church » Background Information », OrthodoxEurope.org, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁵⁸ Igumen Veniamin, *Анализ 1-5 Глав "Основ Социальной Концепции Русской Православной Церкви"* [Analysis Of Chapters 1-5 Of The "Fundamentals of the Social Concept Of the Russian Orthodox Church"], *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, 2002, -04-01SCS-No. 004.

distorted by sin, could help avoid a greater sin through opposing it by means of temporal power [...]”²⁵⁹.

The document specifies that “the form and methods of government is conditioned in many ways by the spiritual and moral condition of society. Aware of this, the Church accepts the people's choice or does not resist it at least” nevertheless it also clarifies that “under monarchy, power remains God-given, but for its exercise it uses not so much spiritual authority as coercion. The shift from the judges' rule to monarchy indicated the weakening faith [...]”²⁶⁰. Although, to this form of government is not granted a special status, the ROC's adoration for theocracy necessarily establishes a rigid framework against which other forms of government appear deficient. The contradiction emerged in the relation with the Kremlin and Putin's several addresses about his work to consolidate democracy. Katja Richters reported that Maksim Meyer, director of the presidential administration's internal policy department when the *Social Concept* was adopted, publicly complained about the monarchist slant of the document. In his opinion the Moscow Patriarchate before the publication should have consulted the governments, that always furthered Church's interest. Instead, besides this stance on monarchy, the ROC also added the passage regarding civil disobedience. The position of the Church was confirmed also by Father Chaplin, deputy Chairman of the Department for External Church Affairs, who affirmed that democracy can be accepted but does not represent the ideal because it was rooted in competition rather than in the church's view of society as “a unified body that sees disagreements as unnatural and unhealthy”²⁶¹. Perception of relation with the State is explained thus:

“In church-state relations, the difference in their natures should be taken into account. The Church has been founded by God Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, while the God-instituted nature of state power is revealed in historical process only indirectly. The goal of the Church is the eternal salvation of people, while the goal of state is their well-being on earth”²⁶².

This is a clear point of departure from the symphonic ideal described by Emperor Justinian, in fact temporal authorities are not considered as God's representatives on earth, the political leadership is not the protector of Church's canons, traditions and practices, but is the protector of citizens' well being. Indeed the *Social Concept* recognized the incompatibility of the symphonic tradition with the modern secular state: “the Orthodox tradition has developed an explicit ideal of church-state relations. Since church-state relations are two-way traffic, the above-mentioned ideal could emerge in history only in a state that recognises the Orthodox Church as the greatest people's shrine, in other words, only in an Orthodox state”²⁶³.

This passage clearly specifies that Church leadership do not want Orthodoxy to become a

²⁵⁹ III.1, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁶⁰ III.7 *idid*.

²⁶¹ Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*; Anderson John, *Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church: asymmetric symphonia?*, Journal of International Affairs, 61:1, 2007, pp. 191.

²⁶² III.3, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁶³ III.4, *ibid*.

state religion. The thesis was confirmed by Metropolitan Kirill who in 2000 declared: “we are not striving to resurrect the role which the Orthodox Church exercised in the Russian empire. Well before the 1917 Revolution, the church’s best representatives were aware of how the Church’s dependence upon the State, the subjugation of her life to the interests of the state, is so detrimental to the church’s own mission. In this sense the separation of Church and State – regardless of which political system in effect – is unquestionably favourable to the Church, and we will always insist on this fundamental principle”²⁶⁴.

At the same time, Metropolitan Kirill clarified that Church-State separation should not prevent the Church from influencing Russian political and social life: “So the Russian Orthodox Church stands at the same time for separation of Church and State, but against the separation of Church from life or from society. On the political plane this entails the necessity of dialogue and cooperation between the Church and the powers that be, in the interests of the people”²⁶⁵.

This means that, although the Russian Orthodox Church should not be a state church, it should play a preeminent political and social role, and that religion should not be limited to the sphere of civil society, but rather enter the political sphere. Indeed, in the text we read that although “in contemporary world, state is normally secular and not bound by any religious commitments [...] the principle of the secular state cannot be understood as implying that religion should be radically forced out of all the spheres of the people's life, that religious associations should be debarred from decision-making on socially significant problems and deprived of the right to evaluate the actions of the authorities. These principles presupposes only a certain division of domains between church and state and their non-interference into each other's affairs”²⁶⁶. In fact “the Church’s participation in the work of the State is correspondent to her nature and calling [...] and the Church is not involved in the spheres of public activity where her work is impossible for canonical and other reasons”²⁶⁷. The document lists the areas of Church-State cooperation as follows:

a) Peacemaking on international, inter-ethnic and civic levels and promoting mutual understanding and co-operation among people, nations and states; b) concern for the preservation of morality in society; c) spiritual, cultural, moral and patriotic education and formation; d) charity and the development of joint social programs; e) preservation, restoration and development of the historical and cultural heritage, including concern for the preservation of historical and cultural monuments; f) dialogue with governmental bodies of all branches and levels on issues important for the Church and society, including the development of appropriate laws, by-laws, instructions and decisions; g) care of the military and law-enforcement workers and their spiritual and moral education; h) efforts to prevent crime and care of prisoners; i) science and research; j) healthcare; k) culture and arts; l) work of ecclesiastical and secular mass media; m) preservation of the environment; n) economic activity for the benefit of the Church, State and society; o) support for the institution of family, for motherhood and childhood; p) opposition to the

²⁶⁴ Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, *The Russian Orthodox Church and the Third Millenium*, Ecumenical Review, 52:3, 2000, pp. 306.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 307.

²⁶⁶ III.3, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁶⁷ III.8, ibid.

work of pseudo-religious structures presenting a threat to the individual and society. The document then specifies that cooperation is not possible in following areas: a) Political struggle, election agitation, campaigns in support of particular political parties and public and political leaders; b) waging civil war or aggressive external war; c) direct participation in intelligence and any other activity that demands secrecy by law even in making one's confession or reporting to the church authorities. The claim of extensive areas of cooperation confirmed the privileged status of the ROC and its prominent role. Indeed some of the areas of cooperation refer only to the role of the Orthodox Church and do not extend to other confessions. For example, there are mentions of church-state cooperation on spiritual, cultural and patriotic education, mentions of the influence of Orthodoxy on national culture more any other religious denomination and of the importance of Orthodox influence on education. The same can be said with regard to work in military and law enforcement agencies, for instance, the "close cooperation developed between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Armed forces"²⁶⁸ and the establishment of a "Synodal Department for Cooperation with Armed Forces and Security Organs"²⁶⁹.

Thought the Russian Orthodox Church is ready to cooperate with the State, and the ROC reserves a right to call on her faithfuls for civil disobedience:

"If the authority forces Orthodox believers to apostatise from Christ and His Church and to commit sinful and spiritually harmful actions, the Church should refuse to obey the state. The Christian, following the will of his conscience, can refuse to fulfill the commands of state forcing him into a grave sin. If the Church and her holy authorities find it impossible to obey state laws and orders, after a due consideration of the problem, they may take the following action: enter into direct dialogue with authority on the problem, call upon the people to use the democratic mechanisms to change the legislation or review the authority's decision, apply to international bodies and the world public opinion and appeal to her faithful for peaceful civil disobedience"²⁷⁰.

This provision became the most contested passage of the entire document. According to Ponomariov the disobedience clause has specific goals. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Moscow Patriarchate tried to achieve a reunion with the Russian Churches, the ROC and the ROCA. The main obstacles from the ROCA's point of view were the Declaration of 1927, whose applicability was denounced by the ROC in 1990²⁷¹, the ROC's canonization of the royal family (already canonized by the ROCA), proving in this way her otherness in terms of the communist past, the readiness to resist the state when need be, that was demonstrated not throughout the canonization, but also with the reference to civil disobedience in the *Social Concept*. Ponomariov pointed out that the relation between the Church and the State under the rule of Vladimir Putin was complementary enough that this provision has never been applied by the ROC. It's important to note not only the meaning of its theoretically application, but the frictions it created between the ROC and the Kremlin. The *Social Concept* mentions a passage which states "attempts to introduce

²⁶⁸ Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*. pp. 123.

²⁶⁹ *ibid.*

²⁷⁰ III.5, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁷¹ Ponomariov Alexander, *The Visible Religion*.

anarchy contradict the Christian worldview”²⁷². This passage spurred fears of rebellion because of the possibility to challenge the state’s authority. In addition, although Putin in his addresses to the Federal Assembly repeatedly encouraged the formation of a civil society, his administration reacted against this part of the *Social Concept*. His disapproval highlights the revolutionary nature of this passage in the conception of Church-State relation, in fact in this case the Church did not hold a firm position. Already in autumn (2000) Metropolitan Kirill amended the clause by affirming that it was applying only to Church hierarchy, which excluded bishops in this instance. Moreover Kirill restricted the circumstances that justify civil disobedience. In the numbers of actions included there are the encouragement of sin as rounds for resisting the state, and the “refusal to pay for honest work”²⁷³. Mitrofanova pointed out that Kirill denied that salary non-payment could legitimize civil disobedience²⁷⁴. This rhetoric raised the question of what kind of sin the document is referring to, and when during a roundtable discussion Metropolitan Kirill was pressed to give an example he replied that: “if tomorrow a law emerges that allows children to throw their parents from their homes [...] the Church will declare civil disobedience”²⁷⁵. This remark invalidated the clause by demonstrating that it had not been elaborated on concrete, real examples, and convinced the cleric intimated that neither the Putin administration nor its successor had anything to worry about this part of the *Social Concept*. Nevertheless, according to Igumen Veniamin, this point of the doctrine can be considered another confirmation of the overcoming of Byzantine Church-State symphonic ideal, and the starting of the transition towards a model based on a contractual (договорной) basis²⁷⁶. In section V the document seems to confirm the 1994 prescription to “refrain” clergy from election to organs of representative power. The *Social Concept* reformulates this restrictions by affirming that the clergy “are not allowed to be nominated for elections to anybody of representative power at any level”²⁷⁷. The softened tone of the impediments is not only confirmed by the following passage according to which “the decision of the clergy to participate or not to participate in political activities was made and should be made depending on the needs of a particular period and the internal condition of the church organism and its place in the state”²⁷⁸, and by the particular example of Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa who ran for the regional parliament both in 2006 and in 2010²⁷⁹.

The same attitude manifested towards the liberal concept of freedom of conscience can be traced in the treatment of bio-ethical, medical and ecological issues, as well as in the treatment of the issue of human rights. The *Social Concept* rejects the project of

²⁷² III.2, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁷³ VI.6, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁷⁴ Mitrofanova Anastasia, *Политизация православного мира [Politization of the Orthodox World]*.

²⁷⁵ Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*, pp. 27.

²⁷⁶ Igumen Veniamin, *Анализ 1-5 Глав "Основ Социальной Концепции*.

²⁷⁷ V.2, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Another attempt to approach issue of election was made in 2011with the adoption of a document on participation in election campaigns: “The practice of Statement and Actions of the hierarchs, clergy, monks, and laymen during election campaign. The problem of nomination of clergy candidates in elections” (Практика заявлений и действий иерархов, духовенства, монашествующих и мирян во время предвыборных кампаний Проблема выдвижения духовенством своих кандидатур на выборах). See: Ponomariov Alexander, *The Visible Religion*.

modernization and its liberal nature whose present manifestation is globalization. As part of this rejection of modernity, human rights are considered a product of the Western secular world that started to influence Russian legal space after the breakdown of the Soviet Union:

“As secularism developed, the lofty principles of inalienable human rights turned into a notion of the rights of the individual outside his relations with God. In this process, the freedom of the personality transformed into the protection of self-will”²⁸⁰.

The anti-liberal stance and the concern for the prevailing of secularization over religious thought is confirmed in the last section of the document:

“The contemporary international legal system is based on the priority given to the interests of the earthly life of man and human communities over religious values [...] While respecting the worldview of non-religious people and their right to influence social processes, the Church cannot favour a world order that puts in the centre of everything the human personality darkened by sin [...], the Church seeks to assert Christian values in the process of decision-making on the most important public issues both on national and international levels. She strives for the recognition of the legality of religious worldview as a basis for socially significant action”²⁸¹.

This confirms how Metropolitan Kirill (Gundiev) affirmed in the article that preceded the publication of the *Social Doctrine*: the liberal idea that defines the face of modern European civilization is bad, because behind it there is any tradition. The main theory behind this thought is that:

“The liberal idea does not call for liberation from sin, because the very concept of sin is absent in liberalism. Sinful manifestations of a person are allowed if they do not contradict the law and do not violate the freedom of another person”²⁸². The main danger of liberalism was, according to him, the difficulty in finding a balance between national, cultural and traditional values and liberal freedoms. The moral duty of Orthodox Churches as well as of other religions is to oppose the liberal anthropocentric system of values in order to preserve national-cultural identities. The most striking example of the need of such an intervention is according Kirill what happened with the adoption of the law *On freedom of conscience and religious associations* when President Yeltsin was under an unprecedented political pressure only because the law did not conform to the religious standards of the liberal West²⁸³. Regarding this issue, Agadjanian notes that the document contains three pervasive motives: “the uniqueness of personality”, mentioned five times, and the “dignity of human person”, mentioned twelve times, and the conservation of “diversity”²⁸⁴. In fact political international structures, transnational

²⁸⁰ IV.7, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁸¹ XVI.4, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>, (last accessed October 2021).

²⁸² Innokentiy Pavlov, *Вне Предания. Основы социальной концепции*.

²⁸³ Kirill (Gundyaev), *Обстоятельства нового времени. Либерализм, традиционализм и моральные ценности объединяющейся Европы* [The Circumstances of the New Age. Liberalism, Traditionalism, and the Moral Values of a Unifying Europe], *Church and Time*, 9, 1999.

²⁸⁴ Agadjanian Alexander, *Turn of faith. Search for meaning*, pp. 148-149.

corporations, and globalization in general are characterised as inimical of diversity and as “based on the freedom of fallen man”²⁸⁵. The idea at the heart of this discourse is that both the individual person and the individual community must be protected from the mass unification. This means that the concept of individuality does not refer to a person but rather to a community, i.e. to the communal identity. In this perspective the Church links itself to traditional culture, to the nation and in the name of this link tries to influence the conflict of unification versus diversity.

When the *Social Concept* was published in 2000, many commentators interpreted it as an important step of the Russian Orthodox Church towards modernization. Rudolf Uerz defined the document as an “important impulse for a constructive confrontation with the modern world”²⁸⁶, Konstantin Kostyuk considered the document as a sign that made the Russian Church more modern, the beginning of “a new era in contrast to its long social silence”²⁸⁷. Alexander Agadjanian wrote that the Social Concept remains an “intrinsically torn and polyphonic document” that tried to balance attempts to resolve in a “fresh way” some issues and a “strongly conservative agenda on some (other) crucial issues such as nation, state and culture”²⁸⁸. According to Katja Richters the *Social Concept* “sent a clear signal that the Moscow Patriarchate sought to free itself from the fetters of Orthodox tradition as well as its subordination to the state. [...] As the *Social Concept* was not exposed to public scrutiny before publication it suggested that the ROC would assert its independence from the secular authorities and refuse to bow to state pressure”²⁸⁹. By contrast, Kristina Stoeckl pointed out that Richters overstated both the intention and the effects of the document, although she agreed with Richters’ idea that the document distances the Moscow Patriarchate from the radical groups inside the Russian Orthodox Church; in her opinion it is correct to interpret it “as a gesture of self defence: a self-defence of Orthodoxy in Russia today vis-à-vis other religions and secularist worldviews; but also vis-à-vis other extremist fringes inside the Church”²⁹⁰. Very relevant is the opinion expressed by M. P. Mchedlov²⁹¹, during the roundtable of the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church organized in August 2000 to discuss the principles expressed in the document. Mchedlov affirmed that:

“Of particular interest is the position of the church vis-à-vis the authorities. After years of searching for an optimal model of interrelation with the state (symphony) and considering the uncertainty of the present social conditions, the Russian Orthodox Church breaks with the faithful Byzantine tradition of the sacralisation of power and declares the necessity of distancing itself from any state system, political doctrines and specific social forces, including those in power.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, pp. 149.

²⁸⁶ Uerz Rudolf, *Menschenrechte, Demokratie und Rechtsstaat in der Sozialdoktrin – eine politikwissenschaftliche Betrachtung. In Beginn einer neuen Ära? Die Sozialdoktrin der Russisch-Orthodoxen Kirche vom August 2000 im interkulturellen Dialog*, Moscow: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung e.V, 2004, pp.77–96.

²⁸⁷ Kostyuk Konstantin, *Возникновение социальной доктрины Русской православной церкви, Общественные науки и современность [The Emergence of the Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church, Social Sciences and Modernity]*, ONA, N°. 006, 11-01-2001.

²⁸⁸ Agadjanian Alexander, *Turn of faith. Search for meaning*, pp. 153-154.

²⁸⁹ Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 34.

²⁹⁰ Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church and Human Rights*, pp. 54.

²⁹¹ director of the Centre "Religions in the Modern World" of the Russian Independent Institute of National and Social Problems, Doctor of Philosophy.

The Church, based on traditional positions, is law-abiding, loyal to the state and ready to cooperate with it, but the document clearly states that loyalty has limits.”²⁹².

This conception of Church-State collaboration, as a relation in which the Church can call for civil disobedience, or can refuse to obey the State, seems to determine a new subjectivity of the Church in Post-Soviet Russia, in which, after having gone through a period of atheism of the State and then of state atheism, the Church is trying to find a new identity in which she is not only an instrument of the State, but look at the pre-Petrine model of Church-state relation, when she had more formal power.

1.3.3 Basic Principles of Attitude to the Non-Orthodox: main principles of the relation of the ROC with *Inoslavie*. Foreign policy through inter-church relations and beyond.

The *Basic Principles of the Russian Orthodox Church Towards the non-Orthodox* (*Основные принципы отношения Русской Православной Церкви к инославиям*)²⁹³ was adopted at the Jubilee of the Bishops Council of 2000²⁹⁴. The document defines the basic principles of the Russian Orthodox Church’s attitude toward non-Orthodox as well as interaction with interfaith organizations; it was prepared by a special working group established under the auspice of the Synodal Theological Commission headed by Metropolitan Filaret (Vakhromeev). The group was formed by several and renowned professors of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Theological Academies and by the deputy chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Hegumen Hilarion (Alfeev). According to Sergei Balanov, ecclesiastically the *Basic Principles* summarizes the long standing and consistent view of the Russian Orthodox Church towards the *inoslavie*, in order to build principles for the ROC’s external relationships. Balanov pointed out that the closest reference for the document can be found in the article of Metropolitan Filaret of 1963; “The Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church towards the Western non-Orthodox Churches” (*Отношение Русской*

²⁹² Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya, SCS, *Основы социальной концепции Русской Православной Церкви ("круглый стол")* [Basics of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church (roundtable), №.008.08-01-2001.

²⁹³ The text in Russian is from website of the Moscow Patriarchate: Russian Orthodox Church, *Основные принципы отношения Русской Православной Церкви к инославиям* [Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418840.html>; The text in English is from the site orthodoxeurope.org, Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Département des relations extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou, Kirchliches Außenamt des Moskauer Patriarchats, *Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions*, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/7/5/1.aspx>, (last Accessed July 2021). See note 55.

²⁹⁴ The first English translation published in November 2000 is titled *Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions*. However, the current official version of the title reads *Basic Principles of Attitude to the Non-Orthodox*. Note, in the former version the ‘attitude’ is towards ‘the Other Confessions’, whereas the latest, official, translation directs the ‘attitude’ to ‘the Non-Orthodox’, which a native English speaker would perceive as Non-Orthodox persons: as the Russian *inoslavie* (heterodoxy), is countered by *pravoslavie* (orthodoxy). Since 2000 also the index of the Bulletin in the section dedicated to the Church’s external relations introduces a distinction among relations with *inoslavie* and interreligious relations. Translations from Russian are my own.

Православной Церкви к Западным Инославным Церквам)²⁹⁵, and in the reference to Patriarch Sergius's conception of the development of Russian Orthodox Church's attitude to non orthodoxy:

"We, Orthodox, recognize only one True Church - our Church. However, we treat the Christians of other confessions with fraternal affection; we regard their churches and communities as verdant and fruit-bearing branches of the tree of the Church that were transplanted to a different soil, and [we] sincerely want unity with all of them"²⁹⁶.

This thought of Patriarch Sergius, was confirmed during the following reign of Patriarch Aleksii I, Pimen and Aleksii II and was only the result of the traditional views of the Russian Orthodox Church through the history, and of the development of Russian Church's relations with non-orthodox Church through the centuries. The document is composed of five sections: the first explores the history and the principles of the development of the *Basic Principles*; it lays the foundation of the document by declaring at the beginning that the "The Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ established by our Lord and Saviour Himself, the Church confirmed and sustained by the Holy Spirit"²⁹⁷; the church is "one holy, catholic and apostolic church"²⁹⁸ because is "sustained by the holy Spirit"²⁹⁹ and for the "proclamation of the Truth of Christ's Gospel"³⁰⁰. This "unity of the Church overcomes all barriers and frontiers, including racial, linguistic and social differences"³⁰¹ because it is "bound up inseparably with the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in which the faithful, partaking of the one Body of Christ, are really and truly joined in the one and catholic Body, in the mystery of Christ's love, in the transforming power of the Spirit"³⁰². Therefore any break from the canonical relationship with local churches as well as any division or schism is qualified as sin which "distances a person from the Church to a greater or lesser degree, but it does not cut him off from her altogether"³⁰³. The document states that "throughout centuries Christ's commandment of unity has been repeatedly violated"³⁰⁴ and that "the tragedy of divisions has become a serious visible distortion of Christian universality, an obstacle in the way of her witness to Christ before the world"³⁰⁵ and with these claims, the document aims to explore how the

²⁹⁵ Отношение Русской Православной Церкви к западным инославным церквам [The attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church towards Western heterodox churches], ZhMP, no. 11, 1963, pp. 36-46.

²⁹⁶ "Мы, православные, признаем только одну истинную Церковь — такой является наша Церковь. Однако мы относимся с братской любовью и к христианам других исповеданий; их церкви и сообщества мы рассматриваем как зеленеющие и плодоносящие ветви церковного древа, лишь пересаженные на другую почву, и искренне желаем со всеми ими соединения", *ibid*.

²⁹⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Православная Церковь есть истинная Церковь Христова, созданная Самим Господом и Спасителем нашим, Церковь утвержденная и исполняемая Духом Святым* [The Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ, created by our Lord and Savior Himself, a Church approved and filled with the Holy Spirit], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418840.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

²⁹⁸ I.1, Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions, orthodox europe.org, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/7/5/1.aspx>, (last accessed July 2021).

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*.

³⁰¹ I.4, *ibid*.

³⁰² I.8, *ibid*.

³⁰³ I.10, *ibid*.

³⁰⁴ I.12, *ibid*.

³⁰⁵ I.20, *ibid*.

Russian Orthodox Church theologically approached this topic. The second section “The quest for restoration of the unity” analyzes the principles for restoring the God-commanded Christian unity acceptable to the Orthodox Church. It is noted that “while recognising the need to restore our broken Christian unity, the Orthodox Church asserts that genuine unity is possible only in the bosom of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. All other “models” of unity seem to us to be unacceptable”³⁰⁶. Moreover the “Orthodox Church cannot recognise “the equality of the denominations””³⁰⁷. Those who have fallen away from the Church cannot re-unite with her in their present state. “The existing dogmatic differences should be overcome, not simply bypassed, and this means that the way to unity lies through repentance, conversion and renewal”³⁰⁸. In the third section, “Orthodox witness before the non-Orthodox world” is underlined the role of the Orthodox Church as the “guardian of the Tradition and the grace-filled gifts of the Early Church” stressing that “her primary task, in her relations with non-Orthodox confessions is to bear continuous and persistent witness which will lead to the truth expressed in this Tradition becoming understandable and acceptable”³⁰⁹ the Orthodox Church’s responsibility is underlined, along with the importance of the ecumenical mission of the Church, in particular the ones expressed in the Ecumenical Councils that testify the indissoluble link existing between “true faith and sacramental communion”³¹⁰

Sections four, five, and six contain an overview of the history and the dialogue with the non-Orthodox world and relations with non-Orthodox on the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church. This section mainly focuses on the efforts necessary to “coordinate social work, promote social harmony and put an end to proselytism on the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church”³¹¹, and it is specified that according to the Russian Orthodox Church the “the mission of the traditional confessions is possible only if it is carried out without proselytism and not at the expense of “stealing” the faithful, especially with the aid of material benefits”³¹². Moreover this section carries out a distinction between non-Orthodox Christian bodies which “declare their faith in the Holy Trinity and the divine-human nature of Jesus Christ”³¹³ and the destructive sects which “reject fundamental Christian doctrines”³¹⁴. This subsection is important also because it is connected to the debate whose result was the managed pluralism of the 1997 law (the danger of destructive sects is manifested also in the *Social Concept*) as response to the liberalization of the early 90s. The last section analyzes the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement; the bulk of the section is represented by the decisions adopted at the pan-Orthodox meeting in Thessaloniki in 1998. Any accusation of betrayal of Orthodoxy by the Russian Orthodox Church is dismissed: “The delegates unanimously denounced those groups of schismatics, as well as certain extremist groups within the local Orthodox Churches themselves, that are using the theme of ecumenism in order to criticise the Church leadership and undermine its authority, thus attempting to create divisions and schisms within the Church”. Further,

³⁰⁶ II.3, *ibid.*

³⁰⁷ II.7, *ibid.*

³⁰⁸ II.7, *ibid.*

³⁰⁹ III.1, *ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ VI.1, *ibid.*

³¹² VI.2, *ibid.*

³¹³ VI.3, *ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

the document stresses that those people who sow “seeds of temptation among ordinary believers, should be subject to canonical sanctions”³¹⁵, and that “a threat to the Church is also presented by those who participate in inter-Christian contacts, speaking on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church without the blessing of the Church authorities, as well as by those who bring temptation into the midst of Orthodoxy by entering into canonically inadmissible sacramental communion with non-Orthodox communities”³¹⁶.

One of the main reasons that led to the adoption of the document, and to the “cooling” in the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement was the proselytism³¹⁷ conducted on the territory of the Russian Federation by the Protestants Evangelicals from America (condemned by the Protestant Church), by Jehovah Witnesses and by some representations of the Roman Catholic Church. As declared by Metropolitan Hilarion at the Jubilee Bishops Council of 2000 “the Council issued a judgement concerning the reciprocal relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Protestant denominations. It expressed regret with regard to the development of a liberalism in the field of the doctrine and the ecclesiastical practice within some certain Western Protestant communities which distanced more and more from the Orthodox Church. At the same time the importance of continuing the dialogue with the Protestants and so that the witness of the true faith is not weakened or diminished”³¹⁸. While Protestant communities wield a certain political influence in the USA, Protestantism is not considered a “traditional religion” in Russia, but a foreign religion. Nevertheless, the Kremlin was interested in strengthening Russian Protestant communities currently undergoing revival, such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia, the Church of Ingria and the Biblical Lutheran Church, with the aim of using them as contacts with the USA. By contrast, for the ROC the development of Protestant Churches represents a considerable challenge. Formulations of *The Security Concept of the Russian Federation* referring to “cultural-religious expansion” and “spiritual aggression” of particular states that represent a threat for Russia refers above all to US violation of Russian space through Protestant proselytism. The Kremlin and the ROC confirmed this conviction each time Washington criticized Moscow for violating the freedom of conscience, referring to the law of 1997. Relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the various Protestant denominations, as well as with the Anglican community, developed along several lines. On the one hand, the Russian Church continued to participate in the theological dialogues at inter-Orthodox level, which began in the 1970-80s. The future Patriarch Kirill co-chaired the second round of Orthodox-Reformed dialogue (Debrecen II) held in 1976 in

³¹⁵ VII.3, *ibid.*

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

³¹⁷ Although, as has been declared in an interview by Bishop Hilarion, the concept of canonical territory “is not applicable to Orthodox-Protestant relations, “but it is applicable to Orthodox-Catholic relations, since we have de facto mutual recognition of hierarchies and sacraments (as recorded in the” Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church to Non-Orthodoxy”).” My translation. (Понятие «канонической территории» не применимо к православно-протестантским отношениям, «но применимо к православно-католическим, поскольку у нас существует де-факто взаимное признание иерархий и таинств (зафиксированное в «Основных принципах отношения Русской Православной Церкви к инославиям»)). See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Епископ Венский Иларион призывает Ватикан обсудить вопрос о статусе католических епархий в России* [Bishop Hilarion of Vienna calls on the Vatican to discuss the status of Catholic dioceses in Russia], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 26-02-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/370447.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

³¹⁸ Lossky Nicolas, *L'église orthodoxe et le mouvement œcuménique : les difficultés*, Recherches de Science Religieuse, 89:2, 2001, p. 240. My translation.

Leningrad and participated in the Evangelical Kirchentag in Wittenberg (GDR, 1983), in Dortmund (1991) in Hamburg (1995). Dialogues with the Anglican Communion and with the Lutheran World began in 1981, and with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1986. Moreover, bilateral relationships between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England (in January 1991 Metropolitan Kyrill met with representatives of the Church of England in Moscow, in October 1991 he accompanied Patriarch Aleksii II on a visit to Great Britain), with the Evangelical Church in Germany (Metropolitan Kyrill met with the Westphalian Evangelical Church delegation in August 1990 and took part in the events of the 24th German Democratic War, participated in the activities of the 24th German Evangelical Church in Ruhr in June 1991) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (Metropolitan Kirill visited Finland by invitation of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and met with the head of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, Archbishop of Turku J. Paarma, in April-May 1999) were held regularly. The main problems that in the 1990s represented an obstacle to the continuation of the dialogue were the issue of proselytism, on the one hand, and the issue of the female priesthood, on the other. Regarding proselytism, one of the main examples was the Mission Volga 92 proposed by Lutherans in 1992. On this occasion, Metropolitan Kirill in the Department of External Church Relations set up a special group, and after studying the proposal, the investigation conducted by the group found that the humanitarian component of the project was a cover for the "mission" of converting traditionally Orthodox Russians to Lutheranism. A special focus of the dialogue with Protestant communities in Europe was the protection of Christian values in the context of the formation of the new EU regulatory system. Since Metropolitan Kirill was the co-chairman of the CIS and Baltic inter-confessional Conferences *Christian, Faith and Human Rights* held in Russia in 1994, *Called to one hope in the Union of Peace*, Belarus, 1996, and *Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Russia, 1999, the role of Christian Churches in history and their spiritual legacy, the Christian foundation of European civilization, and the promotion and defence of Christian rights became the main themes of joint conferences and consultations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Evangelical Church of Germany (2005-2007), with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (2005), and with the Baptists (2006). These topics were at the centre of discussion at the Conference of European Churches (2005 and 2007), at the European Inter-Christian Assembly (2007), and at the European Inter-Christian Assembly (2007), where Metropolitan Kirill strongly criticized the moral and religious relativism imposed by the "postmodern age". Regarding the issue of female priesthood it became increasingly difficult to find common theological ground. This situation forced the Russian Orthodox Church to reconsider its attitude toward Orthodox-Protestant dialogue and to initiate a gradual transition from theological themes to social and political themes. In the dialogue with Protestant denominations the Russian Church considered it a duty to witness to the spiritual and moral values based on the Tradition of the ancient undivided Church. That is why, when radical departures from the fundamental moral norms of Christianity were observed in Protestant congregations, the Russian Church limited or completely terminated contacts with them (for example, with the Episcopal Church in the United States in November 2003, in connection with the elevation of openly gay bishop Gene Robinson, the Holy Synod decided to freeze its relations with this church community and with the tendency, judged unacceptable, of the Episcopal Church to bless same-sex marriages and ordain people of non-traditional orientation). The 2008 Council of Bishops noted that "the future of relations with many

Protestant congregations depends on their fidelity to the norms of evangelical and apostolic morality that Christians have preserved for many centuries”³¹⁹. Indeed, still in 2008, in an interview regarding the status of Russian Orthodox Church’s bilateral relations with other Local Churches and Christian denominations, Metropolitan Kirill declared: “Our Church's relations with Protestant churches and communities are more complex due to various circumstances. On the one hand, among Protestants, we have long-standing partners in theological dialogue and joint social service. These are the Evangelical Church in Germany, with which we have been conducting theological dialogue since 1959, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, with which we have been conducting similar interviews since 1970. In addition, we support joint educational and social projects with German and Finnish Lutherans. But there is another side in the Orthodox-Protestant relationships. To our deep regret, in recent years, some Protestant churches and communities have shown a tendency to liberalize many aspects of their lives. The most disturbing thing is the radical change in their ideas about the norms of Christian morality. Let me remind you that in the early 2000s, some Protestant churches, in favour of secular sentiments, retreated from Christian moral laws based on Holy Scripture, and began to publicly bless the so-called ‘same-sex unions’, ordain open homosexuals to the pastoral and Episcopal dignity. As a result, our Church refused to contact the communities that follow this anti-biblical path - the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Church in Sweden. Unfortunately, this trend continues to spread to more and more Protestant communities in the West. In order to successfully resist this attempt at total liberalization, the task arises of uniting the efforts of the Orthodox and those Protestants who have remained faithful to the Evangelical traditions in faith and life. In this sense, our relations with Protestant denominations in Russia and other CIS countries inspire more optimism. We have similar views on issues of Christian morality and can develop common positions in order to give a worthy joint response to all the above-mentioned challenges that the secular world poses to us. On the other hand, a problematic issue is the proselytizing activity of certain Protestant communities in relation to the Orthodox. This creates difficult and often even conflict situations on the ground. Each of these cases requires careful consideration and resolution. An open and mutually respectful dialogue is also needed to address this problem”³²⁰.

In 2004 Bishop Hilarion commenting participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the World Council of Churches (WCC) pointed out that the choice of participating in this

³¹⁹ Official site of the Moscow Patriarch, *Взаимоотношения с протестантами и англиканским сообществом [Relationships with Protestants and the Anglican community]*, patriarch.patriarchia.ru, <https://patriarch.patriarchia.ru/vzaimootnosheniya-s-protestantami-i-anglikanskim-soobshchestvom/>, (last accessed July 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 3 октября 2004 года [Report of Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church on October 3, 2004]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/420130.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

³²⁰ Russian Orthodox Church, *Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл: «Церкви удалось добиться положительной динамики в построении отношений с обществом и государством» [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad: "The Church has managed to achieve positive dynamics in building relations with society and the state"]*, 21-06-2008, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/424818.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

organization was inspired by criteria indicated in the *Basic Principles* according to which the Russian Orthodox Church cannot participate in international (regional/national) Christian organizations in which a) the charter, rules or procedure require a rejection of the doctrine or traditions of the Orthodox Church, b) the Orthodox Church has no opportunity to bear witness to itself as the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, c) the method of decision-making does not take into account the ecclesiological identity of the Orthodox Church, d) rules and procedure assume the obligation of "majority opinion." He clarified that at that moment the WCC did not fall under any of the four categories listed in the criteria that make the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the work of an inter-Christian organization impossible. And that the ROC recognized the fact that in the period between the Harare and Porto Alegre Assemblies the WCC had done its best to be responsible to the wishes and demands of the Orthodox Churches. In that situation, a withdrawal from the WCC seemed unjustified. One of the observations regarding the membership of the Russian Church was exactly connected with those Protestant communities in which adherence to the Tradition has never been accepted as the norm and in which there has been a rapid liberalization of doctrine, moral principles and church practice. The latter include, in particular, most Protestant congregations in the North. The gap between "churches of tradition"³²¹ and "liberal churches"³²² seemed to be so great and growing so rapidly that Bishop Hilarion cannot imagine how the "inter-Christian fellowship"³²³ can be maintained in the very near future. He pointed out: "The fact that our Church has already broken off dialogue with the Episcopal Church USA and the Church of Sweden indicates that the inter-Christian community is, so to speak, beginning to 'burst at the seams'. It is hard to doubt that other Protestant churches in the North will follow in the footsteps of American Episcopalians and Swedish Lutherans, and that ties will soon be severed on a regular basis. In that case, one day the hard-won 'union of Protestants and Orthodox,' such as the WCC, will simply fail under the weight of the accumulated disagreements, and the 'ecumenical ship' will sink. There are now two fundamentally different versions of Christianity - traditional and liberal. And the chasm that exists today separates not so much Orthodox and Catholics, or Catholics and Protestants, as 'traditionalists' and 'liberals' (despite the conventionality of such names). Of course, there are defenders of traditional values in the Protestant camp (especially in the churches of the South, i.e., Africa, Asia, Latin America). But the prevailing attitude among Protestants is liberal"³²⁴.

At the end of the Council a certain reserve was also expressed with regard to the dialogue with the non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Church: "the Council examined the results of the activity of the Joint Commission for the dialogue between the Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches (pre-chalcedonian) and found the work that has been done useful.

³²¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Епископ Иларион: «Разделение, которое существует между нами, возникло по политическим причинам»* [Bishop Hilarion: "The division that exists between us arose for political reasons"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 20-03-2006, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/98739.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Ibid.

The Council confirmed the need to continue the study of the problems connected with Christology and other problems entering the agenda of the joint Commission. It also considered it useful to establish a bilateral dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the several Eastern Orthodox Churches (pre-Chalcedonian) with the aim of clarifying opinions expressed previously and that cannot be considered definitive”³²⁵.

Regarding the relations with the Roman Catholic Church, the main problems were not connected to ecclesiastical or doctrinal issues but to political issues. Hilarion confirmed the worries expressed by the Council with regard to the “absence of a real progress in the dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and of the importance of the inter-confessional situation in Ukraine where, following acts of violence from the side of the Greek-Catholics (Uniates), Orthodox churches have been seized, and there have been no positive developments. As before, tensions remain; numerous Orthodox communities are still deprived of their places of worship. The Council also expressed worries regarding the proselytizing activities of some Catholic structures in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate. And it called on the governing bodies of the Roman Catholic Church in order to apply all the necessary efforts so that the situation can improve, not in words but in deeds. It stated that the disagreement in the way of understanding the problem of Uniatism, which manifested itself in a particularly acute way during the meeting of the Joint Commission for the dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Baltimore, held from the 9 to the 19 of July of this year [2000], represents an obstacle to the continuation of the dialogue. The attitude towards this last [event] deserves to be defined through consultations with the local Orthodox Churches. As far as concerns the bilateral dialogue it should be continued in order to overcome problems relating to Uniatism and proselytism, considering that the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is taking part in this talks”³²⁶. Lossky pointed out the importance of the document produced in 1997 by the Theological Commission of the Saint Synode of the Russian Church, presided by Mgr Philarete, Metropolitan of Minsk, and by Slutsk, Primate of Belarus. The document was a reaction to the document adopted from the catholic-orthodox bilateral Commission in 1993 in Balamand, which treated the issue of uniatism and used the expressions “sister Churches”³²⁷. It is important to point out that in September of 2000,

³²⁵ Lossky Nicolas, *L'église orthodoxe et le mouvement œcuménique : les difficultés*.

³²⁶ Ibid, pp. 241.

³²⁷ An interestingly understanding of the term “sister church” is given in the statement issued in 1997 by the Synodal Theological Commission: “Vatican II called the Orthodox Church a sister Church, thus recognising the blessed nature of the Orthodox Church and the salvific nature of her sacraments. The Orthodox Church, in her turn, always recognized the validity of the sacraments of the Catholic Church. The evidence to that is the fact that the Catholic Christians are accepted into the Orthodox Church by the so-called Third Order for joining the Orthodox membership – not through Baptism, as non-christians or sectarians, nor through Chrismation, like the Protestants, but through repentance, like schismatics. Roman Catholic clergymen are accepted in their existing orders to which they had been ordained by the Catholic Church. It is no coincidence that the Old Believers, who are also in schism from the Orthodox Church are accepted back in the same manner as the Roman Catholic Christians. This fact shows that despite serious fundamental differences on a number of doctrinal and spiritual issues between the two Churches, Roman Catholicism in the Orthodox mind and Tradition is viewed as a Christian community in schism with the Orthodox Church which nevertheless has preserved apostolic succession [...]. The Balamand document adds nothing fundamentally new, but follows in the manner of the traditional Orthodox attitude to Catholicism. At the same time, the Synodal Theological Commission of the Russian Orthodox Church finds it important to

during the annual Ecumenical Colloquium organized by the Community of Bose, Metropolitan of Smolensk Kirill, the then president of the DECR of the Moscow Patriarchate, made a declaration which contradicted the reticence expressed at the end of the Council. According to Metropolitan Kirill the Congress was a positive sign of the common will of continuing the dialogue toward unity³²⁸. Indeed, although in the official document “Pro Russia” published in 1992, the Vatican asserted that it does not intend to conduct missionary activity and much less proselytize in the area of the former Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church considers that the Catholic Church “is carrying out extremely unfavourable policy towards Orthodoxy in Russia and other Post-Soviet countries”³²⁹. The ROC considered the visits of John Paul II to former Soviet Republics (in Ukraine, 23-27 June 2001, in Kazakhstan, 22-25 September 2001, in Azerbaijan, 22-23 May 2002, in Georgia, 8-9 November 1999 and in Armenia, 25-27 September 2001) as examples of this unfavourable policy. The most controversial visit that in the view of the Russian Orthodox Church revealed the proselytise intentions of the Vatican was the four days visit in Ukraine, when Pope John Paul II met with the President Leonid Kuchma: this was considered as a violation of the principle of the “canonical territory” and as a attempt to strengthen the position of the Greek Catholic Church inside the country. As reported by Alicja Curanovic, the ROC’s assessment of the visit was unambiguous: “Proclaiming the equality of sister Churches, it is not possible for representatives of one of them to enter the residence of another Church without the owner’s permission, especially with aims that are contradictory to the interests of the master house”³³⁰. The official response to the issue of proselytism came from the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate itself with the issue of the document entitled: *Catholic proselytism among the Orthodox population in Russia* (25 June 2002) that presented in a detailed way the problem of proselytism, canonical territory and missionary activity of the Roman Catholic Church. In the Orthodox view the problem of proselytism was aggravated by the fact that the Catholic Church denied its existence. The document raised objections to the Catholic understanding of mission in the country, and objected that she did not recognize that the object of this mission was for the traditional Orthodox population to have “spiritual, cultural and historical bonds with Orthodoxy”³³¹. In name of the “millennium old Christian culture imbued with Orthodox tradition”³³² that is the main characteristic of

clarify a number of the Document’s affirmations, including the use of the term “sister Churches” in the text, which was motivated by emotions rather than by dogmatic considerations”. See: Kharlamov Vladimir, *Vatican II on Ecumenism, and the Eastren Orthodox Church*, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, 38:2-3, 2001, pp. 186.

³²⁸ Lossky Nicolas, *L’église orthodoxe et le mouvement œcuménique*, pp. 242.

³²⁹ Kharlamov Vladimir, *Vatican II on Ecumenism*.

³³⁰ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*. pp. 229.

³³¹ Text in Russian here: Католический прозелитизм среди православного населения россии. Справка [Catholic proselytism among the orthodox population in russia. References], 03 July 2002, <https://russian.kiev.ua/katolicheskij-prozelitizm-sredi-pravoslavnogo-naseleniya-rossii-spravka>, (last accessed July 2021).

Text in Italian here: *Il proselitismo cattolico. Tra la popolazione ortodossa in russia*. Informazione generale, 25-06-2002, http://spazioinwind.libero.it/sanmassimo_decaita/testi/confronti/proselitismo.htm, (last accessed July 2021).

³³² Ibid.

the Russian Federation, the country was not to be a field for competition in evangelising the local population³³³.

The second event that contributed to increased tensions between the ROC and the Vatican was the raising of four informal administrations established in Moscow, Saratov, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk. These four administrations were raised to the rank of dioceses in February 2002; the ROC recognized them as an hostile act, dispelling the perspective of an improvement in orthodox-catholic mutual relations. In a letter addressed to the chairman of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Walter Kasper, Metropolitan Kirill declared that the Vatican's actions stand in contradiction with the declared respect for the "sister" Orthodox Church. Kirill empathized that the main problem was that the decision to create the new dioceses was kept secret by the Vatican since the Orthodox side had not been consulted. Another problem in the relations between the ROC and the Vatican, during the pontificate of John Paul II, was the influence of the Polish factor. In particular the activity of Polish priests in Ukraine and Belarus was perceived in Moscow as "imperial nostalgia for the lost Kresy and as an attempt to rebuild the influence of the pre-war Polish state"³³⁴. Indeed, at the time of the pontificate of John Paul II the Vatican's activity was seen in the context of the Polish foreign policy: the lack of the ROC's agreement to a papal visit to Russia and the absence of President Vladimir Putin at the funeral of Karol Wojtyła was seen as an affront not towards the Vatican but towards the Poles. Polish-Russian tensions have their roots in a long history of clashes between two Slavic empires in Eastern Europe, both legitimated by Christianity, both characterized by strong connections between national identities and religion, which is manifested in the notions "Polish Catholic" and "Russian Orthodox". The greatest symbol of Polish missionary activity was considered the Uniate Church created in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, supported by the Polish king Sigismund III. At present the religious factor has remained an important source of mistrust in Polish-Russian mutual relations. Therefore good relations between the ROC and the Polish Autocephalous Church (PAOC) could be used to strained the relationship between the countries. The head of the PAOC, Metropolitan Sava Hrycuniak regularly meets with the Moscow Patriarchate: his first visit took place on 26 August 1998, few months after his coronation as Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland, other meetings took place in 2003³³⁵ and in 2005³³⁶, in 2007³³⁷, in 2009³³⁸. Between 2000 and 2005 the work of the

³³³ Hryniewicz Waclaw, *Ecumenical relations and theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, Exchange*, Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research, 32:2, 2003, pp. 168-187.

³³⁴ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*, pp. 230.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, *Журналы заседания Священного Синода от 27 декабря 2005 года. Журнал № 112 [Journals of the meeting of the Holy Synod of December 27, 2005. Journal No. 112]*, 27-12-2005, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1501491.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

³³⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Визит митрополита Варшавского и всея Польши Саввы в Россию. Посещение подворья Православной Церкви в Америке — храма св. вмц. Екатерины [Visit of the Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland Sava to Russia. Visit to the courtyard of the Orthodox Church in America - the church of St. Catherine]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21-01-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/185330.html> (last accessed October 2021).

Mixed Commission and Orthodox Catholic Dialogue (the Russian Church entered into the bilateral dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church in 1967) were in fact interrupted on the initiative of the Local Orthodox Churches, which saw neither the sense nor the possibility of continuing discussions on theological issues before resolving other issues related primarily to the Eastern Catholic Churches (Uniate) in Eastern Europe and the practice of Catholic proselytism in traditionally Orthodox territories. It should not be considered a coincidence that one of the last plenary sessions of the Mixed Commission in Balamand (in 1993) at the insistence of the Orthodox participants, especially representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate, was entirely devoted to the problem of uniatism³³⁹.

In 2009 hope for an improvement in Polish-Russian relations was kindled by talks between the representatives of the ROC and the Polish episcopate: the events that followed indicated that one of the goals was to explore the possibilities for improving bilateral dialogue. The first talks between the high representatives of the churches took place in Warsaw on 28 February 2010. The Russian delegation was presided over by hegumen Philip, deputy head of the DECR-MP (Bishop Hilarion, despite early announcement did not come to Poland); the Polish party was lead by the Secretary General of the episcopate – Bishop Stanisław Budzik. After the meeting the parties issued a joint statement calling for a rapprochement between the nations. Along with the election of the new pontiff, the German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, relations with the ROC improved: in June Cardinal Walter Kasper visited Moscow, then in October Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo went to Russia and met with Metropolitan Kirill. After this visit, the archbishop acknowledged that the “ecumenical ice age” between Orthodoxy and Catholicism had ended, and announced the Vatican’s will to establish full diplomatic relations with the Moscow Patriarchate.

One result of the new diplomatic measures was the meeting between Metropolitan Kirill and Benedict XVI at the Vatican in May 2006, which brought to decision the building of an Orthodox church (Saint Catherine) in Rome (the church was the first after the great schism). Moreover the new Pope decided to reduce the role of Polish hierarchs in Russia in October 2007 by replacing the previous representative of Catholics in Russia, Bishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz with the Italian Paolo Pezzi. One of the main results of the attempts of Benedict XVI to improve relations with the ROC can be considered the joint conference *A Soul for Europe* held at the beginning of May 2006, at which representatives of Catholic and Orthodox believers spoke of the need to oppose secularism and resist the de-Christianization of Europe. Metropolitan Hilarion as well called on all Christians to form a strategic partnership in the face of the progressive secularization of Europe³⁴⁰.

³³⁸ Metropolitan Sawa (*Hrycuniak*), orthodoxcanada.ca, [https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Sawa_\(Hrycuniak\)](https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Sawa_(Hrycuniak)) (last accessed October 2021).

³³⁹ Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквями: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев [The Current State of Relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: An Official View, Alekei Dikarev], mospat.ru, Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквями: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев: новость ОБЦС (mospat.ru), (last accessed July 2021).

³⁴⁰ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

Thanks to the agreements reached, both sides of the dialogue recognized that the problem of Uniatism cannot be solved in isolation from the theological problems of papal primacy and of its implantation in the Universal Church. Therefore the Orthodox participants agreed to resume the discussion of theological issues, and after six years of hiatus, the Mixed Theological Commission met again for a plenary session which was held in Belgrade from 18 to 25 September 2006. The delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church at this meeting was headed by Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev) of Vienna and Austria (later Metropolitan of Volokolamsk), and Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate. The session in Belgrade began to study the most important topic for the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue: *Ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental nature of the Church. Power and conciliarity in the Church*. The draft of the document on this topic was prepared by the Coordination Committee of the Joint Commission in 1990 in Moscow. The final document was adopted at the session held in Ravenna in October 2007. Nevertheless, the Russian Orthodox Church did not take part in the discussion that led to the adoption of the document because of the presence at the meeting, as part of the Constantinople Patriarchate delegation, of representatives of the Estonian Orthodox Apostolic Church, which was not recognized by most of the Local Orthodox Churches. Already in 2004 the establishment of the Joint Working Group to address problems between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches in Russia (Совместная рабочая группа по рассмотрению проблем, существующих между Русской православной и Римско-Католической Церквями в России) was a sign of the will to resolve difficulties in bilateral relations. This group was composed of three Orthodox and three Catholic representatives; the group officially met twice a year for an open discussion of specific cases of concern on the Orthodox side and to review the current state of affairs in Orthodox-Catholic relations. For instance during the last two meetings held in 2009 (October, December) at the Salesian Center near Moscow and Gatchina, participants noted the positive developments reached in the relations between the two Churches in the last years. It was also decided to broaden the competencies of the group and discuss not only problems but also possibilities of joint cooperation, in particular in the social and cultural spheres³⁴¹. When in November 2007, after another dispute with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church left the work of the mixed commission on matters of theology, the Vatican stood on the side of the Russian Church explaining that the work of the commission without the participation of the largest Orthodox Church made no sense. In December 2008 the Russian Orthodox Church, represented by Metropolitan Hilarion, took part in the first European forum concerning the question of protecting the family. In the face of disputes between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican, Russian authorities declared themselves to be on the side of the ROC's hierarchs. While the president tried to be an intermediary by encouraging the churches in dialogue, the Foreign Affairs Ministry used harsh words on the Vatican's policies in Russia. During

³⁴¹ Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквями: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев [The Current State of Relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: An Official View, Alekei Dikarev], mospat.ru, [Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквями: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев: новость ОБЦС \(mospat.ru\)](http://mospat.ru), (last accessed July 2021).

the second visit of President Vladimir Putin to John Paul II held in 2003 (the first was held in 2002), the President supported unambiguously the dialogue between the churches and announced Russian authorities' commitment to bring the Vatican and the ROC closer. At the same time, when questioned about the possibility of inviting the Pope to Moscow, the answer was always that this event could take place only with the clear approval of the Patriarchate, and in an official communication Orthodox hierarchs expressed their gratitude to the president for the understanding and for the support in regarding relations with the Vatican. As has been already said, Vladimir Putin did not attend the funeral of John Paul II or the inauguration of Benedict XVI, nevertheless the President met with the new Pope in March 2007, when the two discussed the transfer to the ROC of an Orthodox church in Italian Bari. From the other side, the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry, in an official note addressed in February 2002 to the Vatican, asked to the Holy See to delay the decision to raise the status of the administrations until the question was resolved with the Orthodox Church. This position was supported by the Duma that in February ordered the ministry to deny visas to representatives of the Vatican on a motion made by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. As a consequence, in 2002 five Catholic clergymen were refused entry into the territory of the Russian Federation³⁴². Patriarch Aleksii in his statement expressed regret that the decision was taken just before the next round of official talks between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches, jeopardizing any further form of dialogue between the Churches and even any form of relationship. He stated:

“the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church is now responsible before God and history for a sharp aggravation of our relations, for the frustration of the hope for their normalization that has just begun to shape. The Vatican's action has put in [jeopardy] the ability of the Catholic West and the Orthodox East to cooperate as two great civilizations for the benefit of Europe and the world. The opportunity for common Christian witness before divided humanity has been sacrificed for momentary benefits. The question arose: did the Vatican still regard its relations with the Orthodox Church as those of dialogue and cooperation, as it has continually stated, or [did it see] Orthodoxy as an undesirable rival? If the latter was the case, any agreement between us is in question”³⁴³.

In conclusion, speaking of the results of the Jubilee Council of 2000, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the most important acts, the *Basic Principles of Attitude to the Non-Orthodox*, and the *The Bases of the Social Teaching of the Russian Orthodox Church*, and the canonization of the new martyrs, also contributed to improve relations with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. All these acts have considered as a good response in resolving the main problems in order to overcome the division: the question of the canonical status of the Russian Church Abroad and of the Synod of Bishops heading it in the light of the decree of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, the Holy Synod and the Supreme

³⁴² Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

³⁴³ Statement by Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, quoted in Kharlamov Vladimir, *Vatican II on Ecumenism, and the Eastern Orthodox Church*, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, 38:2-3, 2001, pp. 187.

Ecclesiastical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church on the abolition of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration abroad; Russian Orthodox Church hierarchs' non-recognition of the canonical legality of conciliar acts and other major decisions of the Russian Orthodox Church from the side of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad; Eucharistic communion, in which the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is, at least formally, together with non-canonical groups separated for various reasons from other Local Orthodox Churches, and is active, in particular, on the canonical territory of the Romanian, Bulgarian and Hellenic Churches; the presence among the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad of persons who have passed from the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate and other Local Orthodox Churches and are under canonical prohibitions; finally, since the early 1990s, the acute problem of the existence of parallel dioceses and parishes established by the Russian Church Abroad on the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate. From the side of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, the following conditions were put forward in order to restore communion with the Moscow Patriarchate: condemnation of the 1927 Epistle of Patriarch Sergius; refusal of ecumenism, which means such communication with non-Orthodox Christians or even representatives of non-Christian religions, which is seen as signs of a deviation from the purity of Orthodoxy; the beatification of the New Martyrs and confessors of Russia, especially the Royal family, to the Russian Orthodox Church. This demand became audible after 1981, when the glorification of the Council of the New Martyrs was performed in the Russian Church Abroad. In an interview conducted in 2008, Metropolitan Kirill, chairman of the DECR, declared that both documents adopted at the Bishop Councils testify to the gain of freedom from state interference in Church affairs, the affirmation of the "uniqueness of the Church"³⁴⁴ and the refusal of the "branch theory"³⁴⁵. They testify to the Russian Orthodox Church's role as guardian of the Tradition and of the gifts of grace of the Ancient Church"³⁴⁶. This created real prerequisites for a meaningful dialogue with the Church Abroad in order to finally eliminate misunderstandings, and overcome the problems that still stand between the two Churches. The next step toward dialogue was done thanks to the message of Patriarch Aleksii to the Council of the Russian Church Abroad held in 2001, in which was expressed regret for the schism and the will to begin joint work in order to resolve the perplexities still standing in the way to unity. State authorities do not remain indifferent to this process either. Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2002, while in Washington, had a brief meeting with a representative of the Synod Abroad, through whom he conveyed an invitation to Metropolitan Laurus to visit Russia. In 2003, the President personally met with the Primate of the Church Abroad and again, on his own behalf and on behalf of His Holiness the Patriarch, extended an

³⁴⁴ I.7, Russian Orthodox Church, *Основные принципы отношения Русской Православной Церкви к инославию* [Basic Principles of Attitude to the Non-Orthodox], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 2.5, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418840.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

³⁴⁵ The Basic Principles of Attitude to non-Orthodox affirmed that "The so-called 'branch theory', which is connected with the conception referred to above and asserts the normal and even providential nature of Christianity existing in the form of particular 'branches', is also totally unacceptable". (Совершенно неприемлема и связанная с вышеизложенной концепцией так называемая «теория ветвей», утверждающая нормальность и даже провиденциальность существования христианства в виде отдельных «ветвей».), *ibid.*

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, III.1.

invitation to Metropolitan Laurus to come to Russia. This meeting made a very favourable impression on international level, and showed, according to Kirill, that the time of godless power in Russia was really over.

The date of Metropolitan Laurus's visit was decided in November of the following year, during the visit of the first official delegation of the Church Abroad, headed by Archbishop Mark. The visit was very fruitful, characterized by trusting and respectful tones. Both sides asked for forgiveness for the excesses that occurred during the years of separation, and also expressed the wish that "the movement towards unity no longer meets new obstacles through statements or actions that can damage the process of mutual rapprochement."³⁴⁷ In conversations with Most Reverend brethren, the Moscow Patriarchate agreed on the main thing — the basic principles of working to overcome the division. First of all, it was decided not to repeat the polemics of the past decades. The parties agreed to jointly formulate a common attitude to such topics as "Church and State", "Orthodoxy, non-Orthodoxy and interfaith organizations", as well as to other issues that are the subject of negotiations³⁴⁸. An important event on the way to unity was the visit of the Primate of the Church Abroad, Metropolitan Laurus, in May of 2004. This visit was of great symbolic significance: for the first time, the Primate of the Russian Church Abroad officially visited Russia, and he met with His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Metropolitan Laurus was accompanied by a large group of clergy. Foreign guests prayed at the Patriarchal services, made a pilgrimage to Russian shrines. The visit was also of great practical importance. It was decided to start the joint work of the dialogue commissions established back in December, and specific topics were formulated that required joint study. The commissions were invited to speak:

- 1) On the principles of the relationship between the Church and the State, corresponding to the teaching of the Church;
- 2) on the principles of relations between the Orthodox Church and non-Orthodox communities, as well as inter-confessional organizations, which correspond to the tradition of the Church;
- 3) on the status of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad as a Self-Governing Part of the Russian Orthodox Church;
- 4) on the canonical conditions for the establishment of Eucharistic communion.

The commissions started working together and have already held two meetings in Moscow and Munich. Agreed documents have been prepared on the range of issues that were identified during the May visit of Metropolitan Laurus³⁴⁹. On 21 June 2005, the

³⁴⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата по вопросам взаимоотношений с Русской Зарубежной Церковью и старообрядчеством* [Report by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate on relations with the Russian Church Abroad and Old Believers], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06- 2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423152.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

official websites of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, and the ROCOR simultaneously published documents of the counter commissions for dialogue between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR) on the restoration of church unity. According to the draft document *Act on Canonical Communion*, the Russian Church Abroad will become a self-governing part of the Moscow Patriarchate, similar to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The ROCOR will be independent in pastoral, educational, administrative, economic, property and civil matters. The supreme authority within the Russian Church Abroad will be exercised by its Council of Bishops. At the same time, decisions that fall outside the competence of the Council of the Church Abroad will be taken in consultation with the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. The higher authority of the Church will be the Local and Bishops' Council of the Moscow Patriarchate, the bodies of which the bishops of the Russian Church Abroad will become members. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad received holy myrrh (a special holy oil) from the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia as a sign of its unity with the fullness of the Russian Orthodox Church. The act on canonical communion would come into force if it is adopted by the Council of Bishops of the ROCOR and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, which received the authority to do so from the Council of Bishops of the ROC, held in 2005. On May 6-14, 2006, the fourth All-Russian Orthodox Council of the Church Abroad was held in San Francisco. It was convened for the first time in 32 years - specifically to consider the readiness of the clergy and laity of the ROCOR to reconcile with the Church in Russia. 127 deputies and 11 bishops gathered from all over the world. Among the clergy and laity were representatives from Germany and Australia, South and North America, England, Siberia and Ukraine. The fourth Council became the most significant in terms of the importance of the issues raised at it. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia, Patriarch Pavel of Serbia, Patriarch Maxim of Bulgaria, Patriarch Ilia of Georgia, Archbishop George of Georgia, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Western Europe, and the monks of Mount Athos and the Optina Desert sent greetings to him. The third day of the Council's work was decisive. Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany made a report on the work done in the conciliation commission over the past two years. On 12 May 2006, the forth All-Diaspora Council in San Francisco adopted a resolution on the restoration of Eucharistic communion with the Church in the Fatherland. The resolution was adopted by an open vote, almost unanimously. Less than 5% were against it. The document consisted of six paragraphs. Serious debates, as expected, were aroused by the points on the relationship between Church and state, or the so-called "Sergianism", and ecumenism³⁵⁰. In the period between July 2006, September 2006, the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church approved the *Act of Canonical Communion*. In May 2007-in Moscow, at the Cathedral of Christ, the heads of the two branches of the Russian

³⁵⁰

Ria Novosti, Воссоединение РПЦ и РПЦЗ [Reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad], ria.ru, 07-06-2008, <https://ria.ru/20060515/48135892.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

Orthodox Church signed the *Act of Canonical Communion*, thus completing the process of unification³⁵¹.

Appendix 1

Federal Law n° 125-FZ of September 26, 1997 on <i>The freedom of Conscience and Religious Organization</i> ¹	Law of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic n° 267-1 October 25, 1990 on <i>Freedom of Worship (known as Law 1990)</i> ²	<i>Constitution of the Russian Federation</i> , December 12, 1993 ³
Preamble: Confirming the right of each to freedom of conscience and freedom of creed (свободу совести и свободу вероисповедания [..] [....]proceeding from the fact that the Russian Federation is a secular state, recognizing a special role of the Orthodox Church in the history of Russia, the formation and development of its spirituality and culture, having respect for the Christianity (христианство), Islam, Buddhism, Judaism and other religions constituting an integral part of the historical heritage of the peoples of Russia		
Art 2.3. Nothing in the law on freedom of conscience and religious associations may be interpreted in such a way as to diminish or limit the right of man and citizen to freedom of conscience and freedom of creed, as established by the Constitution of the Russian Federation or stemming from international treaties of the Russian Federation.	Preamble: Freedom of religion is an inalienable right of the citizens of the RSFSR, guaranteed by the Constitution of the RSFSR and the international obligations of the Russian Federation. This Law is based on the provision contained in international agreements and covenants that the freedom to hold religious or atheistic beliefs and to carry out appropriate actions is subject only to restrictions established by law and necessary to ensure the rights and freedoms of others.	Art 15.4 Universally recognized principles and norms of international law as well as international agreements of the Russian Federation should be an integral part of its legal system. If an international agreement of the Russian Federation establishes rules, which differ from those stipulated by law, then the rules of the international agreement shall be applied

³⁵¹ Konygina Natalia, Время собирать церкви [Time to unify the Churches], Rossijskaja Gazeta, 18-05-2007, <https://rg.ru/2007/05/18/akt.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

4.1. The Russian Federation is a secular state. No religion may be established as a state or compulsory religion. Religious associations are separate from the state and are equal before the law. Art 4.3 . In accordance with the constitutional principle of the separation of religious associations from the state, religious associations: - are not to take part in the activities of political parties or political movements, or to provide them with material or other help.	Art 8.3 Religious associations of citizens may take part in the social and cultural life of the society in accordance with the legislation regulating the activities of public associations in the RSFSR.	
Art 5.3. Religious organizations have the right, in accordance with their charters and with the laws of the Russian Federation, to create educational institutions.	Art 9 Teaching beliefs, as well as religious education can be implemented in non-state educational institutions, privately, at home or in a religious community, as well as optional at the request of citizens and representatives of religious associations registered with the Charter in any preschool educational institutions and organizations.	Art 13.1 Ideological diversity shall be recognized in the Russian Federation. Art 13.5 The establishment and activities of public associations whose goals and activities are aimed at the forcible changing of the basis of the constitutional order and at violating the integrity of the Russian Federation, at undermining its security, at creating armed units, and at instigating social, racial, national and religious strife shall be prohibited. Art 43.5 The Russian Federation shall establish federal State educational standards and shall support various forms of education and self-education.
Art 7.1 A voluntary association of citizens, formed for the goals of joint confession and dissemination of their faith, carrying out its activities without state registration and without obtaining the legal capabilities of a legal personality, is recognized as a religious group in this federal law. Premises, and property necessary for the activities of a religious group, are to be provided for the use of the	Art 5 The main guarantees of religious freedom in the RSFSR are: - equal rights of citizens regardless of their attitude to religion; - equality of religious associations before the law; In accordance with the Constitution of the RSFSR, every citizen has the right to choose and have religious beliefs and freely change	Art 14 Religious associations shall be separate from the State and shall be equal before the law. Art 28 Everyone shall be guaranteed freedom of conscience and religion (свобода вероисповедания), including the right to profess (исповедовать) individually or collectively any religion or not to profess any religion, and freely to choose, possess and disseminate religious and other

group by its participants. 7.2. Citizens forming a religious group with the intention of eventually transforming it into a religious organization are to inform the local authorities about its creation and the beginning of its activities.	them. A citizen of the RSFSR may alone or jointly with his co-religionists profess any religion, freely perform religious cults, voluntarily join or leave religious associations. A citizen of the RSFSR may express and disseminate religious views and beliefs in oral, printed and any other form, provided that this activity does not violate this Law, public order and is not accompanied by encroachments on the person and rights of citizens. Hindering the acceptance or rejection of religious beliefs, joining or leaving a religious association, as well as the use of coercive measures for this purpose, is punishable by law	convictions and act in accordance with them. Art 30.1 Everyone shall have the right of association, including the right to establish trade unions for the protection of his(her) interests. The freedom of activity of public associations shall be guaranteed. 3.2. Nobody may be compelled to join any association or to stay there.
Art 8.5 A centralized religious organization the structures of which have been active on the territory of the Russian Federation on a legal basis for no fewer than 50 years as of the moment when the said religious organization files its application for state registration to the registering organ has the right to use in its names the words 'Russia', 'Russian' and derivatives of these.	Art. 10 All religions and religious associations are equal before the laws of the State. No religion or religious association enjoys any advantages and may not be subjected to any restrictions in comparison with others. The state is neutral in matters of freedom of religion and belief, that is, it does not take the side of any religion or worldview. Art 17 A religious association is a voluntary association of adult citizens formed for the purpose of jointly exercising the right of citizens to freedom of religion, including for the joint confession and dissemination of faith. The profession and dissemination of faith includes the performance of worship, the dissemination of one's beliefs in society directly or through the mass media, missionary activities, works of charity and charity, religious education and upbringing,	

	ascetic activities (monasteries, monasteries, etc.), pilgrimages and other activities determined by the relevant creeds and provided for by the charter (regulations) of this association. Religious associations may form regional or centralized. associations with their own governing bodies and other structural division	
Art 9.1 No fewer than ten citizens of the Russian Federation may be founders of a local religious organization, joining together as a religious group which must have confirmation from the organs of the local government that it has existed on the given territory for no less than fifteen years, or confirmation from a centralized religious organization of the same creed that it forms part of its structure.	Art 18 A religious association of adult citizens, which includes at least 10 people, shall enjoy the rights of a legal entity from the moment of registration of its charter (regulations) in the manner provided for in Article 20 of this Law. A religious association that enjoys the rights of a legal entity may establish other religious associations with the rights of a legal entity	Art 19.2 The State guarantees the equality of human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, material and official status, place of residence, attitude to religion, convictions, membership of public associations, or of other circumstances. All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, language or religious grounds shall be prohibited. 19.3. Men and women shall enjoy equal rights and freedoms and equal opportunities to exercise them.
Art 13.2 the right to open a representative body in the Russian Federation may be granted to a foreign religious organization. A representative body of a foreign religious organization may not engage in liturgical or other religious activities, and does not receive the status of a religious association as established by this federal law.	Art 4 Citizens of the RSFSR, foreign citizens and stateless persons can enjoy the right to freedom of religion individually, as well as jointly, by creating appropriate public associations...	

Art 14.2 Grounds for liquidating a religious organization or for banning the activities of a religious organization or religious group by judicial order are: - the undermining of social order and security or threats to the security of the State; - forcing a family to disintegrate..		
Art. 27. 3 Religious organizations which do not possess a document proving their existence on the corresponding territory over the course of at least 15 years are to enjoy the rights of a legal person on the condition of re-registration every year until the expiration of the indicated 15-year period. During this period these religious organizations are not to enjoy the rights stipulated in point 4 of article 3, points 3 and 4 of article 5, point 5 of article 13, point 3 of article 16, points 1 and 2 of article 17, point 2 of article 18 (as applicable to educational institutions and mass media), article 19 and point 2 of article 20 of this federal law.	Art 20 The citizens who formed a religious Association to obtain legal personality apply with the application of the Charter (regulations) to the Ministry of justice of the Russian Federation or its bodies (depending on the territory covered by the activities of the enterprises). Membership in a regional or centralized religious association is indicated in the charter and confirmed by the said association. In such cases, the judicial authorities are obliged to register the charter (regulation) within one month. In the absence of confirmation of a regional or centralized association, the relevant justice body applies for the opinion of the Expert Advisory Council under the Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on Freedom of Conscience, Religion, Charity and Charity. In this case, the registration period can be extended up to 3 months. The registration of the charter (regulation) may be refused only if its content contradicts the requirements of this Law and other acts of the legislation of the RSFSR. The refusal to register the charter (regulations) of a religious association may be appealed to the court.	

2.

The Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (DECR) under Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill

2.1 The main fields of the Church's "foreign policy", Its correspondence with the state's foreign policy

"At a time when a new Russian state was being created on the ruins of a once unified country, many people sought to overcome the grave consequences of the atheist policy towards the Church, [...]. The difficulty was to support the authorities and the civil society institutions that were forming at that time in their good intentions and in their desire to abandon atheist policies, and on the other hand, to make the authorities, society and the media understand the special role of the Russian Orthodox Church in the life of our country and learn to respect it"³⁵². With this words, Patriarch Kirill, Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, commented the challenges that the Russian Orthodox Church had been facing since the end of the Soviet Union. He stressed that the task of reconstructing the role of the Church in Post-Soviet society should be expressed first of all in concrete external manifestations: "We strove to ensure that the personal authority of His Holiness the Patriarch as an external representative of the church's authority was recognized in society. And this was also a very big role for our Department."³⁵³

³⁵² «В то время, когда на руинах единой некогда страны стало создаваться новое Российское государство, многие стремились к преодолению тяжких последствий атеистической политики в отношении Церкви, [...] И трудность заключалась в том, чтобы, с одной стороны, поддержать власти и формировавшиеся тогда институты гражданского общества в их добрых намерениях и в стремлении отказаться от атеистической политики, а с другой, — чтобы власть, общество и средства массовой информации поняли особую роль Русской Православной Церкви в жизни нашей страны и научились ее уважать», Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с сотрудниками Отдела внешних церковных связей* [*His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the staff of the Department for External Church Relations*], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-02-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/556365.html>, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed July 2021).

³⁵³ «Мы стремились к тому, чтобы личный авторитет Святейшего Патриарха как внешнего выразителя церковного авторитета был признан в обществе. И в этом также очень большая роль нашего Отдела». Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с сотрудниками Отдела внешних церковных связей* [*His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the staff of the Department for External Church Relations*], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-02-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/556365.html>, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed July 2021).

According to the *Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church*, adopted by the Holy Synod held in 1992³⁵⁴, the Department for External Church Relations fulfills the following functions: It represents the Russian Orthodox Church in its relations with the outside world; and it carries out its relations with the Local Orthodox Churches in the Russian Federation and beyond its borders, that is, with non-Orthodox Churches, religious organizations, governmental, parliamentary and public organizations and institutions, mass media, cultural, economic, financial, touristic and other kind of organizations. In addition, the Department takes care of the diaspora of the Russian Orthodox Church located in different countries, and informs the Patriarch and the Holy Synod of the events and activities taking place outside the Russian Orthodox Church, and of those affecting her interests. The Department submits materials and recommendations for making decisions concerning church-state relations, and relations of the Church with society to the Patriarch and to the Holy Synod. In the field of the problem of settling the pastoral care of Russian Orthodox Church's diaspora, the Department exercises, within the limits of canonical powers, the administrative and financial-economic management of the dioceses, of the missions, of monasteries, parishes, and representations of the Russian Orthodox Church outside its canonical territory. In addition, the Department promotes the work of Patriarchal Representations of the Local Orthodox Churches in Moscow, ensures the property rights and interests of the Russian Orthodox Church on its canonical territory, sends delegations abroad and individual representations of the Moscow Patriarchate, maintains contacts with foreign embassies, organizes pilgrimages, training and internships for the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad, facilitates the acquisition of theological education in the theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church for students from Local Orthodox Church, provides legal support to the Russian Orthodox Church in its relationship with the outside world, and writes protocols during official church events. Finally, the Department coordinates the external activities of the Moscow Patriarchate's Synodal Institutions, parishes, eparchies and monasteries, giving them support in the establishing of international, interreligious and interfaith relations. There are several other units close to the Department: these are the Secretariats for Inter-Orthodox relations, Secretariats for inter-Christian relations, and for relations between Church and society, the Communication service, the sector for foreign missions, orthodox pilgrimages, protocols and publications and some others structures³⁵⁵. The Department is the forefront of the Church mission which, according to Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, "needs to be accomplished not only through direct preaching of the Word of God, but also through an example of kind, sincere service to the good of our neighbours, through caring for the better life of the people around us and the whole world"³⁵⁶.

³⁵⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, *Устав русской православной церкви [Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/419782.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

³⁵⁵ Russian Orthodox Church, *Русская православная церковь, Организация [Russian Orthodox Church. Organization]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/organizations/30970/>, (last accessed July 2021).

³⁵⁶ My translation. "нужно Совершать не только через прямую проповедь Слова Божия, но и через пример доброго, искреннего служения благу наших ближних, через заботу о лучшем устройении

On 11 February 2009, Patriarch Kirill met the staff of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, of which he had been chairman for almost twenty years. In his address he shared his recollections of the time he worked at the Department, with which he was associated since 1968, and pointed out that his and his collaborators' main task was the preservation of the institution and of its role in a period of very difficult economic conditions, at the same time guaranteeing efficiency and capability in solving the problems the Church was facing in that phase³⁵⁷. During the twenty years of his chairmanship, the Department tried first of all to change the image of the Church in the eyes of contemporaries, by defining its new role in the society. An example of this can be considered the first laying of a wreath by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii at the tomb of the Unknown Soldiers after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Indeed, when Metropolitan Kirill was informed that the Patriarch and all other religious leaders of various religious groups must lay a wreath together, he replied that, although only probably the Unknown Soldier was Orthodox, certainly the people who died with him in the Great Patriotic War were Orthodox, thus it would be good to highlight the role of the Patriarch in this ceremony. In that moment state authorities refused to highlight the role of the Patriarch in this ceremony, but that was the first and the last time: thereafter, the Patriarch and the Orthodox clergy regularly placed a separate wreath. This gesture marked the prominence of the role of the Russian Orthodox Church also in external ceremony. Following the seismic historical changes affecting the country after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian population was divided, and the ROC was placed under significant strain to maintain the unity. Schisms arose in Ukraine, and the Church of Estonia was divided. Moreover, in the context of globalization, the Church took upon itself the dual tasks of defending her apostolic faith, and the witness to the whole world about Orthodoxy, this lead for instance to the changing of the understanding of the Moscow Patriarchate's spatial conception. In the new world, the Moscow Patriarchate included not only the countries located in its canonical territory, but also 276 church institutions in 42 countries. The main reason for the increase in the number of parishes was the rapid growth of emigration from Russia and other CIS of the former Soviet Union. In the view of the ROC, the opening of new parishes was not a strategy for spreading influence, nor did such efforts proceed from the desire to proselytise; rather, they followed from the necessity to provide spiritual care for Russian compatriots. This can be said for the cases of France, Great Britain, Hungary, Germany, and other countries. According to

жизни окружающих нас людей и всего мира". See: Information Bulletin, *Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла Архиерейскому Собору Русской Православной Церкви. О внешней церковной деятельности [Report of the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, to the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. About external church activity]*, 2004/Spezvypusk. pp. 65.

³⁵⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Руководство Отдела, с одной стороны, прилагало все силы, чтобы в очень трудных экономических условиях сохранить учреждение, а с другой — сделать его дееспособным и нацеленным на решение тех задач, которые возникали у Церкви, отметил Святейший Владыка. See: Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с сотрудниками Отдела внешних церковных связей [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the staff of the Department for External Church Relations]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-02-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/556365.html>, patriarchia.ru, (last accessed July 2021).

Metropolitan Kirill, it was an indisputable fact that the Moscow Patriarchate was the most multinational and multicultural church among the Orthodox Churches. The canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church spanned 16 countries, and included Churches which had different status, and there were also monasteries and churches of the Russian Orthodox Church outside its canonical territory, in 61 countries, organized in different canonical formation. Under these conditions, the Department saw its main task as preserving and promoting this diversity under the guide of the Patriarch³⁵⁸. According to Metropolitan Kirill, the Department was also at the forefront of the organization of the Communication Service (this service facilitated the destruction of the wall of information blockade), and at the forefront of setting limits on the missionaries who came to Russia in order to convert Orthodox people to their faith—including those traditionally Orthodox but, for historical reasons, still non-believers. In addition, Patriarch Kirill testified that the Department had always maintained a dialogue with the non-Orthodox people, and a collaboration with international Christian organizations, in order to build a strong civil and international support against violent proselytizing activities. Moreover, the work of the Department was fundamental in the preparation of the negotiations that lead to the reunification of the Moscow Patriarchate with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. It formulated the same concept of unification, and elaborated the methodology to follow during the meetings. Patriarch Kirill recalled that, the conciliatory attitude of the Department was decisive in solving the most critical moments that arose during the negotiations. Finally, he referred to the foundation of the World Russian of the People Council³⁵⁹ as an important outcome: indeed the work done through this forum offered to society new ideas, linked the Orthodox faith with specific public, political, and social problems, and developed the foundations of the Orthodox social ethics. Other important priorities in the Department's work were the promotion of inter-orthodox, inter-Christian relations, and interreligious relations, of a real dialogue and interaction with governmental agencies and public organizations. Moreover, the Department collaborated with the Post-graduate Study Committee at the DECR and in maintaining the system of Orthodox education abroad, in particular regarding the formation of priests and clergymen who worked abroad, with the aim of forming "the main ideas with which the Russian Church came out powerfully both in her country and abroad, giving theological and ethical commentary on human right issues"³⁶⁰.

Therefore the main challenges of Russian Orthodox Church's foreign policy in the Post-Soviet period include the diaspora and its integration, the relations with the Local Orthodox Churches, inter-Christian relations (with the Ancient, pre-Chalcedonian

³⁵⁸ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *К 60-летию Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата [On the 60th anniversary of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, 2006/6, pp. 13-16.

³⁵⁹ Всемирного Русского Народного Собора. See next paragraph.

³⁶⁰ «были сформированы основные идеи, с которыми Русская Церковь очень мощно выступила как в своей стране, так и за рубежом, давая богословский и этический комментарий на проблематику прав человека». See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с сотрудниками Отдела внешних церковных связей [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the staff of the Department for External Church Relations]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-02-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/556365.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

Churches, with the Roman Catholic Church, with protestants communities, and international Christian organizations), and interreligious collaboration. A clarification here is required: the term foreign policy is here considered in a wider conception than outside Russia, but also relations with other religions (inside Russia) and relations with the State, media and societal organizations (inside Russia).

The number of Russian Orthodox Church's diaspora outside the canonical territory³⁶¹ of the Church is very high. According to data last updated on 1 September 2004, there were 277 church institutions of the Moscow Patriarchate in 42 countries, including 8 dioceses, 1 spiritual mission, patriarchal parishes in the USA, in Canada and in Finland, 16 monasteries, 1 hermitage, 10 chapels, 6 representatives offices and 9 courtyards (подворье). 265 clergymen worked in foreign missions, including 10 bishops, 211 priests, and 44 deacons. Many parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate diaspora, had been created following the urgent coming from Orthodox Christians living in different countries. For example, after the Holy Synod held in September of 2000, two new parishes were created: the Intercession parish in Gothenburg (Sweden) and the St. Tikhon Compound in Toronto (Canada). In addition, the St. Nicholas Parish in Rome (Italy) was transferred from the jurisdiction of the Constantinople Patriarchate (Exarchate of Russian Orthodox Parishes in Western Europe). In 2001 21 new parishes were created, 16 of which were located in the Berlin-German eparchy. In 2002, 7 new parishes, one of which, the parish St- Kirill and Methodius, was formed with mutual consent from the jurisdiction of the Polish Orthodox Church; the expansion continued in 2003, with 14 new parishes, and in 2004, with 5 new parishes. Thus, the Holy Synod created 51 new parishes in different countries of the diaspora from September 2000 to August 2004³⁶². In 2006 the Department coordinated the work of about three hundred foreign institutions of the Moscow Patriarchate in forty-two countries of the world. Indeed, for many Russians who lived outside the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Church was the only place where paternal faith, national language and culture were brought together³⁶³. During the inter-conciliar period, 24 new parishes were formed, not counting individual Orthodox communities regularly nourished by Russian Orthodox Church's clergy. In the period from 2004 to 2008, 24 real estate objects were built and acquired. Orthodox churches were built in Rome, Havana, Tokyo, Ulan Bator. The construction of the Church of All Saints Who Shone in the Land of Russia in the Gornensky Convent in Jerusalem was fully accomplished. A complete reconstruction of the Hospital building in the St. Panteleimon Monastery on Holy Mount Athos was carried out. A temple was built at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Bolivia, temples were being built at the Russian embassies in Beijing and Istanbul. In addition, in that period, church buildings in the cities of Kiel (Germany) and Hobro (Denmark) were acquired by the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as temple complexes with houses in the cities of Hamburg and Ulm (Germany), a

³⁶¹ See next paragraph.

³⁶² Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата о внешней церковной деятельности* [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations on External Church Activities], 07-06-2008, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423147.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁶³ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Слово Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия на торжественном акте, посвященном 60-летию ОБЦС-МП* [The word of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia at the solemn act dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the DECR-MP], 2006/6, pp. 17.

large monastery complex in Amsterdam (Holland), and two house churches on the island of Sardinia. In addition, a house was purchased in the center of Rome for a diocesan and pilgrimage center. An important event was the transfer to the Russian Federation of the complex of buildings of the Compound of the Russian Orthodox Church in the city of Bari (Italy). Therefore, in this period not only was there a quantitative expansion of the activities of the Russian Church's foreign structures, but there were also positive qualitative changes, thanks to the increase of the pastoral ministry among compatriots abroad and the resulting increase of an international testimony of the values that the Russian Orthodox Church preserved and promoted.

The resolution of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church of 19 April 2000 called for canonical unity of the Russian Orthodox Church with all Orthodox believers in the diaspora who associated their church life with the spiritual ideals of historical Russia, but for various reasons stayed outside canonical communion with the Mother Church. One of the main reason for the Russian Orthodox Church's urgency to create new parishes in the countries of the diaspora and to send educated pastors to these distant lands was the tendency of many clerics from Western Europe, North America and other continents, to create self-proclaimed communities, to conduct liturgical and spiritual activities without the requisite blessing of the ROC. According to Metropolitan Kirill, this tendency led to divisions among believers and then to schisms, thus these clergy were banned from priesthood. Regarding the situation of the diaspora in East Asia, Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that through the efforts of the Department's staff, regular pastoral care of the Russian diaspora in the People's Republic of China was carried out in Pechino, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Shenzhen. Divine services were held on the grounds of the Russian Embassy in Beijing, in the general consulates in Shangai and Hong Kong, in the room of the cultural association Ressurrection in Shenzhen. Moreover, students from the People's Republic of China were hosted as students in the Spiritual Schools of the Russian Orthodox Church. In 2003 the first temple of the Russian Orthodox Church in Korea was constructed (in Pyongyang); a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church was also present in Thailand, and he used to travel in Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam (a parish was established in Vungatu), and Singapore. Additionally, the pastoral care of Orthodox believers was preserved in India, not only thanks to pastoral care for Orthodox believers at the Russian Embassy in Delhi, but also thanks to pastoral trips to Mumbai and Chennai, where social services were made available in the general consulates of Russia. A representative of the Russian Orthodox Church was also present in Nepal, thanks to numerous requests from the Associations of Compatriots in Nepal Ivushka and the assistance of the Embassy. Moreover, the Church restored its activities in Indonesia, where was present since 1940³⁶⁴.

³⁶⁴ See: Asrinda Idrus, *Православная церковь в Индонезии: специфика становления и взаимодействия с Русской Православной Церковью* [The Orthodox Church in Indonesia: specifics of formation and interaction with the Russian Orthodox Church], in *Россия И Мир: История, Политика, Культура, Образование* [Russia And The World: History, Politics, Culture, Education] Researchgate.net, 2014, pp. 181-185, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337186621_Pravoslavnaa_cerkov_v_Indonezii_specifika_stanovlenia_i_vzaimodejstvia_s_Russkoj_Pravoslavnoj_Cerkovu, (last accessed October 2021); Kryazheva-Kartseva, Yelena Idrus, Asrinda Ayub, *Новые Векторы Миссионерской Деятельности Русской Православной Церкви В Начале Хxi В. (На Примере Миссий В Таиланде, Камбодже И Индонезии)* [New Vectors Of Missionary Activity Of The Russian Orthodox Church In The Beginning Of The Xxi Century. (By The Example Of Missions In Thailand, Cambodia And Indonesia)], RUDN Journal of Russian History, 2, 2014, pp. 148-159, <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/novye-vektory-missionerskoy-deyatelnosti-russkoy->

The Russian Orthodox Church's mission and educational services, although interrupted by the revolution of 1917-18, entered a new field in the new contest of freedom which favoured the renewal of the social role of the Church. At the same time this freedom left space to social changes which generated ideological confusion and favoured the emerging of spiritual vacuum³⁶⁵. In particular, the Bishops Council of 1994 pointed out the need to be guided by the "precepts of the Ancient Church" (заветами Древней Церкви)³⁶⁶, to use the "rich missionary experience of Russian Orthodoxy"³⁶⁷, and to carefully coordinate "current opportunities with memory of the years of martyrdom in the recent past"³⁶⁸. Moreover, the Orthodox mission should take into account the diversity of modern society, the need for a special approach to various cultural and professional groups, for instance, soldiers, farmers, and intelligentsia, thereby intensifying the missionary work among youth and children. An important part of the missionary service of the Church was intended to be its contribution to culture, art, science, and to issues of economy, ecology and peacemaking. In addition, the Council considered it crucial to thoroughly study the issue of the revival of the missionary activities. As a result, the Bishops Council instructed the Holy Synod to form a working group to plan the revival of the Orthodox mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in its canonical territory. The working group was invited to collect information about the current state of the missionary field, which was part of the canonical and pastoral care of the Russian Orthodox mission, and about missionary activity in the field of heterodox churches and religious associations, about proselytizing activities of non-Christian religions, on the activities of pseudo-Orthodox groups, para-religious groups, and sects, about the degree of religious and confessional identity of Orthodox believers, and about the percentage of the practicing Orthodox Christians³⁶⁹. According to its chairman, the Bishop John of Belgorod, the formation of this group was based on two principles: regional representation and the representation of synodal institutions and theological schools. The group also interacted with all church structures and Orthodox publishing houses. However its immediate task was the revival of the Orthodox mission on the canonical territory of the Russian Federation; moreover it confirmed that missionary work had nothing to do with politics, and that the main aim of the working group was involving those people who do not participate in political strife in missionary activities. According to Viktor Petlyuchenko, deputy chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, the mission in the modern sense of the meaning was formed by 18th century, when the ROC reached the Pacific Ocean (China, Korea, Japan), and from there went to the American continent. In his perspective, this

pravoslavnoj-tserkvi-v-nachale-xxi-v-na-primere-missiy-v-taillande-kambodzhe-i-indonezii/viewer, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁶⁵ to know more about the "spiritual vacuum" thesis see: Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*, pp. 99-104.

³⁶⁶ Определение Освященного Архиерейского Собора 1994 года «О православной миссии в современном мире» [Definition of the Council of Bishops of 1994 "On the Orthodox Mission in the Modern World"], 1994, <https://pravobraz.ru/opredelenie-osvyashhennogo-arxierejskogo-sobora-1994-goda-o-pravoslavnoj-missii-v-sovremennom-mire/>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁶⁷ использовать богатый миссионерский опыт Русского Православия, *ibid*.

³⁶⁸ тщательно и бережно соотносить нынешние возможности и потребности с постоянной памятью о годах мученического свидетельства в недалеком прошлом, *ibid*.

³⁶⁹ *ibid*.

mission was always peaceful, non-violent and based on the word of apostle Rom 12.9: to turn away from evil and cleave to good³⁷⁰.

Maintaining fraternal relations with the Orthodox world was a priority in the activities of the Department for External Church relations. During the inter-council period, relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and all Local Orthodox Churches were actively developing, facilitated by the numerous visits of the Primates of these churches. The Moscow Patriarchate was visited by his Beatitude the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa Peter VII (2004), his Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV (2003), his Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos Patriarch of Georgia Ilia III (2000-2003), His Holiness Patriarch of Serbia Pavel (2000, 2002), his Beatitude Archbishop of Athens and All Hellas Christodoulou (twice in 2001), his Beatitude Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada Theodosius (2001) and his successor on the Primate Throne, his Beatitude Metropolitan Herman (twice in 2003 and twice in 2004). The reunification of the Russian Church Abroad with the Mother Church was an event of great importance. In the period after the signing of the *Canonical Communion Act*³⁷¹, on 17 May 2007, there had been several examples of interactions. Recall, for instance, the trip of the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate to a number of dioceses of the Church Abroad in America, Australia and Western Europe (September-October 2007); the participation of bishops abroad in events related to the visit of His Holiness the Patriarch to France (October 2007); the participation of Archbishop Mark in the celebrations of the 160th anniversary of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem and, in general, the growing successful cooperation in the Holy Land (October 2007); the repeated participation of foreign bishops and clergy in the exhibition-forum *Orthodox Russia*³⁷² (most recently in November 2007); a significant joint pastoral conference of bishops and clergymen of the two Russian dioceses existing there (December 2007) that took place in Germany; the participation of a delegation of the Russian Church Abroad, headed by Metropolitan Laurus, in the work of the World Russian People's Council and in talks with bishops abroad during the visit to Russia by Metropolitan Laurus (which turned out to be a farewell one - February 2008); the participation of Vladyka Metropolitan Yuvenaly in the burial of Metropolitan Laurus (April 2008) and the then fraternal conversations; a discussion of a number of topical issues of the Russian Orthodox Church and of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad's joint ministry that took place during the days of Metropolitan Hilarion's insistence (May 2008); a very useful conversation of arch pastors serving abroad, which took place in Berlin in connection with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Cathedral (1 June 2008). Nevertheless, the existence of parallel church structures remained a problem and was agreed to be resolved over the five-year transition period after the *Act of Canonical Communion* entered into effect. In addition, since 2000 the Russian Orthodox Church has organized a number of events which, in terms of degree of representation in them of the Local Orthodox Churches, can

³⁷⁰ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *На Международной Конференции «Христианские Мессия В XVIII-XX ВВ» [At the international conference Christian Messiah in the XVIII-XX centuries]*, 1995/8, pp. 1.

³⁷¹ Акт о каноническом общении Русской Православной Церкви Заграницей с Русской Православной Церковью Московского Патриархата.

³⁷² Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий Вручили Премии Международного Фонда Единства Православных Народов [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii was presented with prizes from the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations]*, 2003/1, pp. 43.

be characterized as events of pan-Orthodox scale. Among them can be included first of all the celebrations for the consecration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow on 19 August 2000. This cathedral hosted delegations from all over the Orthodox world, including the Primates of the Georgian, Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Cyprian, Albanian Orthodox Churches, and the Orthodox Churches of Czech and Slovakia lands. A notable event in the Orthodox world was the celebration of the 950th anniversary of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, which took place in Kiev on 25-28 August 2001. The participation of guests from all the Local Orthodox Churches was considered from the Russian Orthodox Church's perspective as a special support to the canonical Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Developing ties with the Orthodox world, the Russian Church used various forms of interactions with other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. For example, joint commissions were set up in order to find solutions to specific problems; thus, together with the Orthodox Church in America, a commission was created for the pastoral care of Russian speaking Orthodox believers. Another example to consider is the activities of the commission established by the Moscow and Serbian Patriarchates on the issues of schisms. Indeed for both these Churches this topic was very important and, according to Metropolitan Kirill, both the Russian and the Serbian cases³⁷³ testified to the usefulness of inter-church cooperation in fighting against this evil. Rendering assistance to the Orthodox Sister Churches, the Russian Church itself systematically appealed to them for support in the case of difficult situations, for instance when the Vatican decided to raise the status of its structures in Russia, as well as when the issue of a Uniate patriarchy arose in the Ukraine. In other cases, actions of local Orthodox Churches created a situation of crisis in the sphere of inter-orthodox relations – this happened in Estonia, Moldavia, Hungary, and Mount Athos, which became causes of concern. Indeed, although the monastic republic of Mount Athos is under the supreme spiritual jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, it has rights of autonomy enshrined in international agreements. For centuries this "republic" had been, and still remains, the common property of all Orthodox people, Greek, Russian, Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians, Georgians, and so on. And spiritual ties of the Russian Orthodox Church with Athos were long standing and always very important; Russian presence on Mount Athos dates back to the 10th century, nevertheless this holy monastery for decades had not been able to solve out the problem of replenishing the Brethren due to various artificial obstacles to the settlement of non-Greek monks on Athos. After the Jubilee Council of Bishops, out of nine candidates presented by the Russian Church for admission to the Panteleimon monastery, seven were refused, and in letters of 2004 sent from his Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii with regard to the issue, the history of Russian monasticism on Mount Athos was interpreted in a very tendentious manner: was declared the intention to continue to restrain the growth of the number of monks coming to the Holy Mountain from Russia, also demanding to stop direct relations between the Russian Church and the Holy Mountain, and the end of correspondence with the Holy Panteleimon Monastery. In defending the interests of Russian monasticism on Mount Athos, the Department for External Church Relations was also supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Indeed, this topic had always been raised in bilateral negotiations with Constantinople. In addition, the Department organized a program of

³⁷³

He referred to the case of Republic of Macedonia where, for long time, the local hierarchy has been out of communion with the Orthodox Plenitude. He also referred to the overcoming of the schism in Bulgaria, and to relations between Orthodox Churches of Georgia and Abkhazia.

assistance to the Russian monastery on Mount Athos, which provided for the collection and transfer of funds for the restoration of the monastery. Active pastoral work was carried out by the Russian Orthodox Church in relation with the Orthodox diaspora. Views differed significantly from the views of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on this issue. The latter, on the basis of the interpretations of canons, and in particular of the rule 28 of the Council of Chalcedon, declared that all the Orthodox parishes and eparchies located outside the traditional canonical territory of the Local Orthodox Churches are part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. If it is allowed the entry of these parishes and eparches under other jurisdictions, this is temporary and by "leniency". From this, the Patriarchate of Constantinople concluded that only the Church of Constantinople has the right to ecclesiastical jurisdiction outside its territorial limits, namely throughout the world, but, however far from the above mentioned regions of the 28th canon. This canonical novel is presented by Constantinople as a common opinion of all Orthodox Christians³⁷⁴. The recent interpretation of this theory created the impression of a new ecclesiology, previously unknown to the Orthodox consciousness. According to Metropolitan Kirill this new ecclesiology can be reduced to the following theses: 1. Only the Local Church which is in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople is considered and has always been considered Orthodox; 2. Any bishop or clergymen who is outside the geographical boundaries of his Local Church is under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the formal acceptance of such a clergymen into the jurisdiction of Constantinople can take place without the knowledge of the bishop who ordained him, without a letter of release and against the will of his hierarchy; 3. The Patriarchate of Constantinople establishes the boundaries of the Churches, and if its opinion on this issue does not coincide with the opinion of one Church or another, it can establish its own jurisdiction in the respective territory (as was the case in Estonia); 4. The Patriarchate of Constantinople alone determines who can and cannot participate in inter-orthodox events: this means that churches under its jurisdiction can be invited, but the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate or the Ukrainian Orthodox Church cannot, as well as the Autonomous Orthodox Church or the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of America. Moreover, according to representatives of the See of Constantinople, the presence of other ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the countries of the diaspora only possess a temporary character. According to Metropolitan Kirill, in each of the countries where the Orthodox diaspora lives, it is the hierarch of the Church of Constantinople who, in the opinion of its leadership, should represent the interest of all Orthodoxy in relation with the government, other confessions, and interfaith organizations. Kirill contested this priority of Constantinople, and considered it a serious issue in relations between the two Churches. At the same time, he pointed out that maintaining the authority and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the world, meant exactly maintaining this spiritual, moral, ideological influence and the authority associated with this influence, considered "prophetic". The importance of the presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the

³⁷⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, *Православное единство и православное свидетельство в современном мире. Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 года* [Orthodox Unity and Orthodox Witness in the modern world. Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2008], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/427253.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

sphere of inter-Christian relations was evidenced by the seriousness and persistence of the attempts to oust it. The most eloquent example can be considered, according to Kirill, the events that took place in October 2007 in Ravenna (Italy). At that time the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate was forced to leave the X Plenary session of the Mixed International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church due to the presence of representatives of the “so-called” Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church. He stated that this case of participation of the EAO in dialogue with Catholics was not an isolated case, but part of a certain strategy. He viewed the participation in various dialogues with non-Orthodoxy, and the membership in international organizations, for example the CEC, as a danger, and considered a scandal the possibility of its participation in the 2009 General Assembly of the CEC, and the attempts of Constantinople to block the entry into the CEC of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, which met all the criteria for membership. According to Metropolitan Kirill, the granting of Autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America and the granting of autonomy to the Japanese Orthodox Church serve as indicators of the Russian Orthodox Church’s willingness to resolve this issue in fraternal cooperation with Autocephalous Churches. Moreover, in 2003 Patriarch Aleksii declared his willingness to establish a metropolitan district on the basis of Church structures of Russian origins and Russian spiritual traditions existing in Western Europe, which included several dioceses. Such dioceses would have the right of local government, including the right to elect a Primate from a district council consisting of hierarchs, clergy and laity on the basis of their own chart. The proposed model of a metropolitan district was considered a way to restore the spiritual unity of the Russian diaspora, which at moment was divided under three jurisdictions (Moscow Patriarchate, the exarchate of Russian Orthodox parishes in Western Europe under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Russian Church Abroad). These structures in the future could also become a good basis for the formation of Local Churches in Western Europe. One of the most active supporters of this idea was a public organization called the Movement for Local Orthodoxy of the Russian Tradition in Western Europe (Движение за поместное православие русской традиции в Западной Европе), which set itself the task of promoting the rapprochement between the Exarchate, the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Church Abroad, and then the creation of the Local Orthodox Church. Another issue regarding the relation with the Patriarchate of Constantinople is connected to ecclesiastical situation in Estonia, and to the granting of autocephaly to its Church³⁷⁵. The situation became particularly acute after the visit of Bartholomew of Constantinople to Estonia in November 2000. The statements made during these trips meant a rejection of a compromise agreement, or extreme condescension on the part of the Moscow Patriarchate, and confirmed the willingness to restore the peace in ecumenical Orthodoxy according to the negotiations taken in Zurich in 1996, whose fundamentals were the idea of equality of both the Orthodox jurisdictions, so that all Orthodox Christians in Estonia will receive the same rights. This is the reason why the Moscow Patriarchate did not participate in events organized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, including the anniversary celebrations held in December 2000. Metropolitan Stephen took part in these celebrations together with Primate of Local Orthodox Churches, and this gesture was presented as the recognition of this hierarchy as the head of the Autonomus Estonian Church from the Orthodox World. Accordingly, Patriarch Aleksii sent

³⁷⁵

See next paragraph.

a message to Primates of the Orthodox Churches with the request of communicating their position on this issue. None of the replies received contained an acknowledgment that the Estonian Church under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople had the status of an autonomous church, and that Metropolitan Stephen was the head of the Local Estonian Church. In parallel with consultations on Church level, this did not stop agreements between the Department for External Church Relations and Estonian authorities, moreover, interactions were carried out with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Russian Embassy in Estonia, the Estonian Embassy in Russia, the State Duma, political and public organizations so that the Estonian Orthodox Church –Moscow Patriarchate can achieve legal status in Estonia. In April 2002 the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Estonia finally registered the Estonian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate. In October of the same year, protocols of intent were signed between the Estonian state represented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Estonian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, as well as between the Estonian state and the Constantinople Church structure. However, these documents did not represent a final and fair option for settling the property issue between the Constantinople Patriarchate and the Estonian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. Over the past period, relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Patriarchate of Constantinople were also complicated by the claims of the latter to churches and properties of the parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate in Hungary. In particular, the Constantinople side initiated a lawsuit on the transfer in its favour of the Holy Dormition Cathedral of the Hungarian Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. However, the Budapest Metropolitan Court rejected these claims as unfounded. Earlier, the court accorded the rights of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Church in the city of Kartsar, which was anti- canonically transferred to the jurisdiction of the Church of Constantinople by a former cleric of the Russian Church. By the time of the Jubilee Bishops Council, the situation remained rather complicated also in Ukraine. Politicians insisted on their own plans for an immediate resolution to the Ukrainian church problem. Leaders of schismatic groups hoped to receive recognition from the Church of Constantinople. Requirements were put forward in relations to the Moscow Patriarchate, so that the so called schismatic should be invited to the negotiations with the same status of bishops from the canonical Church. A lot of work had been done from the side of the Moscow Patriarchate to prevent such a scenario, which would lead according to Moscow to an aggravation of the church crisis in Ukraine, and to the emergence of a new schism. During the period after the Jubilee Council, 11 rounds of negotiations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople were held, in which the Ukrainian Church issue was discussed. At the same time, in the formation of the delegations of the Moscow Patriarchate representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church were included as well. In some cases, representatives of the Ukrainian state were invited to the meetings in order to study their point of view. The main achievement of these meetings was the growing understanding on the part of the Moscow Patriarchate's interlocutors of the fact that unilateral actions that can only aggravate the situation in Ukraine were unacceptable in healing the Ukrainian schism. It was recognized that only on the basis of the sacred canons was a true settlement of the situation possible. These tactics used in overcoming social and political divisions were not always considered suitable by the Church. This understanding was reflected in the position of the Ukrainian state. The main role in overcoming the schism and in preserving the unity of the Church was played, according to Metropolitan Kirill, by the Ukrainian episcopate, headed by his Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine.

Indeed, relying on the clergy and the pious Ukrainian people, faithful to canonical Orthodoxy, the fellow bishops courageously preserved the unity of the Church, hindering the implementation of schismatic's plans.

Another issue was related to the Romanian Patriarchate, which in 1992 established the Bessarabia Metropolia in the Republic of Moldova, headed by the former Bishop Petr of Balti (Padurau), who was banned from priesthood by the Moscow Patriarchate. Negotiations on this issue, had been frozen for long time, although in 1999 both sides acknowledged that it was necessary to continue them. In October 2001, his Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia sent a letter to His Holiness Patriarch Teoctistus of Romania, in which he emphasized that the issue of the Bessarabian Metropolia was primarily of ecclesiastical nature and should be resolved during bilateral consultations between the Moscow and the Romanian Patriarchate on the basis of sacred canons. However, the Patriarch Teoctistus did not reply to the letter. Moreover, actions continued also through secular authorities. In 2001 the European Court of Human Rights issued a decision requiring the Moldavian government to register the Bessarabian Metropolia, that was formed in 2002. The active participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the activities of the World Orthodox Brotherhood of Youth Syndesmos was considered important for promoting fraternal dialogue and cooperation. The World Orthodox Brotherhood of Youth celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2003. In difficult times of persecution, this Brotherhood supported theological schools, forming a whole generation of young people, destined to constitute a new priestly class of the Russian Orthodox Church. Russian Orthodox Church developed its relations also with the Church of Armenia, and with other pre-Chalcedonian Churches of the East: the Syrian Coptic, the Cilician Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church. On 27 December 2000, the Holy Synod decided to form a Coordinating Committee and a Mixed Commission to conduct such dialogue. In March 2001, a meeting of this Coordination Committee was held in Moscow, and in September of the same year, similar consultations were held to clarify the Christological terminology used by the Churches. Taking part in the dialogue with the pre-Chalcedonian Churches, the Russian Orthodox Church relied on decision of its Bishops Council and Holy Synod, proceeding from the fact that a number of theological formulations, on which consensus aimed to be reached within the framework of the dialogue—not only on the Christological formula, but also on its common understanding. This had been the focus of work of theologians taking part in joint discussion. Moreover, close attention was dedicated also to issues of liturgical, pastoral and canonical character, on which a number of significant differences remained with the pre-Chalcedonian Church. The main aim of this process, was clarifying reasons that prevented the return of these Churches to the fold of universal Orthodoxy, despite the support manifested by some pre-Chalcedonian episcopate, clergy and believers, for reunification with the Orthodox Church.

Relations with the Roman Catholic Church continued to be distinguished by a very difficult character, undergoing such serious trials that they often found themselves on the verge of a complete rupture. Exacerbations arose on the basis of long standing “stumbling blocks” between Catholic proselytism in the canonical territory of the Church in Russia and in other CIS countries, and the disadvantaged position of the believers of the canonical Orthodox Church in the West of Ukraine, where the Greek Catholic Church was established. For instance, from 23-27 June 2001, Pope John Paul II paid a visit to Ukraine, despite the objections from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In a letter from his Beatitude Metropolitan of Kiev and All-Ukraine Vladimir to the Pope, dated 22 January 2001, he

expressed a request to postpone the visit because of the unsettled relations between the Greek Catholic and Orthodox Christians in Western Ukraine, and due to the uncertainty of the Roman Catholic Church's position in relation to the schismatic groups existing in Ukraine. However, from the side of the Russian Orthodox Church, the most painful decision was the Vatican's decision in February of 2002 to raise the status of Catholic Apostolic administrations established on the territory of Russia to the rank of dioceses. Such serious changes in the structures of the Roman Catholic Church on Russian territory were taken without any preliminary discussion with the Russian Church. To fully understand the disappointment of the Russian Church on this issue, we should refer to the statement of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia, and to the Holy Synod of 12 February 2002³⁷⁶. The position of the Church found the support of State authorities, who were also not promptly notified of the establishment of the Catholic dioceses. In 2002, Catholics established also two dioceses in the traditionally Orthodox lands of south and east of Ukraine: Odessa-Simferopol, and Kharkov-Zaporozhye. In May 2003, the Vatican announced its decision to establish two new catholic dioceses in Kazakhstan: the apostolic administration of Astana and Alma-Ata were transferred to them. Till that moment, there was only one diocese of the Roman Catholic Church in the country – Karaganda. The attempts of the Greek Catholic Church to extend its influence to the regions in the south and east of Ukraine, where historically there had never been an union, was cause of deep concern. In July 2003 the Pope approved the formation of the exarchate of Donetsk-Kharkovsky and Odessa-Crimea created by the Uniates. According to the Russian Church, all this happened against the background of numerous cases of infringements of the rights of believers of the Canonical Orthodox Church by the local authorities of Western-Ukraine, with the constant support of the Greek-Catholics. At the same time, the Uniates, being historically part of these territories, had always claimed the status of National Church of the Ukraine. Attempts had been made to extend the influence of the Uniates to Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan. After all it was widely known that the desire of the Greek-Catholics leadership was to transfer their main center from Lviv to Kiev and to give the status of Patriarchate to Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The only obstacle to the implementation of these intentions was the lack of approval from the Vatican. At the meeting between the official delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, which took place in March 2003 in Geneva, the Catholic side proposed to discuss the possibility of creating a Greek-Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine. As part of this discussion, in March of the same year, the Department for External Church Relations, received a memorandum from Cardinal Walter Kasper, Chairman of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, entitled *A Review of the History of the Patriarchates and their theological legitimacy* (*Обзор истории Патриархатов и их богословской легитимности*). The document contained a number of assessments of the history and of the current status of the Orthodox Patriarchates, considered unacceptable to the Russian Church. Due to the fact that the question raised affected the interests of the Global Orthodoxy, Patriarch Aleksii II decided to send letters to the Primate of All Local Orthodox Churches, inviting them to express comments on the memorandum of Cardinal Kasper and to forward them to the Russian Orthodox Church, in particular regarding the possibility of the establishment of the Greek-

³⁷⁶

Russian Orthodox Church, *Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Алексия на очередной сессии ПАСЕ* [Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii at the regular session of PACE], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 02-10-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/301775.html>, (last accessed May 2021).

Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine. Answers were received by 2004: they demonstrated a complete solidarity to the position of the Russian Orthodox Church. These answers were also sent to the Vatican; in addition, Patriarch Bartholomew, in order to strengthen the solidarity expressed to the Russian Church, sent a personal message to the Pope, in which he sharply condemned the aforementioned memorandum. In February 2004, Cardinal Kasper paid a visit to Moscow, and during the meeting he assured the complete respect, in the near future, of the opinion expressed by All the Orthodox Churches about the Greek-Catholic Patriarchate. Indeed, on 3 June 2004, the Permanent Synod of the UGCC received the refusal of the Pope, who, although he had expressed his support to the Greek Catholic Church of having their own Patriarchate, expressed the impossibility of meeting their request without the assessment from other Christian Churches. Although the Russian Church noticed such developments of the events, other issues remained on the floor: first of all, the issue of proselytism, since Catholics continued to deny the problem. Only during the aforementioned visit to Moscow did Cardinal Kasper admit the existence of isolated cases of misconduct from the side of Catholic clergy. He also stressed that the evangelization of Orthodox Christians was not a strategy or a policy of the Vatican. During the talks, the Orthodox and the Catholic sides decided to create a joint working group, in order to discuss problems between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches. The group included representatives of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity and Russian and Catholic structures. On 5-6 May 2004, the first meeting of this Joint Working Group took place in Moscow, where the Orthodox side raised specific facts of the proselytizing activities of Catholic missionary monastic order and clergy on the territory of the Russian Federation and of other CIS countries. In particular, the Russian Church condemned the following kinds of activities: the Catholic mission conducted among people belonging to Orthodoxy for tradition based on baptism, faith, and national culture; cases of pastoral and catechising work with Orthodox children, adolescents and young people, especially in orphanages, boarding schools and other closed institutions, barely reachable by Orthodox clergy; facts of preaching Catholicism through the media, and holding religious education and catechetical actions, without clarifying that they are Catholic actions, or creating the false impression that these actions were approved by the Orthodox Church. At the end of the meeting the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church also recognised the existence of actions that could be interpreted as a manifestation of Orthodox proselytism. However, in addition to complaints about the actions of the Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox also made concrete proposals, for instance the idea of developing a kind of code of conduct for Catholic structures in Russia and in CIS countries, an idea shared by Catholics. Nevertheless, the Russian Church claimed that such a document already existed and was the *General principles and practical norms for the coordination of evangelical activities and the ecumenical commitment of the Catholic Church and other CIS countries* published in 1992 by the Pontifical Commission Pro Russia following the meeting of the delegations of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican on 1-2 March 1992 in Geneva. The document urged the Catholic clergy to avoid excessive zeal in their pastoral activities in these countries and to try to coordinate their activities with the Russian Orthodox Church. However, in the years following the publications of this document, subsequent actions did not necessarily match Roman Catholic intentions to follow its recommendations. In the meantime, Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that the Russian side made a number of gestures to demonstrate its readiness to comply with this document; take for instance the

head of the Catholic Church in Russia, Archbishop Tadeus Kondrusiewicz, who, during his travel around the country, tried to meet with diocesan bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. Copies of the letter containing a request for the meeting were also forwarded to the Department for External Church Relations. By contrast, there were also examples of positive relations between the Russian Church and the Roman Catholic Church, one example being the transfer to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of the copy of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God on 28 August 2004. Regarding relations with Protestants, the Russian Church maintained strong partnerships with the Evangelical Church in Germany, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. Regular theological interviews with representatives of these churches were held in order to find a joint answer to the challenges of modern society. Discussions with the Evangelical Church in Germany showed significant difference of views in the understanding of the essence and prospects for the development of the modern international movement for the unity of Christians. At the same time, the openness in the exchange of views and the desire to understand each other allowed both parties to declare the importance and need to continue dialogue in the future. In particular, the interviews with Lutherans from Finland on the results and prospects of the bilateral dialogue were distinguished by the depth and thoroughness of the reports presented, and by the confidence in the usefulness of the bilateral relationships. In 2003, the President of the Council of the Evangelical Churches in Germany, Manfred Koch, paid a visit to the Russian Church, event marked also by the publication of the first joint Russian-German book, titled *Hear and See Each Other (Слышать и видеть друг друга)*, on which representatives of Russian Orthodox Church and of the Evangelical Church in Germany had worked for several years. Another positive signal came from work with Christians in Scandinavia, in the field of social service. In 2001 a Joint Working Group was established on cooperation between the Russian Church and the Church of Norway. This group worked on the implementation of social work, peacekeeping for Russian speaking community in Norway, and theological and cultural exchange. Cooperation within the framework of the program Teobalt was effective. It provided an important opportunity for Christian living in the Baltic countries, to know each other's church and cultural traditions better, to exchange views on public issues related primarily to the enlargement of the European Union. Since the EU was mainly concerned with the economic and the political spheres, the challenge for Christians, and one of the task of Teobalt's missions, was to integrate the spiritual and the moral dimensions into the development of Europe. Regarding the dialogue at pan-Orthodox level, it is worth remembering that the meeting of the International Commission on Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue, held in 2001, was dedicated to the consideration of the sacrament of priesthood and of its unique connection with the High Priesthood of Christ. In 2002, Norway hosted the eleventh plenary session of the joint theological commission of the Orthodox Lutheran dialogue on the topic *The Pursuit of the Church as a means of salvation (Таинства Церкви как средств спасения)*. Moreover, 2003 was marked by a serious crisis of the Anglican Commonwealth; in connection with the ordination of a priest who identified as homosexual in the Episcopal Church in the USA, already mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Department for External Church Relations made a special statement, and in December of the same year the Holy Synod of the Russian Church decided to freeze relations with the Episcopal Church in the USA. Similar trends can be traced in the Church of England where in 2004, someone who openly identifies as homosexual was appointed to a prominent Church post. Recently, a version of the New Testament was published

with a foreword of the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. According to Metropolitan Kirill, this edition, grossly distorted the meaning of the New Testament text, and, simply removed some important passages condemning same-sex relations. As homosexual ordination became more common in the Anglican world, the Russian Orthodox Church closely monitored and analyzed the situation, and the conditions of contacts with Anglicans in general. Of course this was a challenge also for the Churches of the Commonwealth of England, which underwent a process of self determination, since some of them were ready to accept this tendency, and others held more reservation in the acceptance of the situation. In order to resolve the issue, at the end of 2003, a meeting of the leadership of the Commonwealth established the so-called Lambeth Commission. Similar trends were characteristic of other Western Protestant Churches. Not recognizing homosexuality as sin had already existed among some of these churches, and then the practice of ordaining homosexuals was introduced by Church consecrations, both men and women, and also consecration of same sex marriages started to spread in Protestant communities around the world. According to Metropolitan Kirill, some of the members of these communities, who did not accept this practice and left in sign of protest, looked to the Orthodox Church as the guardian of the truth. For this reason the Russian Church felt that it should not turn its back on such people.

External Church activity prioritized relations with those Protestants who had been present in Russia for tens, hundreds of years, and with whom the Russian Church shared a common experience of suffering during the period of religious and Church persecutions in the Soviet Union and a common experience of cooperation during the years of perestroika. Since the end of the Soviet Union, the situation has changed dramatically. Protestant denominations has grown rapidly often with the help of fellow believers who were abroad. Unfortunately, this process has often been accompanied by proselytism, which has the potential to complicate bilateral relations. Moreover, some Protestant communities within Russia have dramatically changed the tone of their statements about the Russian Church. Statements delivered to the media by some leaders of Protestant communities often contributed to this. Since the activity of the Christian Interfaith Advisory Committee (Христианского межконфессионального консультативного комитета- ХМКК) was suspended due to problems that took place in 2002 in relations among Russians and Catholics, the only mechanism for maintaining relations with Protestant confessions has been considered bilateral contacts. From this perspective, a seminar by representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists was considered very successful. This seminar was held on April 15, 2004 on the *Role of Christianity in contemporary Russian society (Роль христианина в современном российском обществе)*. The results of this workshop showed that is possible to work together in order to defend and promote traditional Christian values. This awareness was very important, above all because confirmed a willingness to solve the problems that had been created in bilateral relations. Despite Russian Orthodox Church's concern regarding liberal tendencies in the life of many Protestant communities in the West, her participation in the work of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and in the Conference of European Churches (CEC) continued. Therefore, all Local Churches were unanimous in their criticism of the WCC during the 1990s, stating that the presence of the Orthodox as a minority within the Council, virtually deprived them of the opportunity to influence the decision making process. According to Metropolitan Kirill, the voice of the Orthodox Churches was almost inaudible, and ecclesiological, moral and political theories, alien to Orthodoxy, were

imposed on them. As result of this criticism, the WCC aimed to reassess Orthodox participation in it. The Special Commission on the participation of Orthodox Churches in the work of the WCC, created in 2000 under the initiative of the Russian Orthodox Church, achieved a significant change in the participation of Russians within the organization. The Commission's work was difficult and painstaking, but the Russian Church ensured that the position of Orthodox Churches was not only heard, but of decisive importance in the process of adopting various documents. The conclusions of the Commission were supported by the then WCC General Secretary Konrad Raiser, and by the Central Committee of the Council. Beyond recommendations of the Special Commission, the WCC was adhering to a new method of making decisions through consensus. If one or more Church members expressed their disagreement with the draft document or a decision, it became necessary to find an alternative solution to the issue. With such measures, the adoption of major decisions is not to be based on the principle of the simple majority. Indeed, consensus procedure allows any group of Churches, through their representatives, to ensure that their objections to any issue will be made public and satisfied, even if this would mean a refusal to take a decision on the issue under consideration. In addition, in February 2006 in Porto Alegre (Brasil) a Permanent Committee of the Commission Faith and Order of the World Council of the Churches was created. The Commission consisted of 30 people and consisted of representatives of Local Orthodox Churches, Roman Catholic Church, as well as other various Protestant denominations³⁷⁷. Up until 2006, functions of this Commission were conducted by the Administrative Committee of this Special Commission. The category of Associate Members Churches was also created. The Associate Members Churches does not have any obligations to the WCC but can, under permission of the Chairman, take part in the meeting and work of Commission, Committee, and research groups. As result of these changes, the practice of so-called joint prayer was radically revised. Prior to this, there was a common use of prayers and chants taken from different Christian traditions, which worried largely Orthodox participants in the WCC, fearful of the prayers resulting in artificial conglomerate. A special commission established a separate procedure for the performance of "confessional" and "interfaith" prayers: this was a significant event for the Russian Orthodox Church, to better acquaint Western Christians with Orthodox worship and liturgical piety in all their integrity. In 2003, during the XII General Assembly of the CEC held in Trondheim (Norway), the Orthodox divine services were summoned to the delegates of the assembly, in English. The Commission proposed to continue to use traditional biblical terminology in meetings and in documentation, limiting the use of the inclusive (feminist) language in relation to God. It was also decided to accept as new members of the WCC only those Churches that professed "faith in the True God, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures and in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed"³⁷⁸. The Commission pointed out that, with regard to Orthodoxy, unity can be reached only in the Eucharistic communion, only in the unity of the faith. Recommendations of the Commission were approved by the General Assembly of the WCC in Porto Alegre (Brazil). For many years, representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church had been participating in

³⁷⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Состоялось заседание Постоянного комитета комиссии «Вера и церковное устройство» [A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Commission "Faith and Church Structure" was held]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 25-03-2014, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3612218.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁷⁸ «веру в Троидного Бога, как она выражена в Священном Писании и Никео-Цареградском Символе веры».

the work of the Commission of Churches on International Affairs of the WCC. The position of the Russian Orthodox Church on important issues of international politics largely coincided with the point of view of other Christian Churches. This concerned, first of all, the settlement of the Iraq and Balkans crisis, the situation in the Middle East, the support to United Nations and the international law in world processes. In July 2003, the General Secretary of the WCC, K. Raiser, paid a visit to the Russian Orthodox Church; he visited Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk. And acknowledged the presence of proselytizing activities carried out by the Catholic Church, and expressed understanding for the critical opinion of the Moscow Patriarchate towards the missionary activities conducted by some Western Churches in Russia. At the same time, he pointed out that both the Catholic and the Russian sides made mistakes in approaching this issue³⁷⁹. The Russian Church was also a member of the Conference of European Churches (on 11 October 2008, the ROC suspended its membership), participating in the work of various CEC commissions, primarily the Church and Society Commission, with which it cooperated in the field of dialogue with European politicians, parliamentary and governmental bodies of the European Union, as well as the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Russian Orthodox Church's representatives also regularly participated in the events organized by the representations at EU or Council of Europe and, as part of its executive committee, participated in the development of thematic schedule. Nevertheless, many Protestant theologians and Church leaders raised the problem of a crisis in the ecumenical movement. Indeed, in the past years the leadership of the international Christian organizations had also proclaimed the beginning of the reconfiguration of this movement which, as the analysis of the priorities at the basis of his policy as chairman of the Department confirmed, in the future, should entail changes in the practice of inter-Christian relations, in the style and method of cooperation, and in the content of theological dialogue. In general, participation in international organizations was seen by the Russian Orthodox Church as an instrument to testify about Orthodoxy in the face of the World, as a way to make Orthodox voice heard and understood by many Western Christians³⁸⁰. Indeed, it has facilitated the dissemination of the point of view of the Russian Church to a wide range of Christian Churches and communities, international political, social and informational circles, to testify before the secular world about the need to preserve Christian moral heritage. In addition, Metropolitan Kirill judged it a positive signal that many charitable agencies working under the patronage of the WCC and of the CEC had been carrying out their activities in Russia and other CIS countries for many years, coordinating with the Russian Church. In addition to ecumenical efforts, since 2000, the interreligious ties of the Russian Orthodox Church significantly expanded. The last valuable experience of this kind was the

³⁷⁹ Huseynov Husan, *К межцерковному диалогу в России [Towards an inter-church dialogue in Russia]*, 10.07.2003, <https://www.dw.com/ru/%D0%BA-%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B6%D1%86%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BC%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%83-%D0%B2-%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8/a-917005>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁸⁰ Anderson John, *Putin And The Russian Orthodox Church: Asymmetric Symphonia?*, pp. 185-201; Hertog Katrien, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and in Europe*, 2008; Rimestad Sebastian, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Western Europe: one or many? Religion, State & Society*, 43:3, 2015, pp. 228-243; Mudrov Sergei, *The European Union and Christian Churches: The patterns of interaction*, Europa-Kolleg Hamburg, Institute for European Integration, Hamburg, 3:14, 2014; Leustean Lucien, *The politics of Orthodox churches in the European Union*, *International Journal for the Study of Christian Church*, 18:2-3, 2018.

meeting of Heads and Representatives of religions, churches and religious associations of the Soviet Union on National Relations, held on 7 December 1989. The meeting's final recommendation was: "We call on believing citizens to provide help and support to all people who need it, regardless of their nationality. The religious requirements for the application of effective love and compassion to each person should motivate us to perform deeds of mercy and beneficial social service. Belonging to a Church or religious association challenges chauvinism and national exclusivity, which is a sin. They contradict everything that is defined as national dignity. This feeling is alien to arrogance, contempt for other peoples and cultures [...]"³⁸¹. The goal was strengthening Christian brotherhood, among the CIS and Baltic countries, for the sake of establishing peace and harmony among the peoples of these states³⁸².

According to Alicja Curanovic, the Foreign Policy Concept prepared government's religious diplomacy, by stressing that Russia is a multinational and multicultural state which consistently pursued intercultural and interfaith dialogue within international organizations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, OSCE and the Council of Europe, as well as other regional organizations. Moreover, it maintained the Russian state's efforts in supporting civil society initiatives and active cooperation with the ROC and with the main confessions of the country³⁸³. For instance, when Russia assumed the leadership of the Council of Europe in 2006, it organized two forums devoted to religious dialogue, in Kazan and Novgorod.

The Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry was also involved in the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)³⁸⁴, established in 2005 on the initiative of two prime ministers: José Zapatero (Spain) and Recep Erdoğan (Turkey). An event which confirmed the Moscow Patriarchate's ambitions to be the main animator of the interfaith dialogue was the summit of religious representatives held on 2–5 July 2006, preceding the meeting of the states of the G8 Group in St Petersburg. The gathering was carefully prepared by the Interreligious Council of the CIS with the strong support of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Aleksii II and Allahshukur Pashazadeh, co-chair of the Interreligious Council of the CIS, jointly served as hosts, symbolizing the success of cooperation among Orthodoxy and Islam. President Vladimir Putin inaugurated the talks, while the General Secretary of the UN sent a letter of support for such meetings and for the development of the dialogue between religious confessions on the forum of the UN. On the same occasion,

³⁸¹ Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, Русская Православная Церковь, ее служение примирению и перспективы межконфессионального миротворческого сотрудничества в странах СНГ и Балтии [The Russian Orthodox Church, its ministry of Reconciliation and prospects for interfaith peacemaking cooperation in the CIS and Baltic countries], *Teologija*: Moscow, 3, 1994, <https://www.katolik.ru/tserkov-i-obshchestvo/item/1563-tserkov-obschestvo-mir-hr.html>, (last accessed October 2021). The same article can be found also here: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Материалы конференции. Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на открытии межконфессиональной конференции "христианская вера и человеческая вражда"*, 21 июня 1994 года, 1994/ 11-12, pp. 7.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Curanovic described religious diplomacy as a state activity consisting in the use of religious factor in foreign policy. In her perspective, conducting efficient religious diplomacy depends on two conditions: Church and State relations require a minimum level of mutual trust; religious institutions become useful to state diplomacy if they are able to take actions on the international arena. However, in the context of religious diplomacy, there is not an obvious pattern. Sometimes, it is the state that instrumentalizes weaker religious institutions, but often Church-State relations resemble a collaboration based on mutual dependency and profitable to both side. Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

³⁸⁴ <https://www.unaoc.org/>, (last accessed October 2021).

the patriarch of the ROC turned to the representatives of the eight richest nations in the world with a request for their involvement on behalf of understanding between civilizations. This initiative gave rise to regular meetings of religious leaders before G8 summits in Cologne (2007), Sapporo (2008), Rome (2009) and Baku (2010). During the meeting held in Sapporo, in which took part 300 individuals from 23 countries, the ROC was represented by Protorey Vsevolod Chaplin, who appealed for the creation of a consultative body within the UN. Four months later, the next gathering of clergymen from different religions took place in Moscow, devoted to Russia's proposal to establish a consultative religious body and make the UN an important centre of interreligious debate. Among those present were Allahshukur Pashazadeh, Vatican representative Antonio Menini, the Rabbi of Israel, Jona Metzger, a representative of the American foundation Order of Conscience, Budmir Loncar and a representative of the World Islamic League, Mohammad Hajat. In 2009, thanks to the foreign minister Sergey Lavrov and with the support of the Moscow Patriarchate, under the auspices of UNESCO, the consultative UNESCO group Peace and Dialogue of Cultures was created³⁸⁵.

During the chairmanship of Metropolitan Kirill, relationships between traditional religions within the country reached a high level, and significant results had been reached also in relations with religious leaders of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and with foreign interreligious structures. The main work on the development of internal Russian cooperation with believers of traditional non-Christian religions was carried out within the framework of the Interreligious Council of Russia³⁸⁶, which became an authoritative and influential structure. Its presidium included muftis Ismail Berdiev, Ravil Gainutdin and Talgat Tadzhuddin, chief Rabbi Berl Lazar and Adolf Shaevich, Pandido Khambo, Lama Damba Avusheev, and the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, which provided the religious centers friendly to the Russian Church with advisory, informational and legal assistance, receiving in return support from them. Thus, for instance, in April 2004, the leaders of the Islamic, Jewish and Buddhist communities opposed the construction of a huge Hare Krishna religious building in Moscow. As reported in the International Religious Freedom 2005, in January 2004, the Mayor Luzhkov had signed a decree which allocated a land in northwest Moscow in order to allow the construction of the first Veda temple in the country. A plan for the construction of the temple had been approved, although remained questions regarding property issue due to changes in Moscow property's law. Orthodox groups opposed the project, and representatives of the Hare Krishna's Community of Moscow regret that local official were intentionally delayed the process³⁸⁷. Another example can be considered the action of the above mentioned communities – Islamic, Jewish, and Buddhist -, in June of the same year to condemn the organizers and participants of the anti-Orthodox exhibition Watch out, religion! (Осторожно, религия!). The exhibition organized by the Sakharov Centre for Human Rights, criticized the "mass perceptions of religious doctrines and iconography in contemporary Russia, where the Russian Orthodox Church has gradually replaced the old Communist party"³⁸⁸. Interreligious cooperation within the

³⁸⁵ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

³⁸⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, *Межрелигиозный совет*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3456392.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁸⁷ Bureau Of Democracy, Human Rights, And Labor, International Religious Freedom Report 2005, Russia, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2005/51576.htm>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁸⁸ Zinik Zinovy, "The Neighbors Hence", 2004 Accessed January 15, 2015, quoted in Dolińska-Rydzek Magda (et al.) *"Gays as a Weapon of the Antichrist": Religious Nationalism, Homosexuality, and the*

framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States was marked primarily by the first and second Interreligious Peacemaking Forums held in Moscow (November 2000 and March 2004, respectively), and by the creation, as result, of the CIS Interreligious Council (ICSCC). His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia and the Chairman of the Caucasus Muslims Board Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh were elected as honorary co-chairs of ICSC. Twenty-two leading spiritual leaders of the Commonwealth countries, including the Katolikos Patriarch of All Georgia, Ilia II, the Katolikos of Armenia, Garegin II, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir, His Eminence Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Filaret, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus, of Kishinev and All Moldova, Vladimir, Methodius of Astana and Alma-Ata, Vladimir of Tashkent and Central Asia, joined the presidium of the Interreligious Religious Council of the CIS³⁸⁹. In this context cannot but be mentioned the Congress of the World and Traditional Religions (Съезд мировых и традиционно-национальных религий), which took place in September 2003 in the capital of Kazakhstan, Astana. This summit, which was attended by a representative delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, expressed the desire of the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, to pay attention to the dialogue between different religions, not only as a guarantee of the peaceful life of any society, but also as an important factor in international relations³⁹⁰.

Another important feature of cooperation among religions over the past period was the significant strengthening of the ties of the Russian Orthodox Church with Muslim countries. Since 2001, Russian Orthodox Church's delegations had visited Iran, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malaysia, Indonesia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Among these visits, the peacekeeping trip to pre-war Baghdad of the Christian Muslim delegation headed by Bishop Feofan, Bishop of Magadan and Sinegorsk and the Supreme Mufti Talgat Tadhuddin should be highlighted. Indeed, it clearly demonstrated the common position of Orthodox Christians and traditional Muslims in the face of common challenges. In 2001 and 2004 the dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Muslim community of the Islamic Republic of Iran, initiated December of 1997, continued. In January 2001, a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in the third meeting of the Joint Russian-Iranian Theological Commission on Muslim-Orthodox Dialogue in Tehran and, in March 2004, an Iranian delegation led by the Ayatollah Muhammad Araki arrived in Moscow to participate in the IV meeting of this commission. Progress was also noticeable in the international interreligious organization, mainly with the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WRCM). Thus, in November 2002, under its auspices, the European Council of Religious Leaders was created, and the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations was appointed as co-moderator. This young interreligious structure took important steps in order to protect the rights of believers in an uniting Europe, and also made considerable efforts to peacefully resolve the conflict in Kosovo. However, as pointed out by Metropolitan Kirill, a way to encourage a more adequate development of interreligious relations, could have been developing a theological concept of the Orthodox attitude towards non-Christian traditional relations,

Antichrist on the Russian Internet" in Derks Marco, Mariecke van den Berg, *Discourses About Homosexuality and Religion in Europe and Beyond*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020, note 5, pp. 293.

³⁸⁹ Межрелигиозный совет (МС) СНГ. See <http://interreligious.ru/interreligious-council/>, (last accessed May 2021).

³⁹⁰ See: United Nations Archives, 21.11.2007, <https://search.archives.un.org/uploads/r/united-nations-archives/a/2/8/a28e9192657a0d86e54bb15d8aed15febe949bcb89da3b54c36ba58e1f87b7c4/S-1956-0026-0008-00015.PDF>, (last accessed August 2021).

dialogue and cooperation with them. This kind of document would allow to clarify many controversial points, and to outline methods, goals, principles and boundaries of interreligious dialogue and interaction that the Russian Orthodox Church considered acceptable.

Regarding the peace-building process, the greatest achievement of the ROC in this field was the ability to play as mediator between the Armenian and the Azeri in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In November 1993 Patriarch Aleksii succeeded in convincing Katolikos Vazgen I and Sheik-ul Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh to meet in Moscow at the St Daniel monastery. In May 2001 Aleksii II and Pashazadeh signed a joint declaration in which they called upon politicians of Transcaucasia to resolve the conflict in Karabakh by peaceful means, and announced new talks between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Caucasus Muslim Council. After the meeting, Katolikos Karegin II asked President Putin to increase Russia's activity in the resolution of the conflict in Karabakh, this ensured the Kremlin to not be subjected to possible accusations of interfering in Armenian-Azeri relations. The second trilateral meeting took place in Baku on 26 April 2010. Aleksii tried to mediate also in the conflict between Serbians and Albanians in Kosovo 1999, through a meeting with President Slobodan Milošević and the leader of the Kosovars, Ibrahim Rugova. The Patriarch was involved in the peace process in Cyprus and Moldova, and also in church disputes that had been burdening relations between states of the former Yugoslavia: Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro³⁹¹. Another important task carried out by the Russian Church was a whole series of peacemaking efforts, including the mission during the conflict of September – October 1993, during the Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict, and in general in order to stop the process of disintegration of their traditional economic, cultural and political ties happening in the Baltic and CIS countries. In order to reach this aim, Metropolitan Kirill considered also the possibility of establishing a permanent forum of Christian Churches and religious organizations to coordinate peacekeeping and other church-public indicatives to resolve problems arising between confessions³⁹².

In the inter-conciliar period the Department for External Church Relations was very active also in the field of church-state and church-society relations. This work was carried out with the authorities of all branches and levels in Russia and in other countries: with public and political associations, with scientific, political, cultural, professional and other organizations, with Russian and foreign communities. There is a regular interaction with the Administration of the President of Russia: representatives of the Department conducted regular consultations with employees of the Presidential Associations, on many issues regarding the life of the Church, its national and international problems. The Department coordinated the work of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Council for Interaction with Religious Associations (Администрации Президента по многим

³⁹¹ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

³⁹² Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, Русская Православная Церковь, ее служение примирению и перспективы межконфессионального миротворческого сотрудничества в странах СНГ и Балтии [The Russian Orthodox Church, its ministry of Reconciliation and prospects for interfaith peacemaking cooperation in the CIS and Baltic countries], *Teologija*: Moscow, 3, 1994, <https://www.katolik.ru/tserkov-i-obshchestvo/item/1563-tserkov-obschestvo-mir-hr.html>, (last accessed October 2021). The same article can be found also here: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Материалы конференции. Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на открытии межконфессиональной конференции "христианская вера и человеческая вражда"*, 21 июня 1994 года, 1994/ 11-12, pp. 7.

вопросам жизни Церкви) under the chairmanship of President of Russia. The employees of the Department also maintained working contacts with the apparatus of the Government of the Russian Federation, including through participation in the work of governmental Commissions on issues regarding religious associations. In the field of collaboration with Russian ministries and departments, cooperation developed with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communication. The Department was also involved in a dialogue with the Ministry of Education aimed at strengthening the promotion of positive knowledge about religion in secondary and higher education. Interactions among the Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, reached a new and higher qualitative level after the visit paid by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 6 March 2003, for the first time in more than 200 years history of the Russian Foreign Ministry. This historical event made possible a significant advance in DECR and Foreign Ministry relations, formalized in a permanent mechanism through the establishment of joint working group with two co-chairs represented by the First Deputy Minister and the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations. In the year and half after the formation of the group, plenary sessions had been held three. Moreover, a program of collaboration was developed and approved seeking collaboration between the two institutions. A document entitled *The procedure for interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation* (Порядок взаимодействия Русской Православной Церкви и Министерства иностранных дел Российской Федерации) was drawn up and signed; the document defined the main areas of collaboration, contained a provision on the working-group, and defined the rules of its activities. The working group's activities touched on various different issues: collaboration between Church and State and with public structures of Russia in the development of spiritual and cultural ties with the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States and other countries, the protection of rights of Russian citizens and other compatriots abroad, inter-civilizational dialogue within the framework of international organizations, and so on. In addition, the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Russian embassies abroad intensified its contacts with foreign offices of the Moscow Patriarchate. Thanks to this increased contact between the Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian diplomats' interactions with the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate abroad subsequently intensified. Indeed, diplomatic officials recognised the importance of the spiritual work of Russian compatriots, and helped the establishment and education of the Church's diaspora. The appearance of the first Embassy Chapels stood out, as well as the fact that employees of diplomatic institutions were among the parishioners of Church communities. According to Metropolitan Kirill, the fact that Church-State diplomacy was not only a symbolic gesture, but rather it constituted an integral part of the efforts made in order to assert the distinctive role of Orthodoxy in the world arena. Collaboration with the Church allowed diplomats to take into account the spiritual closeness of countries and peoples belonging to the Orthodox world. And, in his opinion, through a spiritual community, it was easier for these countries to achieve the creation of a single spiritual space for Orthodox civilization. A mutual, beneficial dialogue was regularly conducted with the Federation Council and the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of Russia. The employers of the Department took part in parliamentary hearings and other discussions organized by the Federal Assembly on a wide range of issue concerning Russian and international life. Contacts with parliamentarians and other participants in the legislative process allowed the Russian Orthodox Church to see her wishes taken into account, for

instance with regard to the need of improving the laws on countering extremism and on public events, and the ones related to identification of citizens and freedom of conscience and religious associations. Conversely, the Church manifested marked concern for economic development and, in particular, for the attempts to present the Church as part of the market and, on this basis, form a legislation that deprives religious organizations of their natural advantages over commercial organizations. This tendency led to a limitation of the sphere of social service of the Church. The new version of the Land Code did not provide for the provision of land plots to religious organizations for perpetual use – it was supposed to transfer them to lease or ownership. The situation was corrected as a result of the adoption by the Federal Assembly and the enactment by the Russian Federation, of the federal laws *On Amendments to the Land Code of the Russian Federation, On the Enactment of the Land Code of the Russian Federation and On the Turnover of Agricultural Lands* (*О введении в действие Земельного кодекса Российской Федерации and Об обороте земель сельскохозяйственного назначения*). Problems remained with the taxation of the property of religious organizations. According to the chapter “Property Tax” of the *Tax Code* of Russia, only religious properties were exempt from taxation; that includes temples, monasteries, chapels, icons and so on. Despite the fact that in many regions of the country’s local authorities had agreed to remove the property of religious organizations from the tax base, the risk remained that a similar situation may arise in the area of taxation of church land plots, except for those allocated for the founding and maintenance of churches and monasteries. This concern was a major reason for the promotion of the new law. Another serious issue, was one connected to the fears of some believers in connection with the development of the law *On the main documents proving the identity of a citizen of the Russian Federation* (*Об основных документах, удостоверяющих личность гражданина Российской Федерации*). In the opinion of Metropolitan Kirill, fears concerning dangers for Christian identity and the faith were sometimes unjustified but, since people protested the possible consequences of the law’s adoption, it was the Church’s duty to start an active dialogue with representatives of the state on this issue. Consultations were held with representatives of the Presidential Administration, the State Duma, the Federation Council, and various ministries and departments. Moreover, the issue was raised during conversations between His Holiness the Patriarch and the leadership of the State Duma during his visit on 4 June 2004. As result, Russian legislators, with the support of the President and of executive authorities, took into account wishes of Church’s leadership. According to the new draft of this law, prepared for the second reading, it was planned to exclude the column personal code³⁹³ from the passport questionnaire. The Russian Orthodox Church considered this provision in contradiction with the prohibition stipulated in the Russian Constitution to collect and use personal information about a person without his consent. And thought that the law on human rights should contain the right to refuse the registration of citizens’ personal data, and prohibit to inquiry information about nationality, religious beliefs, or sexual

³⁹³ this “personal code” is understood as unchanged identification number which is assigned to a person registered in the State Register of the Russian Federation. The code is based on a systematized set of documented personal data. See: Department of the Minister of Internal Affairs – Sakhlain Region, Что означает содержащийся в паспорте гражданина Российской Федерации реквизит «личный код»? [What does the “personal code” detail in the passport of a citizen of the Russian Federation mean?], <https://65.xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/document/835350>, (last accessed August 2021).

inclinations³⁹⁴. The refuse of the taxpayer identification number was also due to the claim that the bar code on the application form contained the mark of the Antichrist. The problem was with the pairs of parallel stripes in the bar code reported on the form. In fact some Orthodox priests and believers claimed that in these stripes were possible to see the number 666, the mark of the beast described in the New Testament Book of Revelations³⁹⁵. For these reasons, it was stipulated to simply not fill out the column and in the future to completely eliminate it. Indeed the issue regarded the need to exclude the INN mark from passports, and to include in it only the data included in the list contained in the draft law, that is basic information about its owner (last name, first name, patronymic, gender, date and place of birth, date of issue of the passport, name of the internal affairs body and the code of the unit that issued the passport, personal signature of the owner of the passport). In the main document, it is planned to make notes on registration at the place of residence and remove it from the registration record, on previously issued basic identity documents, on registration and termination of marriage, on children under 14 age, on the issuance of basic documents on the identity of Russian citizens outside the country, on the attitude to military duty. In addition, at the request of the documents' holder it was possible to add information about the taxpayer identification number, on the blood type and on the rhesus factor.

Another important task of the department with regard to Church-State relations was carrying out analytical work in connection with the elections of the President of the Russian Federation, and the election campaign proceeding them. The Church's position in connection with elections was communicated to political press and public organizations. Moreover, the Department for External Church Relations promoted the establishment of Church-state relations in all countries of the canonical territory³⁹⁶ of the Moscow Patriarchate, promoting the establishment of these relations in contact with the Primates of self-governing Churches, and diocesan bishops in the CIS countries and in the Baltic States.

Metropolitan Kirill felt many worries with regard to the situation in Ukraine, and in particular to the support of the schismatic Churches from a significant number of political forces and their leaders, which was usually combined with anti-Russian and sometimes anti-Orthodox rhetoric. Moreover, worries were felt about discrimination against believers of the canonical Orthodox Church in Western Ukraine, where there were protracted cases of non-enforcement of court decisions on the return of temple buildings to the communities of this Church, and sometimes, as in Lvov, of long-term refusals to provide a land plot for the construction of a new church, the construction of which was felt by believers as an urgent concern.

The development of Church-State relations in Belarus was positively endorsed by the signing of a comprehensive agreement on cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Belarusian Orthodox Church on June 12, 2003. A constant and fruitful dialogue seemed to exist also in Moldavia, above all thanks to the support from the society and the

³⁹⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, *Госдума рассмотрит блок законопроектов, направленных на защиту персональных данных* [The State Duma will consider a block of bills aimed at protecting personal data], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 05-07-2006, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/123686.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁹⁵ Russian priests call bar code evil, 24.02.2001, <https://www.deseret.com/2001/2/24/19571533/russian-priests-call-bar-code-evil>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁹⁶ See next paragraph for an analysis of the concept of canonical territory, Holy Rus and Russki Mir in post soviet conception.

state enjoyed by the Orthodox Church. According to Metropolitan Kirill, secular authorities provided the Church with benevolent support in all the other countries of the Moscow Patriarchate's canonical territory: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. However, some concerns were felt in relations with difficulties due to their ethnic belonging, culture and language, experienced by Russian-speaking population of Latvia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. At the same time, concerns were expressed also with regard to the dialogue between the Church hierarchy and participants in the legislative process in Ukraine and in Transnistria. The Russian Orthodox Church developed relations with monarchs, governments, parliaments and other institutions of power in various countries. The purpose of these relations was to support the diaspora, to overcome conflicts, to conduct peacemaking processes in the world, to promote dialogue among civilizations. Contacts with various countries were facilitated by the meetings of the Patriarch with the heads of the state and government, parliamentary delegations, ambassadors accredited in Moscow. During visits to various states, the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations usually held meetings with political leadership. Moreover, the responsible employees of the Department were almost constantly in contact with statesmen and diplomatic representatives of dozens of countries. Since 2002, the Russian Orthodox Church had taken a number of significant steps to establish cooperation with the United Nations and European International organizations. This (unity of Orthodox people) was also the main task of the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church in European international organizations³⁹⁷, established on 17 July 2002 in the framework of expansion of the dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church with European International organizations (since 2002, bishop of Vienna and Austria Hilarion performed the role of representative). The Moscow Patriarchate decided to establish this Representative office after a meeting of Metropolitan Kirill in Bruxelles in

³⁹⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Представительство Русской Православной Церкви при европейских международных организациях*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1590844.html>. On relations of the Moscow Patriarchate with international institutions see among others: Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur*; Kristina Stoeckl, *The Russian Orthodox Church and Human Rights*; Hilarion (Alfeyev), Bishop, 'Orthodoxy in a new Europe: problems and perspectives', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, 24, 2004, pp. 18–26; Payne Daniel. Kent Jennifer, *An alliance of the sacred: prospects for a Catholic–Orthodox partnership against secularism in Europe*, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 46, 2011, pp. 41–66; Spohn Willfried, *Europeanization, religion and collective identities in an enlarging Europe: a multiple modernities perspective*, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12, 2009, pp. 358–374; Pankhurst Jerry, Kilp Alan, *Religion, the Russian Nation and the State: Domestic and International Dimensions: an Introduction*, *Religion state and Society*, 41:3, 2013, pp. 226–243; Mudrov Sergei, *The Christian Churches as Special Participants in European Integration*, *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 7:3, 2011, pp. 363–379; Hertog Katrien, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and in Europe*; Rimestad Sebastian, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Western Europe: one or many?*; Kasatkin Petr, *Русская православная церковь как актор современной мировой политики* [Russian Orthodox Church as actor of contemporary world policy], *Научные школы МГИМО*, 6:15, 2010, pp. 141–151; Beglov Alexsei, *Международная деятельность Русской Православной Церкви в период «нового курса» в государственно - церковных отношениях. Основные этапы и кризисные явления* [International activities of the Russian Orthodox Church during the "new course" in state-church relations. Main stages and crisis phenomena], *Kontury Global'nykh Transformatsij*, 11:4, 2018, pp. 104–129; Agadjanian Alexander, *Liberal Individual and Christian Culture: Russian Orthodox Teaching on Human Rights in Social Theory Perspective*, *Religion, State & Society* 38:2, 2010, pp. 97–113; Hegumen Philip Ryabyk, "New Challenges to Religious Freedom in Europe", in Pasquale Annicchino (ed.), *Freedom of Religion or Belief in Foreign Policy. Which One?*, Florence : European University Institute, 2013, pp. 21.

1999 with representatives of parliament and EU Commission; his goals and objectives were: 1) implementing a direct dialogue between the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the European intergovernmental institutions, 2) participating in discussions on European integration, on the rights of believers in EU countries, on human rights legislation, on interethnic and interreligious peace, social justice, European security, bioethics, ethical aspects of the use of modern technologies, 3) establishing regular contacts and interaction with representatives of the Orthodox churches in the European Union (Patriarchate of Constantinople, Cypriot, Romanian and Greek Churches) and with various structures and representations of the Catholic Church, of Protestant communities and of inter-Christian organizations, 4) providing reliable information about the ministry and doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church to Western and domestic media³⁹⁸. Establishing a regular mechanism for consultation allowed the ROC to intensify contacts with the EU and to react in a timely manner to the work of the institutions: indeed, the patriarchate devoted much attention to the planning of the *Constitutional Treaty*, in 2001 the ROC worked its own position into the *White Paper* published by the European Commission. The Church's involvement was noted by Romano Prodi, who with a letter invited the hierarchy of the Russian Church to participate in the work on regulations concerning religious institutions. In March 2002 the ROC took part in session on the Future of Europe (Будущее Европы); in June 2002 Metropolitan Kirill during a meeting with the representatives of the European Commission suggested holding a dialogue between the EU and the ROC on the topic of a multipolar civilisational order. Over the next year, the ROC took part in a debate on values in the *Constitutional Treaty*, and Metropolitan Kirill sent a letter with the Church's positions in this matter to the chairman of the convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

Namely, the Russian Orthodox Church supported the efforts aimed at establishing in the *Treaty* mechanism for the protection of the distinctive culture and religious worldview of the peoples of Europe, as well as at creating a legal basis for a responsible dialogue between Churches and religious associations with the EU institutions. In particular, as came up in the speech Metropolitan Kirill delivered on 20 December 2004 in the field of the conference *Christianity and Europe: social thought of the Russian Orthodox Church* (Христианство И Европа: Социальная Мысль Русской Православной Церкви), organized by the University of Bari and the archbishop of Bari-Bitonto, the mission of the Russian Church in the European institutions was not a call for a new wave of nationalization of Christian Churches, but rather a call to limit the claim of humanistic liberalism, that can create unacceptable situation for Christians, putting Christian doctrine into conflict with other values considered higher. Cases of such collision from his perspective include the 2003 resolution of the European Parliament on the admission of women to Mount Athos, and the refusal of the European Parliament to Mr. Buttiglione in taking up the post of Commissioner of Europe due to the fact that he publicly recognized homosexuality as a sin³⁹⁹.

³⁹⁸ Russian Orthodox Church, Представительство Русской Православной Церкви при европейских международных организациях, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1590844.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

³⁹⁹ The Church-Compound of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Bari, Выступление Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла, Председателя Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата, На Конференции "Христианство И Европа: Социальная Мысль Русской Православной Церкви"[Speech By Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad, Chairman Of The Department For External Church Relations Of The Moscow Patriarchate, At The Conference " Christianity

During the meeting of the Representatives of the Churches of Europe, the CIS and the Baltic States, Father Igor Vyzhanov, Secretary of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate for Inter-Christian Relations, drew the attention of the audience to the fact that the “ecumenical Charter” adopted by the CEC and the Council of Episcopal Conferences of Europe did not find full understanding on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church and the reason for this was not a matter of wording, but a fundamental discrepancy in a number of worldview issues⁴⁰⁰. He affirmed that “the Ecumenical Charter is the embodiment of the inferiority complex of the Christian Churches of Europe, their surrender to the challenge of the secular world”⁴⁰¹. In particular, according to him the document adopted in 2001 by the European Churches “on the one hand, while declaring that the division of Christians is abnormal, immediately claims that these divisions reflect objective diversity”⁴⁰². If Christianity was considered indeed the spiritual foundation of Europe, it encouraged cultural and religious pluralism, thus contradicting Russian Orthodox Church’s claim of a more deep ideological stance. He further added that “the spirit of political correctness prevails here. On the one hand, the charter proclaims Christianity as the spiritual foundation of Europe, but, on the other hand, cultural and religious pluralism is immediately encouraged”⁴⁰³. He pointed out that the critical position of the Russian Orthodox Church in relation to the *Charter* was already expressed publicly and through special statements, and regretted that apparently this did not have any effect on Christian Churches. The acceptance of the document was a reason for a deep pessimism⁴⁰⁴.

In this issue, Father Igor received support also by Russian Protestants, who confirmed that they also disagree with many of the *Charter’s* provisions. One of the main issues discussed at the meeting was the proposal of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad to intensify cooperation between Christians of the East and those of the West in shaping a joint response to various challenges of modernity. In addition, Metropolitan Kirill made a proposal for resuming the activities of the Christian Interfaith Advisory Committee⁴⁰⁵, under the patronage of three co-chairs: representatives from the Orthodox

And Europe: Social Thought Of The Russian Orthodox Church”], bargrad.ru, 20-12-2004, <http://www.bargrad.ru/biblioteka/vystuplenie-mitropolita-kirilla-na-konferencii>, (last accessed August 2021). The same document can be found here: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Русскую Православную Церковь посетил представитель Константинопольского Патриархата митрополит Сассимский Геннадий* [The representative of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Gennady of Sassim visited the Russian Orthodox Church], 2003/12, pp. 77.

⁴⁰⁰ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Итоговый документ встречи представителей христианских Церквей и общин стран СНГ и Балтии в рамках второго этапа подготовки III Европейской экуменической ассамблеи* [The final document of the meeting of representatives of Christian Churches and communities of the CIS and Baltic countries within the framework of the second stage of preparation for the III European Ecumenical Assembly], 2007/2, pp. 54.

⁴⁰¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *В Русской Православной Церкви указывают на неприемлемость отдельных либеральных положений Экуменической хартии* [The Russian Orthodox Church indicates the unacceptability of certain liberal provisions of the Ecumenical Charter], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 28-02-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/205108.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Христианского межконфессионального консультативного комитета (ХМКК). See: <https://www.xmkk.org/>, (last accessed May 2021).

Church, from the Catholic Church, and from the Churches of the Reformation and the free Churches.

The representatives immediately established good relations both with the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union⁴⁰⁶, and with the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Belgium, in this confirming the spirit of partnership and cooperation that existed among the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian state. In the speech given on the occasion of the reception of February 2003, the Ambassador Likhachev Vasily Nikolaevich, Permanent Representative until May 2003, pointed out that “the tasks of the Representation are somewhat consonant, but by no means identical to the tasks of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Commission. After all, the Russian Orthodox Church enjoys well-deserved respect not only in the Russian Federation, but also in Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Baltic countries, the states of Central Asia, where it is a significant social force. In all these countries, the Church is separated from the State, but it is not separated from society and from the people; foremost, it has a significant impact on the formation of public morality”⁴⁰⁷. He added that the Church conducted a dialogue with European political structures, on a voluntary basis, and that was not directly involved in politics but did participate only in that discussions concerned with spiritual and moral dimension. Then, Metropolitan Hilarion pointed out that in the previous years, the interest of the Russian Church in European issues, increased due to several factors. First of all, because with the fall of the “iron curtain” opened up new possibilities of dialogue among the European Union and countries that previously were part of the Eastern bloc. Secondly, the significant increase in the number of Russian Church communities in the European Union made the participation and presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the European social, political and cultural life, more tangible. Thirdly, the interest of the ROC increased because of the planned entry into the European Union of countries traditionally orthodox and of the Baltic States, where about 300 parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate were located. Metropolitan Hilarion pointed out that the Russian Church was interested in contributing in the formation of the spiritual and cultural identity of the new Europe.⁴⁰⁸

The ROC was also a member of the European Congress of Religious Leaders (ESRL)⁴⁰⁹, and of the Council on Cooperation of Christian Churches in the Barents region⁴¹⁰, and cooperated with the Forum of Representatives of Religious Institutions within the Council of Europe⁴¹¹, and with the European Consultation Ecumenical Council on Church and

⁴⁰⁶ See: <https://russiaeu.ru/ru>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁰⁷ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Второе заседание совместной рабочей группы по сотрудничеству между Русской Православной Церковью и Евангелическо-Лютеранской Церковью Норвегии* [Second meeting of the joint working group on cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway], 2003/2, pp. 37.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ See: <https://ecrl.eu/>, (last accessed May 2021).

⁴¹⁰ Russian Orthodox Church, *Христианские Церкви Баренц-региона обсудили в Мурманске перспективы сотрудничества* [Christian Churches of the Barents region discussed prospects of cooperation in Murmansk], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21.02.2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/564473.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴¹¹ See <https://www.coe.int/it/web/portal>, (last accessed August 2021).

Society. An important event in the ROC's contacts with the Council of Europe was Patriarch Aleksii's appearance before the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 2 October 2007, when he spoke of the necessity of a dialogue of civilization and of the need to strengthen Christian identity of Europe which, without the Orthodox contribution, would be considered incomplete. The European Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Orthodox Believers, which brings together representatives from Orthodox countries, was also involved in promoting the Orthodox point of view. This organization, established in 1994 on the initiative of Greece, gathered once a year in different member states. The secretary was located in Athens, and was usually Greek, while the chairman was Russian. The Moscow Patriarchate also participated in the forums of the UN, UNESCO, and OSCE. In addition, muftiates supported Russia's cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, in order to become "a part of building a strategic partnership of Russia with these countries"⁴¹². In addition, the Holy Synod established a Church representation in Strasbourg (France) in order to significantly intensify contacts of the Moscow Patriarchate with the Council of Europe. The staff of the Department regularly took part in events held by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as in specialized work of the OSCE⁴¹³.

In his speech at the Bishop Council of 2008, Metropolitan Kirill confirmed that testimony of the Orthodox faith is the main focus of external church activities. This task was carried out abroad at the level of multilateral and bilateral relations. For this purpose representations of the Russian Orthodox Church were created in Brussels, Strasbourg, Geneva, New York, which allowed the Church to convey to the government and public circles of different countries the church assessment of modern trends in world development, testify to the need for an attentive and careful attitude to the original spiritual and cultural foundations of the life of peoples, defining their appearance and self-awareness, to avoid behavior that the Church might consider "sinful". In this regard, the visit and the speech of Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia to the Council of Europe in October 2007 caused a wide resonance in the European community and became a landmark event in the history of the Russian Church with European institutions. Regarding the work with compatriots, he confirmed that since the total number of the Russian speaking Orthodox diaspora in the world (including Ukrainians and Moldovans) was over 30 million. A significant percentage of this diaspora is part of the Russian Orthodox Church. Accordingly, the ROC felt obliged to show appropriate pastoral care. Metropolitan Kirill stressed that significant measures had been taken to assure pastoral care for these groups. According to data from 2008, in 51 countries of the diaspora there were 316 parishes and 16 monasteries of the Moscow Patriarchate. They were cared for by 8 bishops and 354 clergymen (282 priests and 72 deacons); there were also 89 Sunday schools. These statistics did not include the Russian Church Abroad. Broad cooperation between the Church and public associations was being carried out. Since 2000 the Department, in cooperation with the Union of Writers of Russia and a number of other

⁴¹² Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*, pp. 102.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

public associations, has organized and held regular World Russian People's Councils (Всемирные Русские Народные Соборы) and supported the work of the Council as a permanent union of public organizations, headed by Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia. President of Russia Vladimir Putin participated in the sixth Council held in December 2001, which was dedicated to the theme *Russia: Faith and Civilization. Dialogue of Epochs*, and involved other state representatives, hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church, heads of other traditional religious communities in Russia, leaders of political parties and social movements, entrepreneurs, prominent figures in science, education and military leaders. The participants in the Council, in particular, tried to understand the events of 11 September 2001 from a global point of view and to define the role of religion in overcoming conflicts raised by civilizational struggle. In December 2002 the seventh meeting of the Council took place and was dedicated to the theme *Faith and Labor: Spiritual and Cultural Traditions and the Economic Future of Russia*. It proposed a discussion of the prospects for the development of the domestic economy, its moral foundations, considerations of the results of socio-economic transformations in recent years, new opportunities and threats generated by the globalization of economy. The Council instructed a group of experts to develop a *Code of moral principles and rules for economic management*. In February 2004 at the Trinity Sergius Lavra and in Moscow the eighth appointment of the Council took place and was dedicated to the theme *Russia and Orthodox World*. Among the issues discussed were the place of Russia in Europe and the world, its role as one of the centers of Eastern Christian civilization, ways of consolidating the countries and peoples of the Orthodox world in the spiritual, cultural, political and economic spheres to interact with other civilizations at a deeper level. At the plenary session of the Council the *Code of Moral Principles and Rules in Business Administration* (Свод нравственных принципов и правил в хозяйствовании)⁴¹⁴ was adopted. Metropolitan Kirill said that the document was created on the basis of ten biblical commandments, therefore it was "open for adoption by all who wish to accept it"⁴¹⁵. The document did not intend to regularize the same technical aspects, as the law did, but to offer and "ideal model of management"⁴¹⁶.

The Department took the most active part in the preparation of the Church-wide exhibition *Orthodox Russia*, one of the brightest testimonies of the Russian Orthodox Church in the modern world, a big Orthodox public forum, a meeting place for workers of various fields of Church activity, who came from many dioceses, a way to become acquainted with Church life and its manifestation. Moreover, the exhibition became an annual review of the works of the best masters of Church art, Orthodox publishers, and

⁴¹⁴ "Real Estate and Investments. Legal Regulation", the journal, *Code of ethical principles and rules in business*, Журнал "Недвижимость и инвестиции. Правовое регулирование" [The magazine "Real Estate and investment. Legal regulation"], dpr.ru, 04:21, 2004, https://dpr.ru/journal/journal_16_2.htm, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴¹⁵ Межрелигиозный совет России принял "Свод нравственных принципов и правил в хозяйствовании" [The Interreligious Council of Russia adopted the "Code of Moral Principles and rules in economic management"], 09.12.2004, <https://ria.ru/20041209/756107.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴¹⁶ Sova Centre for Information and Analysis, На VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе принят "Свод нравственных принципов и правил в хозяйствовании" [The VIII World Russian People's Council adopted the "Code of Moral Principles and rules in economic management"], 05.02.2004, <https://www.sova-center.ru/religion/news/authorities/religion-general/2004/02/d1739/>, (last accessed August 2021).

manufactures of products necessary for the Church. In 2004 the exhibition was attended by over 70,000 people. Since the adoption at the Jubilee Bishops' Council of the *Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, the Department organized a number of events aimed at a public discussion of this document. In cooperation with a group of State Duma deputies, All Russian public readings document were organized in Moscow, Sergiev Posad, Krasnoyarsk, Kostroma, Ivanovo: the document aroused genuine interest both among the foreign and inter-Christian organizations; indeed the Department had regularly responded to proposals to discuss it. Scientific and practical conferences, seminars and roundtables were held also in Austria, Germany, USA, Ukraine, and Switzerland. Relations with various political parties and associations were also intensive on issues within the sphere of church and national interests. Metropolitan Kirill noted that, since the Russian Orthodox Church started to show neutrality in political struggles, - politicians' attitudes to the position of the Church have accordingly changed. In addition, he noted a positive increase of political understanding of the church's view of various socially significant problems, from the political side. Cooperation was also carried out in the field of world culture, science and entrepreneurship. Since 2000, the ROC has increasingly engaged with secular mass media as part of its prophetic ministry (determined by the growth of public interest in Church's activities after the Bishops Council held in 2000 which adopted several documents which expressed the ROC's position on several issues. The Department increased its interaction with the secular, electronic and print media. The first step of the informational openness of the Moscow Patriarchate in order to "gave an answer with meekness and reverence"⁴¹⁷ to anyone who asked, was the creation in 1997 of the official website of the Moscow Patriarchate, one of the first internet sites in the Christian world, on the pages of which messages about the most important events in church life are posted, and church documents are published.

At the broader Church level, the Communication Service of the Department for External Church Relations was called to assist this process in every possible way, developing also cooperation with church journalism. At the diocesan level, these functions were fulfilled by corresponding information structures. Since 2000, the Communication Service of the DECR distributed about 1,300 press releases, carried out over 580 accreditation for divine services and church events, primarily with the participation of the Patriarch; in addition, it carried out about 40 press conferences with the participation of Church hierarchy, provided organizational assistance to journalists of secular media in obtaining 250 interviews, which expounded, commented, and explained Church position on topical problems of modern life. That same period saw 3,500 informational posts on the official website of the Russian Orthodox Church, and about 2 million users in Russia and abroad

⁴¹⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Православное единство и православное свидетельство в современном мире. Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 года* [Orthodox Unity and Orthodox Witness in the modern world. Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2008], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/427253.html> , (last accessed August 2021).

became visitors to this internet resource of the Moscow Patriarchate. The dissemination of materials through Church channels favoured their use by secular media, thus contributing to the formation of a positive image of the Church in various strata of modern society: this was an important result of Kirill's policy. At the same time, he noted that the counter-effects of the fruitful participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the process of spiritual, cultural and national consolidation instigated anti-church forces which tried to discredit the Church's creative work. Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that, although this anti-church "front" represented a minority in the system of modern media, they compensated this position with high profile information campaigns and coordination of their actions. Since these publications and anti-church campaigns, and the names of those who ordered and hired performers of such actions had been well known to Orthodox people, Metropolitan Kirill thought that was time to take a closer look at the work of organizations professionally engaged in the monitoring of such actions, as The Anti-Defamation League in the United States, or a similar Orthodox structures successfully operating in the bosom of the Greek Church in order to control these actions. He pointed out that the names of performers who ordained these actions were well known to the Church, and that was responsibility of the Church to protect people from these "anti-Christian" opinions⁴¹⁸. According to Metropolitan Kirill, the Church and the secular media can be strategic partners. For this reason, in order to develop its own information activities within the Department, in 2002 the Publication Sector was established and its tasks included the publication and distribution of the monthly DECR Newsletter⁴¹⁹ and the quarterly scientific-theological and church public journal "Church and Time"⁴²⁰.

The Department for External Church Relations, in collaboration with the Pilgrimage Center of the Moscow Patriarchate carried out work to study the current state of the pilgrimage movement. In particular, the greatest difficulties were caused by the absence of a clear legal distinction between the concepts of pilgrimage and tourism, which led to sharp decrease in the activities of Orthodox pilgrimage services. These and many other issues were touched upon the all church conference *Orthodox Pilgrimage. Traditions and*

⁴¹⁸ Pravaja.ru, *Talking of anti-church propaganda, Metropolitan Kirill referred to a wide kind of actions, that should be investigated further. Anti-Church actions are actions which support secularistic conceptions, or support separatism of Churches from the Russian Orthodox Church as in Ukraine, or critics against the Interreligious Council of Russia. See for example: Антицерковное лобби против Межрелигиозного Совета России [Anti-church lobbies against Interreligious Council of Russia], 24.10.2005; Lenta.ru, В организации кампании против РПЦ митрополит Кирилл обвинил советских атеистов [Metropolitan Kirill accused Soviet atheists of organizing a campaign against the ROC], 02-02-2004; Russian Orthodox Church, О «церковниках-мракобесах» и законах рынка [About "obscurantistic churchmen" and the laws of the market], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 19.04.2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/230761.html>, (last accessed August 2021).*

⁴¹⁹ Pervushin M. V., «Информационный Бюллетень Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата» [Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate], Orthodox Encyclopedia, <https://www.pravenc.ru/text/468861.html>, (last accessed August 2021). See also: Iliushin Pavel, *Информационный бюллетень Отдела внешних церковных связей как источник по истории межрелигиозных отношений Русской Православной Церкви в 1965–2009 годах [Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate as a source on the history of interreligious relations of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1965-2009]*, Christianity in the Middle East, 2, 2020, pp. 214-225.

⁴²⁰ World Council of Churches. See: <https://www.oikoumene.org/>, (last accessed August 2021).

Modernity held on October 2004. The Pilgrimage Center, at the Moscow Patriarchate, founded in 1999, took active part in its preparation. Over the past years, an Orthodox educational complex was created under its auspices, became a meeting place for clergy, theologians and church workers with employers of State institutions, representatives of the world of science and art. One of the structural divisions of the Department for External Church Relations was the Protocol Sector, whose main task was to implement the entire set of protocol norms during the stay of foreign guests of the Moscow Patriarchate in Russia and to prepare visits by delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church outside its canonical territory. Moreover, the Sector participated in solving practical issues arising in ensuring the life of the Russian Orthodox Church overseas institutions. It also provided for the solution of consular visa issues related to the departure of priests and other employees of the Synodal institutions abroad. In addition, it maintained working contacts with museums, airports, hotels; and often its employers helped pilgrims from other countries organize trips to the shrines of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Another task the Department for External Church Relations carried out in cooperation with foreign Christian and secular circles was the development of the practical aspects of social service and religious education in the Russian Orthodox Church. The Department organized round table on these topics to facilitate discussions on the topics of religious education and diaconia, in cooperation with the Department of Church Charity and Social Service, the Department of Religious Education and Catechism, and other general church and diocesan structures. In the inter-conciliar period, a great part of the work was dedicated to the strengthening of the infrastructure of diocesan and parish diaconal work. In its framework, a program was developed for the parish patronage and care services for the sick and elderly, carried out in cooperation with the St. Dimitrievsky sisterhood (Moscow). Under this program training seminars for patronage workers were held in a number of dioceses, an Orthodox website, and manuals were issued to help parish patronage workers and sisters of mercy. The DECR along with the Department of Religious Education and Catechesis, jointly implemented the project *Advisory and methodological assistance in the spiritual and moral education of preschool children*⁴²¹. This project promoted the development of spiritual and moral education as the main component of family and priest school education. As part of this effort, pedagogical manuals were printed and distributed to Orthodox kindergartens. These materials formed the basis of the education conducted at the Russian Academy of Education. In 2000-2001 the round table held a series of seminars on training to work with projects and information exchange between diaconal initiatives, in which took part representatives of 47 church social organizations from 23 cities of the CIS countries. In March 2004, was held

⁴²¹ Russian Orthodox Church, «Консультативно-методическая помощь по духовно-нравственному воспитанию детей дошкольного возраста». See: Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата о внешней церковной деятельности [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations on External Church Activities], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423147.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

a seminar devoted to the dynamics of church social ministry over the past decade and half, as well as prospects for strengthening intra-church and church-public cooperation in the social field. As result, thematic working groups were formed and they included representatives of the Synodal institutions, dioceses and diaconal organizations. These activities were coordinated by the Department for External Church Relations together with the Department for Charity and Social Service. In addition, in collaboration with the Department for Charity and Social Service, the DECR developed a database of diaconal organizations and initiatives of the Russian Orthodox Church that would aid in determining the priorities and strategies of the development of diaconia for the needs of internal church life as well as for attracting external resources, for church-state interaction and to ensure legal basis to church social work. In 2001, a church program to prevent the spread of HIV/ AIDS was implemented and it has since provided spiritual support to people living with the disease. The program had two directions: educational work with children to prevent risky behavior leading to HIV infection, and spiritual and moral support for HIV-infected individuals and their loved ones. Within the framework of the program, training seminars for clergymen, church social workers and students of theological schools were held in order to provide spiritual support to HIV-infected people in the parish, on the Orthodox "helpline", in special counseling services. Additionally a training course was offered for sisters of mercy on caring for HIV-positive people. Prayers for the health of HIV-infected people and their loved ones were held monthly in a number of churches in different cities. With the participation of the round table, a church anti-AIDS network was created, uniting four organizations in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Ukraine and Belarus, and coordinated church anti-AIDS work, to ensure the ideological and meaningful unity of church projects⁴²². On 24 December 2002, was held a scientific and practical seminar of the Department for External Church Relations and Synodal Theological Commission *Moral, ethical and pastoral aspects of the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS*⁴²³.

⁴²² See: Zigon Jarrett, "A Disease of Frozen Feelings": *Ethically Working on Emotional Worlds in a Russian Orthodox Church Drug Rehabilitation Program*, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 24:3, 2010, pp. 326-343; The Federal Service for Surveillance of Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-Being of the Russian Federation, *Country Progress Report of the Russian Federation on the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, Adopted at the 26th United Nations General Assembly Special Session, June 2001 Reporting period: January 2006 – December 2007*, Moscow, 2008, Russia (en) - Country Progress Report (unaids.org), (last accessed April 2021); The Center for Public Integrity, International Orthodox Christian Charities, 30.11.2006, <https://publicintegrity.org/health/international-orthodox-christian-charities/>, (last accessed April 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, *Концепция участия Русской Православной Церкви в борьбе с распространением ВИЧ/СПИДа и работе с людьми, живущими с ВИЧ/СПИДом* [The conception of the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS and of working with people living with HIV/AIDS], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24.06.2005, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/81695.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴²³ «Нравственные, этические и пастырские аспекты участия Русской Православной Церкви в борьбе с распространением ВИЧ/СПИДа». See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата о внешней церковной деятельности* [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations on External Church Activities], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423147.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

The Russian Orthodox Church cooperated with the international Christian organization Churches in Joint Action (Церкви в совместном действии)⁴²⁴, created to coordinate assistance in emergency situations: as result, a number of large programs of humanitarian aid to victims of the tragic events in the North Caucasus was successfully implemented. These programs were carried out on the territory of Chechnya, North Ossetia-Alania and the Stavropol region. Emergency assistance was provided to victims of floods in southern Russia (2002-2003), in Yakutia (2001) and the Nizhny Novgorod region (2001), as well as abroad – in particular, in Serbia, internally displaced persons from Kosovo (2000) and refugees in Afghanistan (2002).

As we have seen, the Church's "foreign policy" objectives are multi-pronged and diverse, yet they share many similarities with the government of Russia's foreign policy priorities. A first sign of this collaboration and of the break of the constitutional obligations related to secularism and separation of church and state is evident in the rhetoric disseminated through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President Putin, President Medvedev and others. For instance, both Church and state make frequent reference to the concept of "spiritual values". Notably, this central concept had been implanted in the apex of the Russia's strategic planning, in both the *National Security Strategy* (2000) and the *Foreign Policy Concept* (2000). Moreover, numerous concrete political ventures implemented abroad illustrated a governmental willingness to further support the religious favoritism already demonstrated in the domestic context.

Russia's *National Security Concept* from 2000 (approved by Presidential Decree No. 24 of 10 January 2000)⁴²⁵ paid unusual attention to the need for "spiritual revival". Indeed, according to this document, Russia was facing a dual threat: internally "the decline of spiritual values"⁴²⁶, which "promote tensions in relations between regions and the center", and externally because of the "cultural-religious expansion into the territory of Russia by other states"⁴²⁷. In order to eliminate these risks to national security, the *National Security Concept* (below referred as *NSC*), called for "protection of the cultural, spiritual, and moral legacy [. . .] the formation of government policy in the field of the spiritual and moral education of the population, and [. . .] counteraction against the negative influence of foreign religious organizations and missionaries"⁴²⁸. It is important to note that, by talking of "protection of spiritual legacy"⁴²⁹, and of "negative influence of foreign religious organizations and missionaries"⁴³⁰, it seems that the *NSC* is referring to the protection of "traditional faiths", indeed it went on to brand foreign religious organization a "negative influence" although they have existed in Russia for decades⁴³¹. In

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Концепция национальной безопасности Российской Федерации (утратила силу) [National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation], mid.ru, 10-01-2000, https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk86BZ29/content/id/589768, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ National Security Concept released in 2008 ((See: Стратегия национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года, [The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020], 13-05-2009, <http://www.kremlin.ru/supplement/424>, (last accessed October 2021) by the Government of Medvedev, intended to replace President Putin "NSC from 2000". Although the document

addition, as noted by Robert Blitt, it is worth emphasising that the dogma of “spiritual development” that is manifested in the NSC entailed a very particular interpretation limited in the main to Russian Orthodoxy. This is evidenced for instance in the active promotion of government-founded program *Days of Russian Spiritual Culture*⁴³², as well as in Russia’s 2008 *Foreign Policy Concept*, which acknowledged that the Russian government “actively interacts with the Russian Orthodox Church and other main confessions of the country”⁴³³ in order to strength Russia’s international security; this document presented the current state of international affairs as transitional. Also in this case the global competition acquired a civilisational dimension, which entailed a competition between different value systems. Also in this case, Russia’s international image was presented in connection to the dialogue of civilization, connected to Russia’s security. According to the authors of the *Foreign Policy Concept* of the Russian Federation, the West’s reaction to the prospects of losing its cultural monopoly in the global arena manifested in the policies aimed at containing Russia⁴³⁴. Therefore is the document considered important for defending the interests of the Russian Federation, to ensure Russia’s civilizational self-sovereignty, which assumes the image of a Russian cultural space with its own values and traditions. We should also note that from the analysis of the 2008 *Foreign Policy Concept* it is evident that said culture is considered inclusive of religion and of Russian Orthodoxy. According to this document, the primary foreign policy efforts should focus on ensuring “national security, to preserve and strengthen its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to achieve strong positions of authority in the world community that best meet the interests of the Russian Federation as one of influential centers in the modern world, and which are necessary for the growth of its political, economic, intellectual and spiritual potential”⁴³⁵. In addition, the document underlined the importance of reacting to “the prospect of loss by the historic West of its monopoly in global processes, finds its expression, in particular, in the continued political and psychological policy of “containing” Russia, including the use of a selective approach to history”⁴³⁶, and added that the increase in cultural and civilization diversity necessitates creating a larger role for religion in shaping international

was conceived by Medvedev as a new stage, many aspect of Medvedev’s NSS in fact embodied a clear continuation with the Putin regime. Examples are “intelligence and other activities of special services and organizations, foreign governments and individuals” (NSS 2000) are considered the first threat to Russian national security. As well as the need to combat terroristic organizations – category in which were listed this category of organization – through the creation of bureaucratic hurdles. These threats were specifically singled out and labeled as instruments of western geopolitical interest. In addition, it confirmed the importance of spiritual security and of the Russian Orthodox Church. See: Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*..

⁴³² See: Days Of Russian Spiritual Culture To Attract Viewers Around The World, <https://ruskiymir.ru/en/news/280562/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴³³ The Foreign Policy Concept Of The Russian Federation Approved by Dmitry A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, on 12 July 2008. See: The Foreign Policy Concept Of The Russian Federation, russiaeu.ru, 12-07-2008, https://russiaeu.ru/userfiles/file/foreign_policy_concept_english.pdf, (last accessed May 2021).

⁴³⁴ “The reaction to the prospect of loss by the historic West of its monopoly in global processes finds its expression, in particular, in the continued political and psychological policy of “containing” Russia, including the use of a selective approach to history, for those purposes, first of all as regards the World War Two and the post-war period.”. See: The Foreign Policy Concept Of The Russian Federation, russiaeu.ru, 12-07-2008, https://russiaeu.ru/userfiles/file/foreign_policy_concept_english.pdf, (last accessed May 2021).

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

relations. In order to achieve this, the document called for engaging the “common denominator that has always existed in major world religions”⁴³⁷. The link between the concept of Russian culture and the Russian Orthodox Church was also made explicit by the Foreign Minister Lavrov who stated that the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs “maintains the closest ties with the Russian Orthodox Church, which is the church most Russians belong to. [...]We value the influence Orthodoxy had on the formation of our statehood, the shaping of culture and molding of the consciousness of Russia’s multi-ethnic people”⁴³⁸. Indeed, the *Bases of the Social Concept* already endorsed cooperation with the state in “spiritual, cultural, moral and patriotic education”⁴³⁹. Spiritual security also carried an external connotation that relates to the role of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad. In 2009 President Putin stated: “[i]n the dialogue with other Sister-Churches, the Russian Orthodox Church has always defended and hopefully will continue to defend the national and spiritual identity of Russians”⁴⁴⁰. This collaboration was achieved through partnership with Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoting “Russianness” and protecting “the spiritual security of the Russian diaspora from non-Orthodox religions and especially from the spread of secularism”⁴⁴¹. Medvedev allowed his administration to grow this partnership. During the third World Congress of Compatriots living abroad then president Medvedev underlined the importance of supporting the Russians abroad: “I cannot help mentioning the role of the Russian Orthodox Church and our other traditional confessions in reviving the spiritual unity of compatriots and strengthening their humanitarian and cultural ties with the historical homeland. We will certainly continue contacts between the state and appropriate confessions”⁴⁴². The outcome of this collaboration had the results of allowing the Russian Orthodox Church abroad of benefiting from the ROC’s efforts in reinforcing the “spiritual security” of Russia, to project her power abroad. In this regard, Danyel Payne had rightly concluded that spiritual security serves: “as the basis for protecting and uniting the Russian Orthodox people against threats to its spiritual and cultural well-being, especially by limiting the amount of freedom experienced in Russia’s civil society itself”⁴⁴³. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Patriarch Aleksii utilized the network created during his career in the KGB to rebuild the Russian Orthodox Church’s domestic status and to regain the possessions confiscated from the Church during the Soviet period⁴⁴⁴. Garrard and Laine’s⁴⁴⁵ previous research conducted on the basis of documents from KGB’s archive, now closed to the public, showed how both Patriarch Aleksii and Metropolitan

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*., pp. 375.

⁴³⁹ III.8, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, [Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church » Background Information », OrthodoxEurope.org](#), (last accessed October 2021).

⁴⁴⁰ Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security*, pp. 4.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid, p. 8.

⁴⁴² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл принял участие в открытии III Всемирного конгресса соотечественников, проживающих за рубежом [Patriarch Kirill attends the opening of the 3d Congress of Compatriots living abroad]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/58093/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁴³ Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security*, pp. 5.

⁴⁴⁴ Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*.

⁴⁴⁵ Laine Veera, Saarelainen Iiris., *Spirituality As A Political Instrument The Church, The Kremlin, And The Creation Of The ‘Russian World’*, Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 98, 2017, pp. 4-33.

Kirill, the present Patriarch, might have been in contact with KGB⁴⁴⁶. They refer to archive documents provided information of the recruitment of Aleksii under the code name “Drozdov”, and disclose that he was recruited to work at the KGB’s office within the Church’s hierarchy and to promote the KGB’s international propaganda campaigns⁴⁴⁷. An example of this alliance was the re-creation in 2002, of the Church of Sofia the Divine wisdom on the Lubyanka Square in the centre of Moscow, the headquarters of the former KGB, now FSB. Another signal of this collaboration between the Church and the key state institutions was the agreement signed on 6 March 2003 between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA); the committee was entitled The Working Group for Cooperation between the ROC and the Foreign Ministry⁴⁴⁸. During the meeting held on that date, the first in the entire history of the Russian state to which his Holiness Patriarch Aleksii was accompanied by the first deputy chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Patriarch Aleksii affirmed that cooperation between the Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is especially aimed at supporting the Russian diaspora and at creating a single spiritual space⁴⁴⁹.

In the words of the foreign minister Lavrov, the Working Group would enable the Church and the MOFA to work “together realizing a whole array of foreign policy and international initiatives”⁴⁵⁰. He added that this cooperation reflected “an age-old tradition of Russian domestic diplomacy”⁴⁵¹. The ROC-MOFA working group met regularly, sometimes in smaller subgroups, to discuss a range of issues including the maintenance of cultural and spiritual links with Russians abroad, their rights and the need to preserve “the cultural and historic legacy of [the] Fatherland and of the Russian language”⁴⁵². The

⁴⁴⁶ I did not read the documents quoted by Garried and Laine, and I did not work on document from KGB’s archive. The reason why I decided to follow the observation of the two authors I quotes, is because I found reference to Patriarch Aleksii and Metropolitan Kirill’s collaboration with the KGB also in other articles (see for example:), and because during my meeting with Patriarch Filaret on February 28, 2020, he referred to support from KGB to Aleksii’s election to the Patriarchate.

⁴⁴⁷ See: United States Department of State, *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda*, October 1987, [state-department---a-report-on-active-measures-and-propaganda.pdf](https://www.state-department---a-report-on-active-measures-and-propaganda.pdf) (typepad.com), (last accessed August 2021); Knox Zoe, *Postsoviet challenges to the Moscow patriarchate, 1991–2001*, *Religion, State and Society*, 32:2, 2004, pp. 102; Corley Felix, *Russia: The Patriarch and the KGB*, *Keston News Service*, 9:14, 2000, <https://www.keston.org.uk/kns/misc/kns-russia-the-patriarch-and-the-kgb.html>, (last accessed August 2021). On the accord between the ROC and the Federal Security Service (FSB), See among others: Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*, pp.249; Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*, pp.411–412; U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *International Religious Freedom Report*, 2003, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2003/index.htm>; <https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/2003%20Annual%20Report.pdf>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁴⁴⁸ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялось Заседание Рабочей Группы По Взаимодействию Русской Православной Церкви И Министерства Иностранных Дел Российской Федерации [A meeting of the working group on interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation took place]*, 2003/5, pp. 46.

⁴⁴⁹ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*, pp. 425.

⁴⁵⁰ Стенограмма выступления Министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова на торжественном приеме по случаю Православной Пасхи, Москва, 30 апреля 2008 года [Transcript of the speech of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the reception on the occasion of Orthodox Easter, Moscow, April 30, 2008], 01.05.2008, https://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/340004, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

central role of the Church was particularly evident in the promotion of the *Days of Russian Culture Program*, which was part of the broader *Days of Russia*⁴⁵³ initiative launched by the Russian government, and operated with the support from Russia's MOFA, the Ministry of Culture, the ROC and other organizations. As of 2009 the program had been held in over a dozen states including Serbia, Croatia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. According to Foreign Ministry Lavrov, the Days of Russian Culture, allowed to set a series of meetings, exhibitions, joint divine services which allowed to promote Russian spiritual culture. It is important to underline that the program is entirely Orthodox in orientation and directly links the Moscow Patriarchate and State to the exclusion of all the other faiths existing in Russia⁴⁵⁴. The meetings served more specifically as strategy sessions that allowed for planning of the Patriarch's international travels and for evaluation of the ROC's activities in international organizations, in interreligious relations, and in relations with the Vatican. The cooperation should advance the state's foreign policy goals, giving the ROC's traditional religious values greater prominence within the international system. The meeting of the MOFA with Muslim organizations seemed to be more limited⁴⁵⁵ than the percentage and level of cooperation between the ROC and MOFA. On this point, Blitt noted that the establishment of the working group can be considered another sign of contradiction with regard to the principle of secularism and equality of religious faiths affirmed in the *Russian Constitution*. On November 2007, during the 10th meeting of the working group, Sergei Lavrov recalled that for about five years the working group "has shown its unconditional relevance in addressing issues that directly affect the national interests of the country, the fundamental interests of [Russian] citizens. Orthodox values have formed the basis of Russian culture and Russian statehood - this is the origins of the centuries-old tradition of cooperation between Russian diplomacy and the Church"⁴⁵⁶. He stressed that "acting hand in hand, we are helping the Russian diaspora abroad to defend the rights of Russians who have found themselves far from their homeland"⁴⁵⁷. He added that the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church were solving the same tasks of the State diplomacy carrying out its peacekeeping mission in the CIS countries, and in other

⁴⁵³ See the web site of the Russkiy Mir Foundation for further information: <https://rusскиymir.ru/>.

⁴⁵⁴ "Главной целью акции является формирование положительного общественного мнения о воссоединении Русской Православной Церкви в Отечестве и за границей, знакомство православных верующих в странах Латинской Америки с современным русским Православием, восстановлением святынь на территории России», — сообщили корреспонденту «Интерфакс-Религия»". "The main goal of the action is to form a positive public opinion about the reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Fatherland and abroad, to familiarize Orthodox believers in Latin America with modern Russian Orthodoxy, to restore shrines in Russia," the organizers told Interfax-Religion on Monday programs. My translation. This is what the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate reports with regard to the first appointment of this program in South America countries. See: Russian Orthodox Church, *В Латинской Америке пройдут Дни русской духовной культуры [Days of Russian Spiritual Culture will be held in Latin America]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29.06.2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/467132.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁵⁵ The group met only a handful of times since its establishment in June 2007, and had limited its discussions to the status and prospects of Islamic education, and problems encountered by Russian Muslims during the hajj to Saudi Arabia.

⁴⁵⁶ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Юбилейное заседание рабочей группы по взаимодействию Министерства иностранных дел России и русской православной церкви произошло в большом особняке МИД [The jubilee meeting of the working group on cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church took place in the Ministry's grand mansion]*, 2007/11, pp. 107.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

regions of the world. "...We are united by an understanding of the importance of intercultural, interfaith, inter-civilization dialogue, an understanding of the importance of such a dialogue for calming the situation in the world. The colossal experience of our state and the Russian Orthodox Church accumulated in Russia in this area, of course, should be in demand at the global level, on a worldwide scale"⁴⁵⁸, he affirmed. He stated that Russian leadership, together with the Church, supported the development of the Alliance of civilization initiative under the auspices of the United Nations, and that "the prototype of such cooperation was the World Summit of Religious Leaders, held in 2006 in Moscow at the initiative of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii"⁴⁵⁹. He also noted that the promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue was one of the prioritized topics of the Russian chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2006. At the meeting, specific steps were also discussed for further development of cooperation, including the consolidation of those results that had a truly historical character and were expressed, in particular, in the signing in May 2007 of the *Act on Canonical Communion* between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Church Abroad. "We see the restoration of the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church as the most important factor in the consolidation of the Russian World. Our ministry, embassies and consulates always cooperate with representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate, with parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in various countries "⁴⁶⁰, said the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He concluded his speech, by underlining the importance of the Church in the life of Russian society: "We see what a great role the Russian Orthodox Church plays in solving the problems of strengthening our Fatherland, ensuring the most favorable conditions for the further development of the country, for the realization of all the aspirations of our citizens "⁴⁶¹. Patriarch Aleksii confirmed that the main task of the working group was the spiritual assistance to compatriots, the protection of their rights and of their culture. And welcomed the proposal made by the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry at the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly to establish an advisory council of religions at the UN⁴⁶². During the meeting the organization of the Russian Forum The Russian speaking community of Europe and its role in EU-Russia Relations was also approved⁴⁶³.

In addition the Russian MOFA sought to establish a prominent role for the Moscow Patriarchate within the United Nations. The exhibition at the UN's Headquarters in New York entitled *Russian Orthodox Church and Interreligious Dialogue: Spiritual Revival of Russia*, sponsored by the Russia's Permanent Mission to the UN, was similar to the *Days*

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ ibid, pp. 109.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Святтейший Патриарх Алексий Принял Участие В Заседании Рабочей Группы По Взаимодействию Мид России И Русской Православной Церкви [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii Took Part In A Meeting Of The Working Group On The Cooperation Between The Russian Foreign Ministry And The Russian Orthodox Church], 21.11.2007, <https://pravoslavie.ru/24939.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁶³ «Русскоязычное сообщество Европы и его роль в отношениях ЕС-России», Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Юбилейное заседание рабочей группы по взаимодействию Министерства иностранных дел России и русской православной церкви произошло в большом особняке МИД [The jubilee meeting of the working group on cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church took place in the Ministry's grand mansion]*, 2007/11, pp. 107.

of *Russian Spiritual Culture*. It should be noted that while the title remarked the importance of the “interreligious dialogue” at the opening ceremony Patriarch Aleksii proclaimed “we, Russian Orthodox Christians, Muslims, Judaists, and Buddhists, live in peace. And at the heart of this peace is our respect for each other’s traditions, ways of life and social models”⁴⁶⁴, excluding from his speech all the non-traditional religions. In 2007, Russia’s MOFA proposed “establishing under the United Nations auspices, a special forum—a kind of consultative Council of Religions—for the exchanges of views between representatives of major world confessions”⁴⁶⁵. Since then, Russia has constantly made methodical efforts to increase the point of entry available to the ROC on the international level. The *Diplomacy Needs a Moral Foundation* states that “Russia supports in every way possible all efforts to fit the dialog of religions into international affairs within the framework of multilateral organizations and forums”⁴⁶⁶. Nevertheless, the *Spiritual Revival of Russia* exhibition, routinely excluded representatives’ voices from Russia’s diverse religious communities. According to Lavrov it was sufficient that Russia’s MOFA maintained close contacts in UN bodies with religious NGOs that worked in cooperation with the ROC, and namely the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations⁴⁶⁷, the World Russian People’s Council, and the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society⁴⁶⁸. Additionally, in 2009 Medvedev stressed the need to boost cooperation within the UN system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In lobbying the United Nations and its individual member states for the establishment of a consultative council on religions, and sponsoring Russia spiritual renewal, the Russian Foreign Ministry also managed to organize a speech by Metropolitan Kirill addressed to the UN Human Rights Council, a council that was actively supported both by the Russian Orthodox Church and by the Kremlin. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad stressed that human rights should not be in conflict with moral norms that most people consider as desirable norms of behavior. At the same time, he stressed that the practical implementation of universal rights should be carried out by taking into account the cultural and historical specificities of societies and states without using double standards or imposing a uniform civilizational model⁴⁶⁹. He added that “the implementation of

⁴⁶⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, *Патриаршее обращение к посетителям фотовыставки «Русская Православная Церковь и межрелигиозный диалог» в штаб-квартире ООН [Patriarchal address to the visitors of the photo exhibition "The Russian Orthodox Church and Interreligious Dialogue" at the UN headquarters]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 04.10.2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/302661.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁶⁵ Россия предложила начать под эгидой ООН диалог мировых религий [Russia has proposed to start a dialogue of world religions under the auspices of the UN], 29.09.2007, <https://ria.ru/20070929/81601802.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁶⁶ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*: pp. 397.

⁴⁶⁷ Международный Общественный Фонд Единства Православных Народов, <https://www.ifuocn.com/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁶⁸ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла Архиерейскому Собору Русской Православной Церкви. О внешней церковной деятельности [Report of the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, to the Bishops’ Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. About external church activity]*, 2004/ Spezvipusk, pp. 64.

⁴⁶⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Intercultural Dialogue on Human Rights Discussion at the 7th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, 21.03.2008, https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/un/-/asset_publisher/U1StPbE8y3al/content/id/344918,

human rights also involves the question of the identity of human rights legal systems in various countries of the world. True, human rights have universal provisions. But various countries can implement them while taking into account the cultural distinctive features of a particular people. In some countries the population is more religious than in others, and thus religion can and must play a more prominent role in the formation and implementation of human rights. Besides, every nation has its own historical experience, cultural traditions and its own system of meanings. These realities should not be ignored in building a national human rights system [...]”⁴⁷⁰, underlying the need for an approach to the issue of human rights based on cultural relativism. In the conclusions, he stated that “other Christian confessions and world religions have well-developed approaches to human rights. It would be appropriate to make these views heard in the Human Rights Council and in the UN as a whole”⁴⁷¹, and reiterate the Russian government’s call for establishing a consultative government on religion. The summit on world religious leaders held in 2006 in Moscow, showed that “despite the existing differences, religious leaders acknowledged the important role that religion plays in society and stated that major world religions share the fundamental moral norms”⁴⁷². According to Kirill “this is the basis for becoming a docking point between various civilizations in today’s world”⁴⁷³. The urgency of promoting the dialogue between religions was shared with the other participants in the summit who made a proposal in order to establish a forum for interreligious dialogue in the UN.⁴⁷⁴

Another way the Russian government has put into practice the rhetoric of spiritual values was its involvement in enlarging the ROC’s physical and geographical presence abroad. First of all, President Putin played an instrumental role in ending the eighty-year schism between the ROC and the Russian Orthodox Church abroad (ROCOR). As mentioned above, in 2007 the two churches signed the *Act of Canonical Communion* at Moscow’s Christ the Savior Cathedral, reuniting the two branches of the Russian Orthodoxy. At the signing ceremony Putin stated: “We understand well, and value, the power of pastoral words which unite the people of Russia. That is why restoring the unity of the church

(last accessed August 2021). See: also Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur.*, pp.132–151. Stoeckl talks of the importance of the discovery of article 29, and in particular of provision 29:2, of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, according to which the church is allowed to actively present itself as the vanguard of a more original understanding of human rights based on morality, duties and community. The position undertaken since 2000 that is an historical reasoned rejection, is the precondition for the ROC to become a moral norm entrepreneurship in the field of international morality politics. The ROC used reference to article 29 of the Declaration in order to couple its argument for traditional values rooted in religion. As wrote James Billington on 30 August 1991 on the New York Times Russians were looking for a “new Russian identity that seeks to move forward to a Western-style democracy and backward to the moral roots of their own religious and cultural tradition”. (See: Billington James, “*The True Heroes of the Soviet Union*,” New York Times, August 30, 1991), <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/08/30/opinion/the-true-heroes-of-the-soviet-union.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

This allowed to understand Metropolitan Kirill’s claim for a relativistic approach to human rights and moral values.

⁴⁷⁰ Interfax Religion, The address of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate DECR on the panel discussion on Human Rights and Intercultural Dialogue at the 7th session of UN Human Rights Council, 22.03.2008, Interfax-Religion, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

serves our common goals”⁴⁷⁵. Notably the Church merged together the ROCOR’s 400 parishes and 400,000 members worldwide within the fold of the Moscow Patriarchate. This merging allowed the Russian Orthodox Church to gain influence in the US, Western Europe and South America, where it had little influence. And the Russian State also gained. Indeed, while the union created fears among anti-union Orthodox Christians, Foreign Ministry Lavrov described the signing of the Act as heralding a new stage in the consolidation of the Russian World, as a means to ensure stability and a “just world order”⁴⁷⁶. Moreover, in a speech delivered in front of some of the ROC’s senior clergy, Medvedev welcomed the Church’s growing role in securing Russian interests abroad, and pointed to the ROC-ROCOR merger as the first step in the consolidation of Russia’s near abroad. ROC’s actions were considered part of strengthening ties with compatriots abroad as ensuring local foothold for ROC churches and clergy. Russian government had been a strong proponent of efforts to build new Orthodox churches and to pursue property claims against the Russian Orthodox community. Funds for the construction of new sites came from state budget, but also from enterprises such as Gazprom and Lukoil, which funded the repair of St Nicholas’ Cathedral in Vienna, while Stroitransgaz financed the building of a church in the Republic of South Africa. Indeed, the Russian state considered helping the ROC developing, in a way, its own national infrastructure. New Orthodox churches were built in Africa, Argentina, China, Tokyo, Havana, Thailand, Madrid, and Abu Dhabi. Building an Orthodox Church was a positive signal to the Kremlin and was the occasion for important meetings⁴⁷⁷. Examples of this are the setting of the cornerstone of the ROC’s cathedral in Johannesburg in 2001, in which the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Igor Ivanov took part. On this occasion, the king of Jordan, through the mediation of Vladimir Putin, gave the Russian church land on the bank of the River Jordan. There was also the construction of the Holy Trinity Church in Pyongyang and the exchange of students from theological seminaries. Amid this process, Metropolitan Kliment visited the Korean peninsula in 2004, granting a new impulse in the relations between North Korea and Russia. Also, a meeting between Metropolitan Kirill and Fidel Castro was possible only after President Vladimir Putin visited Cuba in 2004⁴⁷⁸. Castro invited Patriarch Aleksii II to Cuba and promised that Cubans would build a Russian church at their own cost as an expression of gratitude for the help received by the Soviet Union. In October 2008 there was a solemn inaugural Mass attended by Kirill, Raul Castro and the highest ranking Cuban officials. Raul would have meet Kirill, then already serving as Patriarch, during his visit to Russia on February 2009. The establishment of a new church was sometimes the sign of dynamically developing relations, as in the case of the building of a church in Reykjavik in 2005. Where there were no Orthodox Churches, Orthodox Masses were held on the grounds of embassies and consulates, confirming that ROC sites were viewed as state centres (for example, in China, in Shanghai, and in India, in Delhi). An important element in the building of Russia as leading in the dialogue of civilization was the creation in 2004, under initiative of the ROC and muftiates, of the Interreligious Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States, after the attacks on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001, and the spreading in the media of the theme of the irreconcilable contradictions between the West and the Islamic world. A further

⁴⁷⁵ Holley David, Russian Orthodox split is mended, Los Angeles Times, 18.05.2007, Russian Orthodox split is mended - Los Angeles Times (latimes.com), (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁷⁶ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Curanovic, *The religious factor*.

interesting example of placing religious construction in order to mark out symbolic borders was the erection of a chapel on Kolguyev Island in 2003, that demonstrated the Russian activity in Antarctica. In February 2004 the first Orthodox church, the Church of the Holy Trinity, was established at the Faddey (Fabrian) Bellingshausen polar station in Antarctica: visible from 30 Km, this Church was the first object noticeable from the sea, after the Tierra del Fuego, and a symbol of the Russian presence on the coldest continent. In 2004 Sakhalin Cossacks put up crosses on disputed islands of southern Kuril, indicating in this manner that as Orthodox, Russian lands, and four years later Crimean Cossacks put up crosses on the edges of their village of Zuya Belogorskaya, which was taken by the Tatar population as Russian provocation and was complained about in court⁴⁷⁹.

I am agree with Blitt and Faragan⁴⁸⁰ who stressed that declaration of Putin according to whom new churches construction is “a very important event even for Russia’s secular power”⁴⁸¹ is in line with Soviet tendencies where one of the more important task of the Russian Orthodox Church was promoting national interests abroad. We should also point out that the MOFA was virtually omnipresent in the Church’s construction efforts abroad. In *Diplomacy needs a Moral Foundation* was stated: “The Foreign Ministry of Russia actively helps communities of the Russian Diaspora, even to meet their spiritual needs. And, whenever our compatriots say they want to build a church, we begin working on the matter in close cooperation with the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church and the host country concerned. This is also so when it comes to transferring the property rights to temples that are monuments of Russian culture and faith back to Russia. We proceed from the assumption that the establishment of spiritual life is one of the key factors in the well-being of the Russian Diaspora”⁴⁸². MOFA-ROC collaboration on this front had resulted in bilateral negotiations for the return of property, and several contentious court battles across a variety of jurisdictions including the UK, Israel, Italy, France and United States. An example is the transfer of the control of the Orthodox Church located in Bari (Italy) to the ROC agreed with the Italian government during a 2007 visit of President Putin with the hope that it could become the center of Orthodox spirituality in Italy. Indeed, as Alicja Curanovic wrote, the Russian government and the ROC “are interested in retaining dominance in the Post-Soviet area, and to achieve this goal they support each other Russian authorities perceive the ROC as an ally in looking after state interests and strengthening the country’s position in the international arena, and therefore supports [sic] the ROC’s transnational activity”⁴⁸³. As stated by Protodeacon Peter Scorer, Churches abroad are seen as was seen the embassy Churches before the Russian revolution, that is representatives of Moscow abroad, and this is the reason why they are controlled by the Department for External Church Relations and not by local bishops. This seems to be in contradiction with the theory of respecting the canonical territory that, as we will see below, from Moscow Patriarchate’s perspective represents the basis for inter-church relations.

A good example of ROC-government collaboration is the case of Russian-Latvian relations. In March 2004, Patriarch Aleksii announced that he would not go to Latvia until the status

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ Fagan Geraldine, *Russia’s Ambitious New Patriarch*, Open Democracy, 12, 12-02-2009, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/russia-s-ambitious-new-patriarch/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁴⁸¹ Blitt Robert C, *Russia’s Orthodox Foreign Policy*, pp. 416.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Curanovic Alicja, *The Attitude of the Moscow Patriarchate towards Other Orthodox Churches*, Religion, State & Society, 35:4, 2007, pp. 301-318.

of the Russian language in schools was positively settled. This announcement signaled the cooling of relations between Riga and Moscow. In 2006, after the Patriarch's visit, Prime Minister Aigars Karamiis declared that he accepted the visit of the head of the ROC as a signal from the Kremlin of a new openness in bilateral relations. Also Saddam Hussein, when he met with Mufti Rawil Gaynetdin in Baghdad in 2001, expressed the hope that the meeting with representatives of Russian religious institutions can be considered as a sign of a growth of Russia's activities in Iraq. Similar expectations were indicated by the delegation of the Japan's Foreign Affairs Ministry during a meeting with Metropolitan Kirill in 2005, as with the Cuban delegation in September 2008. The overlap in the visions of cooperation between the government of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church on the international stage goes beyond the vigorous promotion of Orthodox interests abroad, and also involves principles of international human rights law. According to Lavrov, the ROC's treatise *On Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights* addressed efforts to tie criteria for civil rights and liberties to the individual's responsibility to society. The main challenge was the legalization of an ill-defined prohibition against the defamation of religion (conducted within the UN), and the struggle against the universal foundations of human rights and for the promotion of traditional values. Its efforts to counter Western criticism concerning Russia's human rights records manifested in the development of a program aimed at scrutinizing democracy and human rights practices in Europe and in the United States. For this purpose, in 2008 the Kremlin established in Paris the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation (IDC)⁴⁸⁴.

2.2 The idea of "Post-Soviet space" and the role of the Church in maintaining its legitimacy

2.2.1 The idea and discourse of "canonical territory"

The policy of glasnost and perestroika launched by Gorbachev took no account of religion. However religion became an important task on the Communist Party's agenda because citizens reclaim it from the past. The necessity to clarify policy on religion was forced upon the Soviet Union by the urgency of the celebration of the Millennium of the adoption of Christianity. The key event which made clear that the event was to take place on Church and as well as on State premises was the meeting of Gorbachev with Patriarch Pimen and members of the Holy Synod in the Kremlin on 29 April 1988, which was seen as a turning point in Church-State relations. Another milestone was the meeting held on 12 January 1989 between Konstantin Kharchev and other officials with a group of Russian Orthodox Church clergy and laymen. The Orthodox felt that Kharchev's attitude called for cooperation and good will, an attitude typical of policies of the top Soviet leadership. As

⁴⁸⁴ Natalia Narochitskaya was among the members of the institute. She initiated and co-chaired many forums and associations of the Russian community as the World Russian's People Council. She worked at the Secretariat-General of the United Nations in New York (1982-1989), was member, deputy head of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Chairman of the Commission on Study of the Practice and Implementation of Human Rights and Civil Liberties, State Duma of the Russian Federation (2003-2007), Deputy Head, Russian delegation to PACE (2003-2007). See: Narochitskaya Natalia - Russian Federation, Valdai Discussion Club, <https://valdaiclub.com/about/experts/383/>, (last accessed October 2021).

observed by Ellis⁴⁸⁵, the policy conducted in these years showed that Orthodox faithful certainly had greater freedom than formerly, but key problems remain unresolved. One of the main was that the Church was called upon to play a more demanding role in national life without any kind of internal perestroika. On 3 May 1990, Patriarch Pimen died: he had a reputation of a taciturn person, who based his policy on responding to pressure rather than “initiating actions or ideas”. Certainly, his actions had been circumscribed by the control of the Council for Religious Affairs over all aspects of Church life. On 7 June 1990, Aleksii (Ridiger) of Leningrad and Novgorod was elected as fifteenth Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. He had a good reputation in terms of loyalty to the State, and in involvement in European Ecumenical circles. He was a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches from 1961 to 1968, Chairman of the Conference of European Churches from 1986 (he resigned after his election as Patriarch).

On 25 December 1991, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev shocked the world announcing the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Baltic States were the first to achieve autonomy: their separation was recognized in August and September 1991. The climax of the crisis was the August putsch, when Soviet President was isolated at the presidential dacha in Crimea. On 19 August, had been declared the state emergency in the country, almost all the newspapers were banned, tanks were brought out onto the streets of Moscow and of some other large cities, Thousands of people poured into the city streets and built barricades to protect with an human chains the Russian Parliament, known as the White House. Outside the parliament, Yeltsin rallied the crowds from atop a tank: this popular uprising doomed the coup to failure after three days. On 8 December the Russian President met with leaders of Belarus and Ukraine at a villa in Minsk and signed an agreement to form the Commonwealth of Independent States. The text of the agreement read that the the USSR as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality no longer exists”⁴⁸⁶. The Commonwealth of Independent States also accepted Gorbachev’s resignation, in the meanwhile Yeltsin, had already taken control of the KGB, parliament and even Gorbachev’s presidential office.

During the address delivered before the Bishops' Jubilee Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held in 2000, while presenting the new draft of the Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Kirill declared: “[...] after the political changes in the early 90s of the 20th century the ROC found itself in radically different legal conditions than before: it gained freedom and at the same time its canonical territory, as a result of the collapse of the USSR, found itself within the confines of several states”⁴⁸⁷. The statement make clear that talking of “canonical territory” Russian Orthodox Church referred to territories that were part of the Soviet Union, as confirmed also in its Statute⁴⁸⁸.

⁴⁸⁵ Ellis Jane, *The Russian Orthodox Church. Triumphalism and Defensiveness*, New York: Palgrave, 1996.

⁴⁸⁶ Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library, *Подписано «Беловежское Соглашение» [The "Belovezhskoe Agreement" Was Signed]*, 08.12.1991, <https://www.prlib.ru/en/history/619792>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁸⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, *Архиерейский юбилейный Собор Русской Православной Церкви 2000 г. [Jubilee Bishops's Council of the Russian Orthodox Church of year 2000]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418767.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁸⁸ «3. Юрисдикция Русской Православной Церкви простирается на лиц православного исповедания, проживающих на канонической территории Русской Православной Церкви: в России, Украине, Белоруссии, Молдавии, Азербайджане, Казахстане, Киргизии, Латвии, Литве, Таджикистане,

The concept of canonical territory can be considered movable, a reflection of the changing borders of the Russian Empire and of the Soviet Union⁴⁸⁹. Notably, the changing borders of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union are usually identified with the concept of canonical territory, with the exception of Georgia, which has its own patriarchate, autocephalous from 1917, and the Armenia, which is an independent country with its own patriarchate⁴⁹⁰.

The new edition of the Statute adopted by the Bishop Council that took place in Moscow on 2-5 February 2013, also added China and Japan to the states of canonical territory⁴⁹¹. Bishop Council, held on 2-3 February 2016, incorporated Mongolia into the list of countries Christians supposedly living under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate⁴⁹².

The concept of canonical territory became extremely topical after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, although the ecclesiological model behind it, at least according to some Russian Orthodox interpretations can be dated back to apostolic times. In the speech delivered before the Catholic University of Budapest on 7 February 2005, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk (Alfeev) pointed out that understanding the meaning of this term, and of the principles behind his application, allow the understanding of the relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with Catholic and Orthodox Churches and of its position in inter-orthodox cooperation. The ancient model of Church organization was

Туркмении, Узбекистане, Эстонии, а также на добровольно входящих в нее православных, проживающих в других странах». See: Устав Русской Православной Церкви; English Version: 3. The jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church shall include persons of Orthodox confession living on the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the Republic of Belarus, Moldova, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kirghizia, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenia, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Republic of Estonia, Japan and also Orthodox Christians living in other countries. See: The Patriarchal Parishes in the USA – Moscow Patriarchate, *Statute Of The Russian Orthodox Church*, <https://mospatusa.com/files/STATUTE-OF-THE-RUSSIAN-ORTHODOX-CHURCH.pdf>, (last accessed May 2021).

⁴⁸⁹ Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy," pp. 40,

⁴⁹⁰ See: Kommersant, "Армянская церковь традиционно дорожит связями с русским православием". Интервью патриарха Московского и всея Руси [The Armenian Church values the traditional ties with Russian Orthodoxy]. Interview with the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia], [kommersant.ru](https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/284383), 175, 26.09.2001, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/284383>, (last accessed August 2021); Le métropolit Kirill à Berlin, *Europaica Bulletin*, 59, 2005, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/14/59.aspx#2>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁹¹ Interfax Religion, Китай и Япония официально дополнили список стран канонической территории Русской церкви China and Japan officially added to the list of countries of the canonical territory of the Russian Church], 06.02.2013, [<http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=49898>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁹² Pravmir, *Архиерейский Собор включил Монголию в каноническую территорию РПЦ* [The Bishops' Council included Mongolia in the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church], 04.02.2016, <https://www.pravmir.ru/arhiereyskiy-sobor-vklyuchil-mongoliyu-v-kanonicheskuyu-territoriyu-rpts/>, (last accessed October 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение Освященного Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви о внесении изменений и дополнений в Устав Русской Православной Церкви* [Russian Orthodox Church Consecrated Bishops' Council's Decision on amendments and additions to the Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 03.02.2016, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4367659.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

based on the principle of “one-city, one bishop, one Church”⁴⁹³, it implied the allocation of a certain territory to a certain bishop. In defining the ecclesiastical area, the Fathers of the Ancient Church took into account the territorial divisions established by secular authorities; at the same time, this principle of identifying church territories with civil territorial units was not uncontested⁴⁹⁴. The history of Local Orthodox Churches (the pre-Chalcedonian churches were not included in this concept) showed that among them the principle of canonical territory was observed almost strictly until the beginning of the 20th century, when the borders between churches coincided with the borders of countries or empires. However, Orthodox Churches already operated outside their canonical territory, by conducting extensive missionary activities. In particular, in this period the concept of “missionary canonical territory”⁴⁹⁵ of the Russian Orthodox Church was developed. This concept included Orthodox canonical structures in America, Japan and China. Structures of world Orthodoxy underwent significant changes as result of the revolutionary events that took place at the beginning of the 90s in most European states: the restoration of autocephaly by several Orthodox Churches that previously had lost it; as result of mass migration, a significant part of Orthodox believers belonging to one local church ended up in territories where another one was operating; starting from 1930s, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire lost almost all the believers in its canonical empire, began to create new metropolises and archdioceses in Europe and beyond. As a result of these processes, Orthodox jurisdiction started to emerge in the countries where Orthodox believers were a minority. As an example, we can take the situation in America, missionary activities in Alaska, and the growth of the numbers of Orthodox believers in Western European countries that led to the building of new church structures. The creation of metropolises and archdioceses of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Antioch took place at the same time. The same happened with the Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian diasporas after World War II. Finally, as a result of the emigration of Georgians, some Georgian parishes began to appear in Europe. According to Metropolitan Hilarion, despite the fact that in many regions of the world there are parallel Orthodox jurisdiction, the principle of canonical territory has been traditionally observed by Orthodox Churches. It remains a fundamental norm of Orthodox ecclesiology, and in practice it is applied, although so far not everywhere⁴⁹⁶. Before coming to practical examples, it seems interesting to reflect upon the position of the Abbot Innokenty Pavlov, who in an interview released to Vladimir Oyin, and published on Portal-Credo.ru on 31 October 2007⁴⁹⁷, told about the background of the appearance of

⁴⁹³ «один город - один епископ - одна церковь». See: Принцип "канонической территории" в православной традиции [The principle of "canonical territory" in the Orthodox tradition], Russkaya Narodnaya Liniya, 10.02.2005, https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2005/02/10/princip_kanonicheskoi_territorii_v_pravoslavnoj_tradicii, (last accessed August 2021); For an analysis of this principle's formulation in the canons see also: Laschuk Alksander, *Assemblies of Hierarchs and Conferences of Bishops: A Comparative Study*, Canada: Saint Paul University, 2016.

⁴⁹⁴ Metropolitan Hilarion refers to the conflict between St. Basil the Great and Bishop Anthim of Tyana over the administration of Cappadocian Church, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁷ Credo Press, Мнение: "Католические Миссионеры Ни За Кем Не Гоняются, Но Если Люди Понимают, Что Истинная Церковь — Это Церковь Католическая, Они Должны Быть Приняты Туда" - Кандидат Богословия Игумен Иннокентий Павлов [Opinion: "Catholic Missionaries Don't Chase Anyone, But If People Understand That the True Church is the Catholic Church, They Should Be Accepted There" -

the term “canonical territory”. In 1989, during a meeting of the Synodal Commission for the Promotion of Christian Unity, a letter from the Romanian Patriarch Feoktist to the then Patriarch Pimen was examined, which contained a demand to return Bessarabia, the then Moldavian SSR, under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Church. In analyzing the issue, Innokenti Pavlov, at that time employee of the Department for External Church Relations, used the term “canonical territory”, which later was rehabilitated as a powerful argument in the fight against heterodox missionaries, and proselytizing activities. By contrast, Pavlov said in the interview that no such concept or term existed in ecclesiastical law, and that its current use was misguided, arguing that since, for instance, the Moscow Patriarchate and the Catholic Church lack Eucharistic Communion, it would be “ridiculous” to talk about an exclusive jurisdiction on the territory of the Russian Federation of one of the two (So the canonical territory can be applied to inter-Orthodox relations, not *beyond* Orthodox churches). In addition, he reflected on the fact that the law of Russian Federation affirmed the principle of equality of religious organizations, meaning that each of them can conduct spiritual, missionary and pastoral activities in Russia, and it is impossible to consider the Moscow Patriarchate the only religious institution that can have responsibility in this area. The position of the Moscow Patriarchate contradicts therefore both the *Russian Constitution*, according to which Russia is a secular state, and the law *On religious freedom* which states that “all legally operating religious associations and organizations have an equal right to promote their beliefs”⁴⁹⁸. Undoubtedly, we can say that Pavlov’s argumentation is theoretically correct. However, this argumentation ignores contradictions between the 1997 law on religious freedom and the principle of secularity affirmed in the *Constitution*; moreover it ignores the meaning of the amendments incorporated in the new law⁴⁹⁹, that established legally a classification among traditional religions and other religions. In fact, the concept of canonical territory should be understood in relation to the so called “ethnicization” of religion that developed in Post Soviet Russia. Consider the connection between Russianness and Orthodoxy that made the Russian Church transnational, even if the administration of the Church was framed within a specific area. Indeed, if before 1917 the link between religion and ethnicity was fixed by law, and most of Russia’s ethnic groups were connected with their historical religion, the specifics of soviet imposed secularization, produced also a new religious situation. Firstly, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, religious identity was so strong that even 70 years of state atheism could not eradicate religion. Yet, this process of eradication of religion from society (not just treating it as a private matter, but rather as an enemy of the society), restricted religion to rites and rituals as part of people’s ethnic culture and tradition. Religious education was restricted, but religion was preserved and indirectly developed through proverbs, literature, and custom⁵⁰⁰. As we saw in the previous chapter, in the Post Soviet period, religious identity was encouraged and reinforced. Indeed the ROC positioned itself as the

Candidate Theologian Abbot Innocent Pavlov], 31.10.2007, credo.press, <https://credo.press/87002/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ See paragraph 3.

⁵⁰⁰ As we will see in the next chapter, the strong ties among religion and ethnicity, including the role of the Church as an identitarian instrument, was very strong in Ukraine, and was one of the main factor that prevent the success of policy of atheization there. As affirmed by Zenkovskii “there was a strong yearning for expression of its own national character through the means of religious (church) life”. See: Yelensky Victor, “Globalization, Nationalism, and Orthodoxy: The Case of Ukrainian Nation Building,” pp. 155.

preserver of Russian national spirituality, culture and statehood, as the national Church of the Russians. The idea was to return Russia to its cultural norms, customs, and ways of organizing society. In 1999, Patriarch Aleksii declared:

“We often hear people saying that we have to find a ‘national idea’. Some people are looking for it ‘overseas’, in Western Europe. I am convinced that our national idea is to be found in our own troubled glorious past. We need to go back to those basics that our people lived by when they were a believing people, morally pure.”⁵⁰¹

According to Olga Kazmina⁵⁰², the absence of religious knowledge, led to the fusion of religion and identity, on the one hand, and, favored the development of new religious movements, on the other. People affiliated with these new religious movements identified themselves as “simply Christians”⁵⁰³. Religious freedom was legislated through the prism of ethnicity and the same happened with inter-church and interreligious relations. The ROC privileged traditional religions because it was the “religions of our neighboring peoples”⁵⁰⁴. Proceeding from the assumption that Orthodoxy was the religious basis of Russian culture, stressing the common baptismal font of Kiev, and recalling the Christianization of Rus at the end of the 10th century when the Orthodox Church of Russia and its neighbouring countries emerged⁵⁰⁵; religion was developed as an attribute of the Russian idea, national identity was emphasized as one of the major religious values. Indeed the link between nationality and religion involves a larger ethnic community of Eastern Slavs, besides Russia, that operates though a trans-national religious network. For the Russian diaspora, Russian Orthodoxy constitutes one of the main expressions of Russian ethnic identity, bridging national borders, but also creating symbolic barriers. This trans-nationalism found its manifestation in the idea of specific ethnicity (Russian, Slavs), and of specific territory (the canonical territory)⁵⁰⁶. The combination of these two concepts resulted in the promotion of Russian civilization (*russkaia civilizatsiia*), a term often used by Metropolitan Kirill’s addresses delivered before the World Russian People Council⁵⁰⁷, implying faithfulness as one of the duties of an Orthodox Christian and as a path through the creation of Russia on the basis of the “faith of the fatherland”⁵⁰⁸.

In the Orthodox tradition, there is a concept of traditionally Orthodox states, where the Orthodox Church is the Church of the majority. These populations can be a potential “flock” of the Local Orthodox Church. In the case of Russia, we refer to a country that traditionally conceives itself as an Orthodox country, therefore it cannot be considered a free missionary territory. At the inter-Christian level, this principle, according to Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeev, should be translated as a sort of solidarity and cooperation between Christians of different confessions, primarily between Orthodox Christian and

⁵⁰¹ Safonov V, На Самарской земле [In the Land of Samara], ZHMP, 1999/12, pp. 41.

⁵⁰² Kazmina Olga, “The Russian Orthodox Church in a new Situation in Russia”.

⁵⁰³ Ibid, pp. 224.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Bremer Thomas, *How the Russian Orthodox Church Views the "Russian World"*.

⁵⁰⁶ Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, “Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy,” pp. 41.

⁵⁰⁷ Find here the numerous speeches delivered by Metropolitan Kirill: <https://www.vrns.ru/>, (last accessed May 2021).

⁵⁰⁸ Filatov Sergey, Lunkin Roman, ‘My Father's House has Many Mansions’: Ethnic Minorities in the Russian Orthodox Church, Religion, State & Society, 38:4, 2010, pp. 363.

Catholics, which have the apostolic succession of the hierarchy. This solidarity in his words should discourage any form of proselytism or mission among believers, to the detriment of the Orthodox Church or of the Catholic Church. As for countries where neither Catholics nor Orthodox Christians represent the majority of the population, or where there is no dominant Christian Church at all, Christians of different confessions can conduct missionary activities in parallel, coordinating their efforts, without the risk of violating the principle of canonical territory⁵⁰⁹. As we saw in the previous chapter, in the cases in which this principle has not been respected significant difficulties in inter-church relations arose⁵¹⁰.

The concept of “canonical territory” still, and above all, today is seen as a concept both political and canonical. Vladimir Burega (Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate) in an interview held on 2 March 2021, confirmed that the idea of canonical territory is a new concept, that appeared only in the 90s, but did not exist in the textbooks on canon law of the 19th century. He added: “in this form, this term is not in the canons, that is, in the decisions of the ecumenical councils, the term is not in this form. But I would say that there is still a certain truth behind this term. Why? Because although there is no such term in the canons, the canonical law of the Orthodox Church is all based on the territorial principle”.⁵¹¹ What changed in the 1990s was the use of the term, that became a concept actively used in church polemics and in particular “with the Catholic Church, because dioceses began to open where there was not yet a diocese. But then they became dioceses of the Catholic Church in Russia. And then they started saying that this is our canonical territory, that there should be no structures of the Catholic Church on this territory, and so on. In this context of course it has never been used. This is a new meaning because the canons do not proceed from the fact that there is one single Christian church in the world. And if there is a diocese here, it can't be in another diocese. But now the situation is such that there are several Christian denominations, there are many of them. Basically, there are several of them [...]”⁵¹². What has changed according to Burega, if we compared the present days with the 1990s is that, if 15-20 years ago the

⁵⁰⁹ See: Принцип "канонической территории" в православной традиции [The principle of "canonical territory" in the Orthodox tradition], Russkaya Narodnaya Liniya, 10.02.2005, https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2005/02/10/princip_kanonicheskoi_territorii_v_pravoslavnoj_tradicii, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵¹⁰ An example can be considered catholic-orthodox relations with regard to the instructions of the Pontifical Commission “Pro Russia” of June 1, 1992. See par. 1.3.

⁵¹¹ “в таком виде этого термина нет в канонах то есть постановления вселенских соборов в таком виде термина нет. но я бы сказал так что все таки за этим термином есть определенная правда. почему. потому что хотя нет такого термина в канонах но каноническое право православной церкви оно все построено на территориальном принципе”. Interview with Vladimir Burega, done on March 2, 2021, at the Restaurant Shato, in Kiev, min: 16.06-16.49.

⁵¹² “с католической церковью. потому что начали открываться епархии там где тогда еще не епархия. но потом они стали епархии католической церкви в россии. и тогда и начали говорить что это наша каноническая территория что на этой территории не должно быть структур католической церкви и так далее. в таком контексте конечно этого никогда не употреблялось это новое явление потому что каноны не исходят из того что есть одна единственная христианская церковь она по всему миру. и если тут есть епархия то в другой епархии быть не может. но сейчас ситуация такова что есть несколько христианских конфессий их много есть таких”. Interview with Vladimir Burega, done on March 2, 2021, at the Restaurant Shato, in Kiev. min 17.20-18.01.

Church was viewed as an alternative to politics, more recently “the same thing is happening in the church as in the political sphere. The same disputes about power and influence (that usually regarded territories) are opening the doors down there”⁵¹³. Mykolay Danylevych, since 2008, vice-chairman of the Department for External Relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, also commented on the canonical territory issue. When questioned if, in his perspective, the concept of canonical territory is a canonical or political concept, he replied, underlining the canonical meaning of the term: “No, I believe that this concept is canonical because it follows from the canons; the principle of the canons of Orthodox canon law is that in one city there must be one bishop there cannot be two bishops but there is one bishop [and] accordingly he governs one”⁵¹⁴. Therefore “if we ignore and revise this part of canon law, then we must cancel all canon law, rewrite historical law”⁵¹⁵.

So, both Vladimir Burega and Mykolay Danylevych affirmed that this concept refers to the link between canonical law and territorial principle in Orthodox Churches, but, from the point of view of the first, the concept is today more politicized than it was in the past; in the perspective of the second, it continues to be simply a canonical issue.

The document *On the relationship of the Church with the state and secular society in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the present time* (О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время), issued by the Bishops Council held in 1994⁵¹⁶ analyzed the Moscow Patriarchate’s interaction with central and local government bodies, operating in the CIS countries and in the Baltic states, as well as with individual leaders, in particular during election campaigns. The document confirmed the “impossibility for the Church plenitude to support any of the political parties, movements, unions, blocs and similar organizations operating in the CIS and Baltic countries, as well as their individual leaders, primarily during election campaigns”⁵¹⁷, and instructed the clergy to refrain from participating in the elections for the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, specifically as candidates for deputies (Determination of the enlarged meeting of the Holy Synod of 8 October 1993). As the document *On the relationship of the Church with the state and secular society in the*

⁵¹³ “в церкви происходит абсолютно то же самое что и в политической сфере. те же споры на территориях о власти о влиянии вот там внизу двери открывают”. Interview with Vladimir Burega, done on March 2, 2021, at the Restaurant Shato, in Kiev, min: 24.08-24-17.

⁵¹⁴ “нет я считаю что это концерт является каноническим потому что он вытекает из канонов принцип канонов православного канонического права следующее что в одном городе должен быть один епископ не может быть два епископа а есть один епископ соответственно он управляет одной”. Interview with Mykolay Danylevych, done in his office at Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, on March 3, 2020, min. 52.39-53.03.

⁵¹⁵ “если мы будем его игнорировать и бы его ревизии делать тогда надо отменять все каноническое право переписывать историческое право”. Interview with Mykolay Danylevych, done in his office at Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, on March 3, 2020, 54.24-54.31.

⁵¹⁶ See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение «О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время»* [Definition “On the relations of the Church with the State and secular society in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the present time”], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18-01-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/530460.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the present time (О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время), adopted by the Bishops Council held in 1994 stated, the “future participation of the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church in the elections of any bodies of representative power of the CIS and Baltic countries, both at the national and local levels (is undesirable). It is also extremely undesirable for clerics to be members of political parties, movements, unions, blocs and other similar organizations, primarily those leading the election campaign”⁵¹⁸. In addition, the document manifested the urgency of protecting Russian Orthodox Church’s follow citizens from the activities of “pseudo-religious groups that damage life, health, human rights, freedoms and dignity of the individual, family and society, as well as preaching inter-ethnic, social, interreligious and other strife”⁵¹⁹. The document already manifested deep concerns regarding relations with Catholic Church, in particular the situation in Ukraine. Indeed, the Council noted that despite repeated assurance from the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church regarding the improvement of Orthodox-Catholic relations, Orthodox Christians located in Western Ukraine continued to be victims of gross violations of human rights as result of the actions of local authorities under directions of Greek Catholics⁵²⁰. In fact, deep concern was expressed about the problems existing in Church-State relations in Ukraine, because of state authorities that have supported schismatic formations and infringed on the rights of believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Council pointed out that “the citizens of Ukraine suffer only because they belong to the only canonical Orthodox Church in Ukraine - the Ukrainian Orthodox Church”⁵²¹. In addition, the Council expressed concern with regard to the situation in Estonia, where the canonical Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church had been outlawed by the authorities who took the course towards its complete destruction and its replacement by non-canonical group. In 1995 *The Concept of the Rebirth of Missionaries Activities of the ROC*⁵²² was issued, pointing out that missionary activities have always been a specific duty of Christian Church, according to Christ’s command to his apostles “Go ye therefore, and teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19–20)”⁵²³. In the same document the ROC formulated the forms and methods of its missionary activities in response to the challenges faced by contemporary society. The document also listed informative, apologetic, educational and external missions. The informative mission referred to Orthodox witness to a large segment of people to be

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ See chapter 3, and in particular the paragraph on Greek Catholic Church– Russian Orthodox Church’s relation for additional details.

⁵²¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение «О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время» [Definition "On the relations of the Church with the State and secular society in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the present time"]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18-01-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/530460.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵²² Missionary Department of the Novosibirsk Diocese, *Концепция возрождения миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Rebirth of the Missionary Activities of the ROC]*, ansobor.ru, 1995, <http://ansobor.ru/library.php?book=66>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵²³ Ibid.

conducted through mass media, and special publications that had not yet been achieved. The apologetic mission was thought as providing a comparison of Orthodoxy with the doctrines of non-Orthodox denominations, which the ROC considered inauthentic. The intent of the analysis was to counter the proselytism of non-Orthodox organizations. The educational mission was focused on providing a basic knowledge of Orthodoxy to those who were preparing for Orthodox baptism, and for those who were nominally Orthodox (because already baptized) but unfamiliar with Orthodox practice, so that they can become church members. Finally, the external mission encompassed the Orthodox mission to non-Christian peoples, mostly migrants who lived within the canonical territory of the ROC⁵²⁴. On 27 March 2007, at a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, the document was adopted called *The Concept of Missionary Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church*⁵²⁵, developed by the Missionary Department of the Moscow Patriarchate. The preamble of the document, pointed out that the "Concept for the revival of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church"⁵²⁶ adopted in 1995, had largely fulfilled its purpose; indeed the new document took into account the experience accumulated in the years following 1995, and the new state of Orthodox mission. The document adopted in 2007 was based on documents and materials of the Local Council held in 1917-1918⁵²⁷, and of the Bishop Councils held in 1994, 1997, 2000, 2004⁵²⁸, on recommendations of the reports presented by Patriarch Aleksii on the document entitled *The Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*⁵²⁹, and on the resolutions and the final documents of the All Church Missionary Congresses held before 1917⁵³⁰, and in 1996-2002. The new concept formulated general principles, goals and objectives of the missionary service of the Russian Orthodox which could developed taking into account local conditions and opportunities. An example can be considered the more detailed argumentation of the concept of proselytism, putting it not only in relation with the apologetic mission, as happened in the version of 1995, but also specifying what is important to do in order to prevent it, and to prevent the emergence of "sects and

⁵²⁴ Kazmina Olga, "The Russian Orthodox Church in a new Situation in Russia".

⁵²⁵ See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Концепция миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Missionary Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-03-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220922.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵²⁶ See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Missionary Department of the Novosibirsk Diocese, Концепция возрождения миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Rebirth of the Missionary Activities of the ROC]*, *ansobor.ru*, 1995, <http://ansobor.ru/library.php?book=66>, (last accessed August 2021); and *Концепция миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Missionary Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-03-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220922.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵²⁷ See: Mramornov Aleksandr, *Discernere il tempo presente: il Concilio di Mosca del 1917-1918, Discernimento e vita cristiana : atti del 26. Convegno ecumenico internazionale di spiritualità ortodossa : Bose, 5-8 settembre 2018*, p. 269-290; Destivelle Hyacinthe, *La chiesa del concilio di Mosca : (1917-1918)*, Magnano : Qiqajon, Comunità di Bose, 2003.

⁵²⁸ See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Документы [Documents]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/document/100048/>, (last accessed May 2021).

⁵²⁹ See: Chapter 1.

⁵³⁰ See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл возглавил открытие V Всецерковного съезда епархиальных миссионеров [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill presides over the opening of the 5th All-Church Congress of Diocesan Missionaries]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 23-11-2014, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3851703.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

schisms”⁵³¹. Moreover, “development of all acceptable forms of anti-sectarian activity (which neither contradicts Orthodox morality nor violates secular legislation) and development of targeted missionary programs to neutralize proselytism and religious extremism”⁵³² were listed among the most promising areas of modern missionary service of the Church. Finally, the definition of proselytism provided at the note 5 of the document, mentioned both “direct” and “indirect” attempts to influence the religiosity of a person, leaving, again, enough possibilities open to the Church to decide what actions might be classified as proselytism and not missionary work. In 2008 the same Metropolitan Hilarion noted that the concept of “canonical territory” was not applicable to Orthodox-Protestant relations, “but it is applicable to Orthodox-Catholic relations, since we have *de facto* mutual recognition of hierarchies and sacraments (recorded in the *Basic Principles of the Relationship of the Russian Orthodox Church to Non-Orthodox*)”⁵³³. He confirmed the need for further developing of a “code of conduct for Catholics in countries with a predominantly Orthodox population and Orthodox in countries with a predominantly Catholic population. Such a code was actually created by the Catholic commission “Pro Russia” in the early 1990s, but Catholics do not always follow the recommendations of this document”⁵³⁴. Nevertheless, optimism was expressed regarding possibilities of developing fraternal bilateral relations, going forwards situations of proselytism⁵³⁵.

2.2.2 Estonia, Moldova, Ukraine

The concept of canonical territory and the principles which inspire ROC’s foreign activities, showed that Russian Orthodox Church considered crucial maintaining its influence in the former territories of the Soviet Union, and are part of the Slavic identity. These three cases are linked by this common heritage, but at the same time, they differ in many regards. Indeed, if Estonia and Ukraine share the development of a nationalism that for historical, political and religious reasons formed in opposition to the subjection to Russia and to the Moscow Patriarchate, Moldova has always been viewed as an ally, at least till up the election held in 2009.

“[.]I would like to say clearly once again: our Church fully shares the feelings of the Ukrainian, Moldovan, Estonian peoples, who strengthen their newfound independence and wish to build life on the basis of their own traditions and their own will. We consider the accusations of “Russification” to be false, for we are a truly multinational

⁵³¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Концепция миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Missionary Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-03-2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220922.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Russian Orthodox Church, *Епископ Венский Иларион призывает Ватикан обсудить вопрос о статусе католических епархий в России [Bishop Hilarion of Vienna calls on the Vatican to discuss the status of Catholic dioceses in Russia]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 26-02-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/370447.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

Patriarchate. However, the more we are pushed onto the path of ethnic divisions of a single Church, the greater the danger of harmful contradictions and conflicts between believers, which will by no means contribute to the preservation of civil peace in these countries [..]⁵³⁶.

Over the decades, the integrity of the Eastern Orthodox world's canonical territory had been directly challenged from within. The main splits and serious crisis occurred in Ukraine, Moldavia, and Estonia.

Case I. Estonia

By granting autonomy to the structures in Estonia⁵³⁷ in 1993, the Moscow Patriarchate could not prevent a local split. The result of this split was the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (EAO), registered by the Estonian Internal Affairs Ministry in August 1993, and then on 20 February 1996 accepted under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople⁵³⁸. This decision of Bartholomew I was the cause of a serious crisis in the Orthodox world and damaged the relations between the two Patriarchates and the ROC, leading to a break in canonical relations⁵³⁹. Indeed, in the telegram sent to Patriarch of Constantinople after the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church held on 22 February 1996, it states: "This act will not only split the Orthodox Church in Estonia, but also aggravate the suffering of those Orthodox whose rights are already being violated. We fraternally warn Your Holiness that in the event of the implementation of the plan, you will bear a heavy responsibility for the tragic division of Orthodoxy on the eve of the two

⁵³⁶ «..наша Церковь целиком разделяет чувства украинского, молдавского, эстонского народов, которые укрепляют обретенную независимость и желают строить жизнь на основе собственных традиций и собственной воли. Мы считаем ложными обвинения нас в «русификации», ибо являемся подлинно многонациональным Патриархатом. Однако чем больше нас толкают на путь этнических разделений единой Церкви, тем сильнее опасность возникновения между верующими пагубных противоречий и конфликтов, которые отнюдь не будут способствовать сохранению гражданского мира в упомянутых странах». See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Архиерейском Соборе 2000 года [Report of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia at the Bishops' Council in 2000]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/sobors/2000-2/369.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵³⁷ Sherr James, Kullamaa Kaarel, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Faith, Power and Conquest*, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2019, pp. 1-32.

⁵³⁸ On 3-22 April the Joint Commission of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow met in Zurich in order to discuss the settlement of the situation. On 4 March Metropolitan Kirill defined the transfer of the EAO under the jurisdiction of Constantinople "canonically illegal", and declared his readiness to negotiate with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. On 16 May 1996 was reached an agreement and the communion among the two Patriarchates was restored. See: Московский Патриархат Считает "Канонически Незаконной" Передачу Эстонской Апостольской Православной Церкви Под Юрисдикцию Константинопольского Патриархата [The Moscow Patriarchate Considers "Canonically Illegal" the Transfer of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church to the Jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople], Interfax Religion, 04-03-1996, <http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=archive&div=5810>, (last accessed August 2021); Davis Nathaniel, *A Long Walk To Church: A Contemporary History Of Russian Orthodoxy*, Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1995.

⁵³⁹ Curanovic, *The religious factor*.

thousandth anniversary of Christianity"⁵⁴⁰. The recognition of the EAO by the Patriarchate of Constantinople was seen as a gross violation of all the fundamental canonical rules existing in the Orthodox world, as an invasion of the territory of another Local Orthodox Church. In the message addressed to the archbishop of Tallinn and All Estonia, Korniliy, Patriarch Aleksii referred to the situation in Estonia, as a "tragic situation, developed because of the violations of the canons by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, who invaded the original, canonical Russian Orthodox Church, thus undertaking a path toward schism. Churches that, without receiving letters of dismissal by the Mother Church, would pass under the jurisdiction of the new Church recognised by Constantinople were held guilty of the same schismatic sin"⁵⁴¹. In a declaration delivered some days later (1 March 1996), the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church reflected on the fact that, although bilateral relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople go back to more than thousand years, the global political changes that had occurred since the beginning of the 20th century showed that actions towards the Russian Orthodox Church were far from being friendly. For example, in 1920s when the Russian Orthodox Church was persecuted by the atheistic power, Patriarch Meletius IV of Constantinople, unlike most church leaders in the world, did not support his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, who was imprisoned, and took the side of "renovantionist" Church inspired by the Bolsheviks. His successor, Patriarch Gregory VII, through his representative in Moscow, Archimandrite Basil (Dimopulo), expressed the wish that Patriarch Tikhon resign from the management of the Church, and that the Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church be abolished. In fact, in a response to Patriarch Gregory of Constantinople, Patriarch Tikhon wrote: "we were very embarrassed and surprised that the head of the Church of Constantinople, without any preliminary communication with the representative and head of the entire Russian Orthodox Church, interfered in the internal life and affairs of the autocephalous Russian Orthodox Church. The Holy Synods (rules 2 and 3 of the Ecumenical Councils and others) have always recognized the Patriarchate of Constantinople is only the Primate in honor, but never recognized or will recognize the

⁵⁴⁰ "Это деяние не только расколет Православную Церковь в Эстонии, но и усугубит страдания тех православных, права которых уже сегодня попираются. Братски предупреждаем Ваше Святейшество, что в случае осуществления намеченного на вас ложится тяжелая ответственность за трагическое разделение Православия в преддверии двухтысячелетия христианства". See: Information Bulletin Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Беззаконные В Эстонии Расколо Православный Мир. Русская Православная Церковь Приостанавливает Общения С Константинопольской Церковью* [Lawless In Estonia. Split The Orthodox World. The Russian Orthodox Church Suspends Communion With The Church Of Constantinople], 1996/3 pp. 1.

⁵⁴¹ "Трагическая ситуация сложилась вокруг Эстонской Апостольской Православной Церкви. Константинопольский Патриархат, в нарушение церковных канонов, в одностороннем порядке образовал на территории Эстонии автономную митрополию Константинопольской юрисдикции. территорию Вторгшись исконную каноническую Русской Православной Церкви, на Константинопольский Патриархат встал на путь раскола. В грехе раскола будут повинны таюже те клирики, которые, не получив отпустительных грамот от Матери-Церкви, перейдут в юрисдикцию Константинопольского Патриархата". See: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Беззаконные В Эстонии Расколо Православный Мир. Русская Православная Церковь Приостанавливает Общения С Константинопольской Церковью*, [Lawless In Estonia. Split The Orthodox World. The Russian Orthodox Church Suspends Communion With The Church Of Constantinople], 1996/3, pp. 2.

Primate in terms of power”⁵⁴². This was not the first time that the Patriarchate of Constantinople failed to act according to the canons, and instead opted to play a special role. This happened in particular because of the events occurred in the twentieth century. Examples of the such deviation, from the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate, are the subordination of the Finnish Orthodox Church to its jurisdiction in 1921 and the anti-canonical recognition of autocephaly of the Polish Orthodox Church in 1924, recognized by the same Polish who in 1948 brought repentance to their Russian Mother Church. With regard to Estonia, the Ecumenical Patriarchate claimed his historical existence on the territory of Estonia for 17 years (from 1923 to 1940), as well as the request of the Estonian government and a part of Orthodox believers. In the words of Metropolitan Kirill, this historical relation, was nothing if not temporary, indeed in 1978 Patriarch Demetrius of Constantinople canceled the tomos of Patriarch Meletius, which in 1923 put the Estonian Church under the jurisdiction of Constantinople. But this action of Patriarch Demetrius observed canonical procedure; it was due to the imprisonment of Patriarch Tikhon and to the impossibility for him to carry out pastoral care of faithful in Estonia, and this motive was clear in the tomos, and was done with the consent of both Patriarch Meletios and Patriarch Tikhon. In the last 50 years, the Estonian Church has come back under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate thanks to Metropolitan Alexander, chairman of the Synod of the Estonian Orthodox Autonomous Church, who made a request to Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Sergius in 1940. Regarding the second reason raised by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Kirill confirmed that the Moscow Patriarchate never and under no circumstances invaded the canonical territory of another Local Church, as this kind of initiative contributes to the destruction of Orthodox unity⁵⁴³.

During the press-conference organized on 4 March 1996 by the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, in which the archbishop of Kaluga and Borovosky Kliment (Kapalin), deputy chairman of the Department, abbot Elisey (Ganaba) head of the sector for relations with the Local Orthodox Churches, priest Vyacheslav Saliverstov (Tallin), Filaret Bulekov, head of the Communication Service of the Department, all took part, Metropolitan Kirill delivered a talk which contained several interesting statements. He denied that the Estonian government did not interfere in Church affairs, and that the conflict arisen in Estonia was a conflict among the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Patriarchate of Moscow. Indeed, he pointed out that in registering the Church recognized by Constantinople, the Estonian government violated the law twice. In fact according to the law that in Estonia regulated religious organizations’ activities, only “Episcopal” structures can be registered on the territory of the country. This meant that in Estonia only the Lutheran and the Orthodox Church can

⁵⁴² “Мы немало смущались и удивились, что... Константинопольской Церкви, без всякого предварительного сношения представителем и глав ю всей Русской Православной Церкви, вмешивается во внутреннюю жизнь и дела автокефальной Русской Церкви. Священные Соборы (см. 2-е и 3-е Правила II Вселенского Собора и др.) за епископом Константинопольским признавали всегда только первенство чести (τα πρεσβεία της τιμης), но не признавали и не признают за ним первенство власти (τα πρεσβεία της εξουσίας)”, *ibid*, pp. 1.

⁵⁴³ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *К церковной ситуации в Эстонии. Пресс Конференция 4 марта 1996 года [About the Church Situation in Estonia. Press Conference, 4 March 1996, 1996/5-6, pp. 1-5.*

be registered. The Synod of Istanbul was not an Episcopal structure, because it was formed by clergymen and by few laypeople. The second violation of the law, from his perspective, was the registration of a Church, whose center was located outside Estonia, in Sweden. This proved that the only Church that can be registered in Estonia was the one that existed until the war, the Estonian Orthodox Church to which in 1920 the Moscow Patriarchate conferred autonomy. To the argumentation put forth by archbishop Cornelius, the Estonian government replied by offering to him the possibility of registering the Church he guided as a new organization. The proposal was considered by Metropolitan Kirill as unreasonable, because, by registering in this way, the Church would unavoidably lose all the rights it possessed at that time. For all these reasons the Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1996 interrupted the communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The interruption of communion happened for few months, from 23 February till 16 May 1996⁵⁴⁴.

On 23 August 1996, a joint commission of the two Patriarchates met in Tallinn issued the lists of parishes that have defined their jurisdiction. The parties did not reach an agreement on two parishes: the Assumption Cathedral in Tartu and the Saint Isidor's Church in Valga, thus instructed the subcommittees to organize general parish meetings in order to clarify their jurisdictional affiliation, as well as to prepare a draft on the legal status of the Moscow Patriarchate's parishes that did not yet have civil registration. On 13 March 1999 the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople appointed Bishop Stephanos, vicar of the Greek metropolis in France, to the post of "Metropolitan of Tallinn and All Estonia". In announcing this decision, Patriarch Bartholomew called on the Russian Church to recognize Metropolitan Stephanos as "the canonical and legitimate First Hierarchy of the Estonian Orthodox Church"⁵⁴⁵. Referring to the idea that the region of Estonia is an autonomous part of the historical canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate, the latter refused to recognize Metropolitan Stephanos for his being a "man of Constantinople".

During the negotiations conducted on 28 March 2000, the Moscow Patriarchate proposed to solve the problem by concluding a legal agreement between two parallel church structures in Estonia, and by proving for full ownership of the de-facto historical property of each of them. Metropolitan Stephanos, invited to the meeting by the delegation of Constantinople, put forward the recognition by the Moscow Patriarchate of church structures headed by him as the only Autonomous Orthodox Church in Estonia as a categorical condition for the adoption of any legal agreement. Moscow, from its perspective, considered Zurich agreements as the last compromise it can accept, and refused the proposal, closing therefore the doors to a settlement of church properties in Estonia.

⁵⁴⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church 8 November 2000*, mospat.ru, 08.11.2000, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180612143211/https://mospat.ru/archive/en/2000/11/se011081/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁴⁵ «канонического и законного первоиерарха Эстонской Православной Церкви». See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви от 8 ноября 2000 года [Declaration of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-05-2005, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4923053.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

From 26 October to 1 November, Patriarch Bartholomew paid a visit to Estonia accompanied by Archbishop John of Karelia and Finland, and by hierarchs, clergy and laity of the Finnish Archdiocese of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Bartholomew did not inform Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow of his intention to visit a country considered part of the Moscow Patriarchate's canonical territory; nonetheless, Aleksii knew of the visit thanks to a message sent by the head of the Lutheran Evangelical Church of Estonia. After receiving the message, the Department for External Church Relations made efforts to ensure that this visit could represent the end of the four years long conflict among the two jurisdictions present in Estonia. As a part of this effort, the DECR held negotiations with the plenipotentiary representatives of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Government of the Republic of Estonia in order to achieve the reconciliation among Orthodox Christians and to guarantee equal rights to all Orthodox parishes, including the right to church property. The intention of the Department was to issue a Joint Declaration of the heads of the two Orthodox jurisdictions in Estonia, but the Ecumenical Patriarchate refused the meeting. The Moscow Patriarchate took note of the refusal both from Constantinople and from the head of the Estonian Church under the jurisdiction of Constantinople, Metropolitan Stephanos, to undertake a common path to the peace, decided not to participate in canonical communion with the delegation headed by Bartholomew that arrived in Estonia. Concerns regarding this refusal were also expressed by Orthodox members of the Parliament of the Republic of Estonia who additionally expressed worries about possibilities that this division might run along ethnic lines. The visit of Bartholomew coincided with the publication by the Patriarchate of Constantinople of the *Act on the Canonization of Bishop Platon of Ravel*, the Estonian hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, whose glorification previously was accomplished with all the canonical rules of the Russian Orthodox Church, a coincidence that only served to foster further embarrassment. Indeed, the Jubilee Bishop Council held in August 2000, by its *Act*, had determined to glorify Bishop Platon of Revel in the face of holy martyrs and confessors. And the rite of canonization was solemnly performed at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow on 20 August 2000; the celebration was also attended by a delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. During the days of the visit to Estonia, Patriarch Bartholomew declared to the media that the agreements concluded in May 1996 regarding the situation in Estonia could not be interpreted as a solution that allowed the presence of two different jurisdictions on the territory of Estonia, and that the Moscow Patriarchate had misinterpreted the entire situation. He added that the parishes under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate in Estonia should be considered "exarchate" (representatives) of their Local Church; and that in Estonia it was possible to have only one Metropolitan or archbishop with the title of "All Estonia", and under him, there could only be exarches with parishes subordinated to the Russian Orthodox Church. He reaffirmed Constantinople's right of succession in Estonia, and that the Moscow Patriarchate should remove Archbishop Cornelius from his post⁵⁴⁶. In the wake of the following events in Estonia, reasons for concerns regarded not only inter-orthodox relations, but also the status of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate as well. On 24 January 2001, after long consultations between Metropolitan

⁵⁴⁶

Ibid.

Korniliy of Tallin and All Estonia, members of the Synod and lawyers of the Estonian Orthodox Church with representatives of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the *Statute* was officially submitted for registration to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Estonia. Although according to the law of the Republic of Estonia on churches and parishes, relevant requests about modifications should be received within 20 working days after the submission, only 3 months later, on 18 April, the Minister of Interior of Estonia, T. Loodus, sent a letter to Metropolitan Cornelius, in which, unexpectedly, new demands regarding the revision of the *Statute* were put forward. In fact, the *Charter* adopted by the Council of Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in June 2000, and submitted for the registration in August 2000, was a text already revised under the insistence of the Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs, which in September had rejected it. The refusal to grant registration was, from the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate, influenced by the deny of the permission from the leadership of the EAO - a fact considered unacceptable as this was a church structure under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and registered by the Estonian government in 1993. For this reason, the head of the EOC- MP noted with regret that the decision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs "provokes another round of tensions in the field of inter-church and church-state relations"⁵⁴⁷ by "artificially politicizing"⁵⁴⁸ the situation in Estonia. As we already said above, the main problem was the idea that the Estonian Church of the Moscow Patriarchate should register as a new institution. Moreover, the Moscow Patriarchate regarded the reluctance of representatives of the Estonian government to regulate the legal status of the Estonian Orthodox Church as a manifestation of open discrimination against those believers who maintained a canonical connection with the Mother Church. The *Charter* was finally registered on 12 April 2002.

On 25-30 September 2003, after 11 years, Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia, accompanied by the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Metropolitan Korniliy of Tallinn and All Estonia, Metropolitan of Riga and All Latvia Alexander, Archbishop Arseny of Istra, Bishop of Sergiev Posad and of the Monastery Theognosti, payed a visit to Estonia. During the visit he met with leaders of the Estonian state; in a meeting held with the Estonian President A. Ruutel, he noted that "The Orthodox Church in Estonia has always tried to strengthen peace and harmony among people. The Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate will continue to carry out its mission of spiritual care for the faithful, to perform social service, to help overcoming the uncertainty in society so that all members of the Orthodox Church consider Estonia their homeland and work for its good. At the meeting, we also discussed the situation of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia. I hope that relations between Estonia and Russia,

⁵⁴⁷ провоцирует очередной виток напряженности в области межцерковных и церковно-государственных отношений". See: Orthodox reading information and educational project, Заявление Службы коммуникации ОБЦС МП. "Беззаконие в отношении большинства православных жителей Эстонии продолжается" [Statement of the DECR MP Communication Service. "Lawlessness relations against the majority of Orthodox residents of Estonia continues"], zavet.ru, 08.05.2001, <https://www.zavet.ru/news/news-p010507.htm>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁴⁸ "Те, кто провоцирует конфликт, искусственно политизируя ситуацию... совершают действия, позорящие Эстонию", *ibid*.

as well as with countries where the majority of the population professes Orthodoxy, will be deepen"⁵⁴⁹.

Case II. Moldova

The Archdiocese of Bessarabia, established in 1925 under the Romanian Patriarchate, was liquidated in 1944 after the establishment of Soviet power in Moldova. In 1992 it was re-established under the leadership of metropolitan Bishop Petru (Ion Paduraru)⁵⁵⁰, who was banned from priesthood by the Moscow Patriarchate. As a result of the decision of the Romanian Orthodox Church to restore the metropolis of Bessarabia, since December 1992 structures of both churches – Romanian and Russian – have coexisted in Moldova. In 2008 the Kishiniev diocese had 1277 parishes, 42 monasteries, 8 sketes, and 8 theological schools in the Kishiniev-Moldavian Metropolitanate. The Romanian Patriarchate had about 100 parishes⁵⁵¹. In contrast to the similar situation in Estonia and Ukraine, this time the ROC had an ally in the Moldavian authorities, at least until the opposition won the elections in 2009. Indeed, supporting the canonical Russian Church, the authorities of Kishiniev had refused to register the structures of the Romanian Patriarchate for nearly 10 years. The state refused to recognize this patriarchate until 2004 but, after a decision of the European Court for Human Rights, it was forced to register it. In particular, the Communists who were in power from 2001 to 2009 vehemently opposed the legalization of the Patriarchate of Bessarabia. The main reason for this opposition was its subordination to the Romanian Patriarchate, and the risk of strengthening the traditional ties of Moldovian Orthodoxy with Romanians by virtue of said subordinate relation. In fact, the Communists considered this as a threat to their project of forming a national identity idea based on the concept of a separate Moldavian national identity, radically different from the Romanian one. At the same time, the recognition of the Muslim community was also denied, based on the idea that it posed a threat to the spiritual tradition of Moldovian and brought to mind the legacy of past conflicts between Moldovans and Muslims (mainly represented by Turks and Tatars). All

⁵⁴⁹ «Православная Церковь в Эстонии всегда старалась укреплять мир и согласие среди людей. Эстонская Православная Церковь Московского Патриархата будет и дальше осуществлять свою миссию духовного окормления верующих, совершать социальное служение, помогать преодолению неуверенности в обществе с тем, чтобы все члены Православной Церкви считали Эстонию своей родиной и работали ради ее блага. На встрече мы также затронули вопрос положения русскоязычного населения в Эстонии. Надеюсь, что отношения между Эстонией и Россией, равно как и со странами, в которых большинство населения исповедует православие, будут углубляться». See: Мир Православия, «Я посетил дорогую моему сердцу Эстонскую землю» [*"I have visited the Estonian land dear to my heart"*], <http://baltwillinfo.com/mp10-03/mp-08.htm>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁵⁰ Yelenky Viktor, Украинское православие и украинский проект. Церкви и «непредвиденная государственность» в эпоху религиозного возвращения [Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the Ukrainian project. Churches and "unforeseen statehood" in the era of religious return], Pro et Contra, 2013, pp. 27-44.

⁵⁵¹ See: Russian Orthodox Church, Доклад митрополита Кишиневского и всея Молдавии Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [Report of Metropolitan Vladimir of Chisinau and All Moldova at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 25-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428321.html>, (last accessed August 2021). It is worth pointing out that during President Voronin's regime, the Church's privileged status was cemented in the law on Freedom of Religion and Businesses that became determined for the construction of new Churches. We should also recall that in 2002 hundreds of historical monuments were transferred to the Moldavian Church.

this was expressed in 2000 by the head of the State Service for Religious Affairs, Gheorghe Armasu, who motivated the refusal to register Muslim organizations by the fact that about 97% of the population registered in Moldova belonged to the Christian faith. However the situation changed in 2001, when the Ministry of Justice officially recognized the League of the Republic of Moldova as a nongovernmental organization representing the Muslim community in Moldova. This choice caused sharp criticism from many politicians, including the former communist President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin, the Moldovan Metropolis, whose head defined the choice an “humiliation of the Christian majority of the country”⁵⁵², and several conservative protestant groups⁵⁵³. Negotiation between the Moscow and the Romanian Patriarchates on the issue of the establishment of the Bessarabia Metropolis had long been frozen. However, in 1999 both sides recognized the urgency of continuing negotiations. In the same year a meeting took place in Kishinev among representatives of the two Patriarchates, during which Metropolitan Kirill asked for the complete subordination of the Bessarabian structures to the Russian Orthodox Church. On 26 September 2001 the Moldovan government decided to unilaterally put an end to the dispute by announcing that the ROC was the only legal Orthodox Church in the country⁵⁵⁴. In October 2001, his Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia sent a letter to the Patriarch Theoctistus of Romania, in which he pointed out that the issue of the Bessarabian Metropolis was primarily an ecclesiastical one, and thus it should be resolved in the course of bilateral consultations between the Moscow and the Romanian Patriarchates on the basis of the sacred canons. However, this appeal remained unanswered, and the actions proceeded through secular authorities. At the end of the year, on 30 December 2001, the European Court on Human Rights in Strasburg recognized the Moldovan’s government act as a violation of the obligations accepted in the *European Convention on Human Rights* concerning freedom of conscience. The Court then ordered the Moldovan government to register the Bessarabia Metropolis (which occurred on 30 July 2002) and to pay compensation⁵⁵⁵. The Moscow Patriarchate reacted with regret, above all because of reports that testified of the Bessarabia’s attempts to expand the activities of its Metropolis outside Moldova, thus exacerbating the already existing anti-church tensions⁵⁵⁶. Against the background of the dispute among the two patriarchates, there is also the unsettled status of Transnistria. Indeed, the Russian Orthodox Church is the only institution connecting the divided state

⁵⁵² Hug Adam, (ed.), *Traditional religion and political power: Examining the role of the church in Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova*, The Foreign Policy Center, 2015, pp. 1-77.

⁵⁵³ Sprinceana Vitalie, *Бог в «зонах пограничья» [Moldova: God in Border Zones]*, Pro et Contra, 2013, pp. 1-12.

⁵⁵⁴ Curanovic Alicja, *The religious factor*.

⁵⁵⁵ Both the registration of the Bessarabian Metropolis and of the Muslim League cooled down the ambitions of the Moldovan Church which claimed monopoly over the minds of more than 90% of Moldovans. Indeed, what the Church called parishioners, politicians called the electorate. Hug Adam, (ed.), *Traditional religion and political power*.

⁵⁵⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла Архиерейскому Собору Русской Православной Церкви (3-8 октября 2004 года). О внешней церковной деятельности [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, to the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (October 3-8, 2004). About external church activity]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04.10.2004, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/10/26414/>, (last accessed August 2021).

of Moldova, and the President Voronin saw the ROC as the only ally in processing the unification of the country. These expectations were not unfounded. In November 2005, during his first visit to Kishinev in 15 years, Patriarch Aleksii II expressed his support for the President's actions. He promised Voronin the support of the Russian Orthodox Church in the "reconciliation of people in Moldova and Transnistria"⁵⁵⁷. The Patriarch noted that it was important to resolve the Transnistrian problem in compliance with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova. It is worth pointing out that shortly before the Patriarch's visit to Kishinev, Vladimir Voronin openly accused Russia of unwillingness to contribute to the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. From the other side, the ROC appreciated Kishinev's involvement in the dispute with the Romanian Patriarchate and pointed to Vladimir Voronin (along with Alexander Lukashenka)⁵⁵⁸ as a model. Indeed in 2008, Vsevolod Chaplin expressed appreciation towards both presidents, and in particular, in the case of Moldova, for the amendment introduced to the *Law on Religious Cults* and their components enacted in Moldova in August 2002. The law provided for the automatic registration of new religious formations (while there was still possibility of legal objection from the Ministry of Justice), and made it possible for communities to transfer from one religious organization to another without respecting the right of that organization to its historically owned property. The provisions provoked a negative reaction from the Moldavian Metropolitanate, and protests from the clergy and believers. According to the amendment introduced by Voronin "the state recognizes the special importance and primary role of the Moldovan Orthodox Church in the life, history and culture of the people of the Republic of Moldova"⁵⁵⁹. This rule of the President of Moldova would have guaranteed the Russian Orthodox Church the support of the government. Indeed, the balance of relations was based on Voronin's usefulness to the church, and the Church's usefulness to Voronin as lobbying institutions among the Russian elite on behalf of Moldova's integrity defence. At the same time, the President knew well that Moscow would not encourage Tiraspol to have talks with Kishinev without being sure that warding off the conflict did not mean encouraging supporters to cooperate more closely with Bucharest. Vladimir Voronin, who tried to distance himself from Romanian government, was well aware of similar concerns in Moscow. The active participation of Russia in the process of determination of the status of Transnistria was highlighted also during the meeting held in January 2008 between Patriarch Aleksii and the President Voronin. The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church emphasized that the act of re-establishment of the so-called Bessarabia Metropolis on the territory of Moldova, reflected the aspirations of political circles striving to integrate Moldavia into Romania "still trying to deny the Moldovan people their legitimate right to identity and self-determination, which runs counter to the fundamental norms adopted in

⁵⁵⁷ Petrov Alexander, *Патриарх в "зоне конфликта"* [*The Patriarch in "Conflict zone"*], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 16.11.2005, https://www.ng.ru/politic/2005-11-16/1_patriarh.html, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁵⁸ See: Russian Orthodox Church, «Состояние и актуальные вопросы церковно-государственных и церковно-общественных отношений» [*"The state and current issues of church-state and church-public relations"*], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 26-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428423.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁵⁹ "государство признает особую важность и первостепенную роль Молдавской Православной Церкви в жизни, истории и культуре народа Республики Молдова", Ibid.

the European Union, and is a gross violation of elementary human freedom”⁵⁶⁰. The talks held between representatives of the Russian and the Romanian Orthodox Churches, which took place on 21 November 2007 at the Trajan Monastery in Bulgaria, turned in a fiasco because of the Romanian side’s unwillingness to change its position which, from the perspective of Russia could only be perceived as an anti-canonical attitude. During that meeting, President Voronin recalled the historical role of Orthodoxy in the country, the importance of interaction with the Moldavian Metropolia, and his awareness that the Orthodox Church was, at that moment, the only force capable of uniting society⁵⁶¹. This position was appreciated by the Kremlin, and during a meeting with Dmitri Medvedev⁵⁶², both leaders expressed hopes for further bilateral talks. Voronin’s aim was to improve his image and to prove that he had the Kremlin’s support, Medvedev in his turn, wanted to turn to the *Kozak Memorandum*⁵⁶³, the Russian peace plan for Transnistria which would allow Russia to assume the initiative which had belonged to the European Union since 2005⁵⁶⁴, and extend the mandate of peacekeeping forces. This would allow Moscow to gain recognition and prestige in Europe, by playing the role of a mediator who had been able to reconcile the two sides. In addition, working out a compromise between Kishniev and Tiraspol under the patronage of the Kremlin, would mean keeping Moldova within the Russian sphere of influence. After the meeting with Medvedev, Vladimir Voronin paid a visit to Kirill⁵⁶⁵. Indeed, as soon as the European integration process had started in Moldova, and the *Association Agreement* was signed and ratified (27 July 2014)⁵⁶⁶, the Moscow Patriarchate seemed to prepare a proactive role for the Moldavian Church, which strongly promoted the image of Russia as the sole guardian of true

⁵⁶⁰ «Данные круги и сегодня пытаются отказать молдавскому народу в его законном праве на самобытность и самоопределение, что идёт вразрез с основополагающими нормами, принятыми в Европейском Союзе и является грубым нарушением элементарной человеческой свободы». See: Russian Orthodox Church, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Молдовы Владимиром Ворониным* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21-01-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/353655.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² *Moldavskie Vedomosti*, *В Москве прошла встреча Воронина с Медведевым* [In Moscow was held the meeting between Voronin and Medvedev], *vedomosti.md*, 18.03.2009, http://www.vedomosti.md/news/V_Moskve_Proshla_Vstrecha_Voronina_S_Medvedevym, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁶³ Regnum, “Меморандум Козака”: Российский план объединения Молдовы и Приднестровья [Russian plan for the unification of Moldova and Transnistria], Regnum.ru 23.05.2005, <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/458547.html>, (last accessed August 2021); Regnum, Меморандум об основных принципах государственного устройства объединенного государства (2003) [Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State structure of the United State (2003)], regnum.ru, 23.05.2005, <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/458547.html>, (last Accessed August 2021).

⁵⁶⁴ Lynch Dov, «Общее соседство» или новая линия фронта? Молдавский перекрёсток», [“Common neighborhood” or a new front line? Moldavian crossroads], *Russie.Cei.Visions*, 2, 2005, pp. 2-13.

⁵⁶⁵ Russian Orthodox Church, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла с президентом Молдавии Владимиром Ворониным* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18.03.2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/590368.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁶⁶ Eur-Lex, *Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part, Official Journal of the European Union*, eur-lex.europa.eu 30.08.2014 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2014.260.01.0004.01.ENG, (last accessed August 2021).

Orthodoxy. Russia and the Russian Church were depicted as reference point, home of “traditional values”, alongside with morality and spirituality, alternatives to the “degrading and immoral European lifestyle”⁵⁶⁷. As Patriarch Aleksii wrote in his message addressed to the President of Republic V. Voronin, on behalf of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church, “Moldova occupies a special position on the European continent, being a bridge between the Romanance and Slavic worlds. This allows Moldovan culture to make its significant contribution to maintaining mutual understanding and cooperation between peoples, boldly and firmly testifying to the Orthodox tradition”⁵⁶⁸, and the Orthodox Church of Moldova contributed in cementing the “centuries-old fraternal ties of the Moldovan people with the Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian and other peoples, nourished by the Moscow Patriarchate”⁵⁶⁹. This confirms that the dispute among the two Patriarchate was a rivalry over a cultural space, a friction among the Slavic and the Romanian elements. In fact, since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Romanian authorities had been trying to restore the sense of community with citizens of Moldova, tracing and reaffirming their historical homeland. By contrast, the Moscow Patriarchate saw it as a political manipulation, supported among others by Vlad Kubryakov, leader of the parliamentary faction of the Christian Democratic People’s Party (CDNO). After its accession to the European Union, Romania’s attractiveness in the eyes of Moldavians grew, and in Bucharest the possibility of recovering that lands that were lost in 1940 began to be mentioned. President Traian Basescu also had a plan for a future unification of Moldova and Romania within EU. What the state could not realize was indeed realized by the Church, that in October 2007 established 3 bishoprics within the metropolia of Bessarabia – one in Moldova, and two in Ukraine. In the words of Metropolitan Vladimir of Kishinev and All Moldova, the Bessarabia was trying to recruit clergy from the Moldova Metropolitanate. They acted by luring clergy and promising them to obtain Romanian passports (citizenship), and free travel through Europe. In addition, they rehabilitated banned clergy and offered them a monthly allowance of 300 euros⁵⁷⁰. These actions were considered “a direct and aggressive interference in the

⁵⁶⁷ Hug Adam, (ed.), *Traditional religion and political power*.pp- 63. See also: Russian Orthodox Church, *Ответы Святейшего Патриарха Алексия на вопросы членов ПАЦЕ [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii 's answers to the questions of PACE members]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29.10.2007, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/314613.html>, (last accessed August 2021). “Finally, I would disagree with the fact that over the past 20 years “the religious cult has undergone a noticeable decline in Europe,” as the recommendation says. Somewhere this may be so, but not in Russia, not in Ukraine, not in Belarus, not in Moldova, not in many other countries of the Center and East of Europe. Here faith is revived, and more and more socially active people are involved in the life and work of the Church. ” «Наконец, я бы не согласился с тем, что за последние 20 лет «религиозный культ претерпел заметный упадок в Европе», как говорится в рекомендации. Где-то это, может быть, и так, но только не в России, не в Украине, не в Белоруссии, не в Молдове, не во многих других странах Центра и Востока Европы. Здесь вера возрождается, и все больше социально активных людей вовлекается в жизнь и труды Церкви».

⁵⁶⁸ Russian Orthodox Church, *Послание Святейшего Патриарха Алексия от имени Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви Президенту Республики Молдова В.Н. Воронину [Message of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii on behalf of the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church to President of the Republic of Moldova V. N. Voronin]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-07-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428858.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Кишиневского и всея Молдавии Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [Report by Metropolitan of Kishinev and All*

canonical territory of another Church hierarchy"⁵⁷¹. Russian political scientist Gennady Konenko recognized the Romanian Church's decision as a measure to strengthen the pro-Romanian opposition in Moldova, thus bringing Moldova closer to the EU, in the case liberals win Romania's parliamentary election⁵⁷². In November the ROC called upon all Orthodox churches to not recognize the Romanian parishes in Moldova and in Ukraine⁵⁷³. An attempt of mediation between the two Patriarchates was done by the Bulgarian Church, but the three-way talks did not bring any result⁵⁷⁴. Tensions arose further when in January 2008 Kischinev announced the deportation of Romanian clergymen⁵⁷⁵ (about which the Bessarabia Metropolia complained the Council of Europe)⁵⁷⁶, and when the Romanian Church announced in July 2008 the intention of opening parishes in Japan and South Korea, lands, that as we saw above, the Russian Orthodox Church recognized as its own land of missions⁵⁷⁷.

Moldova Vladimir at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 25-07-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428321.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁷¹ "прямым и агрессивным вмешательством в каноническую территорию другой церковной иерархии".

See: Regnum.ru, *Румынский патриархат отказывается от создания своих епархий на территории Молдавии, Приднестровья и Украины?* [*Romanian Patriarchate refuses to create its own dioceses on the territory of Moldova, Transnistria and Ukraine?*], 14-11-2007.

⁵⁷² Российский политолог констатирует усиление позиций "Бессарабской митрополии" в Молдавии [The Russian political scientist notes the strengthening of the positions of the "Metropolitan of Bessarabia" in Moldova], 17-02-2009, Интерфакс-Религия: Российский политолог констатирует усиление позиций "Бессарабской митрополии" в Молдавии (interfax-religion.ru), (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁷³ РПЦ призвала не учреждать румынских епархий в Молдавии и на Украине [The Russian Orthodox Church urged not to establish Romanian dioceses in Moldova and Ukraine], Ria Novosti, 07.11.2007, РПЦ призвала не учреждать румынских епархий в Молдавии и на Украине - РИА Новости, 07.06.2008 (ria.ru), (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁷⁴ See: Nezavisimaja Gazeta-Religii, *Троянский Конь Автокефалии* [*The Trojan Horse of Autocephaly*], 04.12.2007; Regnum.ru, *Румынская патриархия готова отказаться от "Бессарабской митрополии" ради автокефальной Молдавской православной церкви?* [*Is the Romanian Patriarchate ready to abandon the "Metropolitan of Bessarabia" for the sake of the autocephalous Moldovan Orthodox Church?*], 22.11.2007.

⁵⁷⁵ Portal-credo, *Власти Молдовы намерены депортировать четырех румынских священников и монахиню* [*The Moldovan authorities intend to deport four Romanian priests and a nun*], portal-credo.ru, 10.01.2008, Портал-Credo.ru: Власти Молдовы намерены депортировать четырех румынских священников и монахиню (portal-credo.ru), (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁷⁶ Portal-credo, *Митрополия Бессарабии пожаловалась на президента Молдовы Владимира Воронина в Совет Европы*, [*The Metropolitan of Bessarabia complained about the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin to the Council of Europe*], portal credo.ru, 14.01.2008, Митрополия Бессарабии пожаловалась на президента Молдовы Владимира Воронина в Совет Европы (portal-credo.ru), (last Accessed August 2021).

⁵⁷⁷ Румынская Церковь намерена учредить православные приходы для соотечественников, проживающих в Южной Кореи и Японии [The Romanian Church intends to establish Orthodox parishes for compatriots living in South Korea and Japan], patriarchia.ru, 03.07.2008, Румынская Церковь намерена учредить православные приходы для соотечественников, проживающих в Южной Кореи и Японии / Новости / Патриархия.ru (patriarchia.ru), (last Accessed August 2021). We should also add that the Russian Orthodox Church was not the only one who had problems with the Romanian Patriarchate, but also the Serbian Church did not recognize the Romanian parishes existing on its canonical territory. See: Djenovic Drasko, *Serbia: Romanian Orthodox Church Threatened With Demolition*, Forum 18, 15-03-2005, https://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=523, (last Accessed August 2021); Novaković Igor, Đurđević Nenad, *Serbian-Romanian Relations And The Status Of The Vlach Minority In Serbia Policy study*, International and Security Affairs Centre, 2015, pp. 3-88.

Case III, Ukraine.

The situation in Ukraine was extremely different. The case of Ukraine is undoubtedly the most complicated and “painful” among the ones analysed: the one with the most entwined reality among the former States of the Soviet Union. From Moscow’s perspective, the Ukrainians, in choosing independence and rejecting their integration with Russia in favor of a closer relation with the West, rejected their true identity, their historical roots, as well as their cultural heritage as cradle of Holy Rus and of Orthodox faith.

In her book, Alicja Curanovic reported a survey carried out by the Levada Center in 2008, according to which nearly half percent of the respondents believed that Russia and Ukraine formed one nation (62 per cent did not consider Ukraine to be a foreign country); according to data reported by Curanovic, since the break-up of the Soviet Union, there had been an increasing acceptance of an independent Ukrainian state, which nevertheless should be friendly to Russia and not have border or visa requirements⁵⁷⁸. Indeed, a report of the Kiev International Institute of Sociology compared results of survey carried out by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology and the Foundation for Democracy from 8 to 18 February 2004, and by Levada Center from 21 to 25 February 2014 (a few months after Majdan revolution). The results revealed that both in Russia and in Ukraine the majority of respondents would like the two countries to be independent but friendly states – with open borders, without visas and customs (in Ukraine: 68%; in Russia 59%; although these numbers had decreased since November by 5% in Ukraine, and 4% in Russia). In Ukraine, 12% of respondents wanted unification in a single state with Russia (the number had increased by 3% after Majdan). Most of the supporters of unification with Russia were located in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (41%), in the region of Donetsk (33%), in Luhansk (24%), in Odessa (24%), in Zaporozhye (17%), in the region of Kharkiv (15%)⁵⁷⁹.

Another important factor to be considered is that in trying to keep its advantage over other religious institutions in Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarchate takes into consideration not only the protection of its canonical territory, but also the maintenance of its status as the Church with the largest number of believers in the Universal Orthodox Church. Indeed, in the case of the establishment of a strong Ukrainian national Church, the ROC will lose its leading position to Constantinople and as spiritual leader of the Slavic-Orthodox civilization. In fact, although the Ecumenical Patriarchate is *primus inter pares* in the Orthodox world, the Moscow Patriarchate number of parishioners was 180 million, while the number of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was 5 million⁵⁸⁰. Most important is that Ukraine homes at least 1/3 of all ROC parishes⁵⁸¹. The withdrawal of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate would strongly reduced the territory under its control. Ukraine is the second Orthodox state in terms of

⁵⁷⁸ Curanovic Alicja, *The Religious Factor*, pp. 163.

⁵⁷⁹ Динамика Отношения Населения Украины К России И Населения России К Украине, Каких Отношений С Россией Хотели Бы Украинцы [Dynamics Of The Attitude Of The Population Of Ukraine To Russia And The Population Of Russia To Ukraine, What Kind Of Relations With Russia Would Ukrainians Like], <http://www.kiis.com.ua/?cat=reports&id=236&lang=rus>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.

territory and population, the creation of a new autocephalous Orthodox Church would correspond to the creation of a new regional geopolitical center of the Orthodox civilization and indeed to the establishment of a Moscow's rival in Eastern Europe⁵⁸².

With the beginning of perestroika, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC), previously banned churches, were legalized. Undoubtedly, in the process of restoring their influence in their traditional lands (Western Ukraine), the first was in the lead. However, in that time, Orthodox Churches, moved by a strong desire for independence, had sufficiently established themselves on those same lands. His slogan was: "Rome is not our father, but Moscow is not our Mother"⁵⁸³. The first step toward the revival of the independent Orthodox Church was the proclamation of UAOC on 19 August 1989 in the Lviv Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul. The official restoration took place at the Council of the UAOC held on 5-6 June 1990, which approved also the *Charter for the Administration of the Church*, elected the new Patriarch – the 92 years old Mstislav (Skrypnyk), who was resident in the USA -, and Metropolitans. In terms of number of believers, the UAOC continued to be noticeably inferior to the Russian Orthodox Church, but this number grew up swiftly, in particular in the western part of the country. In the region of Lviv, in 1990, 300 communities were registered. The rehabilitation of the Churches was accompanied by an acute struggle with the ROC, caused first of all by the lack of temples for worship. Certainly the main problems were ones related to property rights. Indeed, the buildings confiscated from the repressed churches were partially transferred to the Russian Orthodox Church or mostly destroyed or transferred to various organizations that directly or indirectly depended on the party or on state structures. Inter-church struggles were especially intense in Western Ukraine. In Kyiv, in October 1991, believers of the UAOC carried out hunger strikes and pickets demanding the transfer of all the Churches of the city to their Church and, above all, the St. Sophia Cathedral. Indeed, the most painful and sharp conflict in Ukraine, arose within Orthodoxy itself. During the years of perestroika, the common striving for maximum independence also affected the Ukrainian hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church: under their growing pressure, the Moscow Patriarchate granted the Ukrainian church considerable autonomy and renamed the Ukrainian exarchate into Ukrainian Orthodox Church⁵⁸⁴. The rapid developments of the events, in particular the proclamation

⁵⁸² Морозов Илья, *Автокефалия Украинской православной церкви как инструмент обострения российско-украинского территориально-политического конфликта* [*Autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as an instrument of aggravation of the Russian-Ukrainian territorial-political conflict*], Society: Politics, Economics, Law, 2:1, 2019, pp. 31-35.

⁵⁸³ "Рим нам не отец, но и Москва - не мать". See: Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*, Kiev Center for Political Studies and Conflictology, pp. 1-9 + приложение 1, 2, 4 [+appendix 1, 2, 4]. (from the archive of Vladimir Sabododan. Access to document was allowed by Metropolitan Drabinko).

⁵⁸⁴ The Bishop Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held on January 30-31, 1990 assigned the Ukrainian Exarchate the name of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) and significantly expanded its canonical independence, in particular blessing the formation of the Ukrainian Synod. Bishops Council held in 25-27.10.1990 made an *Opredeleniye* (Determination) with which to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church were granted independence and autonomy in the administration. This included also the possibility of electing its own Primate by its Council and of conferring him the title of "His Beatitude Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine". In November 1991 the Episcopate of the UOC, on behalf of its Council, appealed to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii, with the request of full canonical independence. During the meeting of Russian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod, held on 25-27.12.91, in which participated also Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, it was decided to submit the issue to the Bishops Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. After the publication of the appeal of the Episcopate of the UOC in 22.01.92, it turned out that three other bishops

of independence of Ukraine, pushed the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) to demanding the autocephaly. Nevertheless, the Russian Orthodox Church removed the issue from the agenda of the Bishops' Council planned on 31 March – 4 April 1992⁵⁸⁵, and replaced it with a personal issue regarding the inconsistency with rank of the Russian Orthodox Church's exarch of Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko), guilty of having turned a consistent part of the Church hierarchy against him. Filaret was forced to give a declaration about his upcoming resignation. Identifying himself with the idea of autocephaly, with the national-patriotic desire of state authorities, Metropolitan Filaret refused to resign⁵⁸⁶. He was deposed and defrocked during the Bishops' Council of the ROC in Ukraine held in Kharkhov on 27 May 1992, which elected Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan), native of Ukraine, former members of the Moscow Patriarchate, as new head of the Russian Church in Ukraine. He was elected

who had refused to sign the appeal, were removed from the pulpit. Indeed, many clergy and laity also stated that they did not share the ideas expressed in the document.

See: Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], pp. 16, 22-5-92 (From the Archive of Metropolitan Sobodan).

⁵⁸⁵ «We were deeply and sadly shocked to learn that the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and All Ukraine, upon his return to Kiev after the Bishop's Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, came out with a number of public statements reflecting very unobjectively his work and actually going back on his earlier pledge to resign at the next Bishops' Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the office of the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. [...] The Patriarch and the Synod of the Russian Church have dedicated much attention recently to the question of enlarging the independence and self government for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The latest extraordinary Bishops Council was called together precisely to respond to the appeal for autocephaly to be granted to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. However a detailed and free consideration of this matter has revealed that the majority of the Orthodox in Ukraine at the present moment do not want to separate from the Russian Orthodox Church. For this reason a decision was made to come back to the question of the autocephaly at the next Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. [...] ». See: Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], Message from Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Episcopate, Clergy and Lay Believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 7-5-92, pp. 4-5. Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sobodan. Original translation in English.

⁵⁸⁶ The Holy Synod of Russian Orthodox Church held on 6-7 May resolutely condemned statements of Metropolitan Filaret and qualified them as an expression of blasphemy. They decided that Metropolitan Filaret had time till May 15 to convene the Bishop Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, to submit his resignation from the role of Primate of the Ukrainian Church-Moscow Patriarchate. He was forbade to act as Primate in the period before the Bishop Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, namely to convene the Synod, to ordain bishops, to issue decrees and appeals concerning the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with the exception of the convocation of the Bishop Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church for the purpose of accepting his resignation and electing a new Primate. The Holy Synod held on 21 May did not meet this request, but did not inform the Holy Synod of the reasons why, until May 15, he failed to convene the Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In that same session the following decisions were adopted: 1) Metropolitan of Kharkhiv and Bogodukhovskiy Nikodim was asked to convene and chaired in the period before the feast of the Holy Trinity, on 14 June, the Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in order to elect a new Primate. 2) was recommended to conduct the election by secret ballot out of at least three candidates nominated by the Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. 3) Metropolitan Nikodim was charged with fulfillments of duties of Primate in the period prior to the Bishop Council. See: Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], pp. 16, 22.5.92 (From the Archive of Metropolitan Sobodan).

with 18 votes out of 20⁵⁸⁷. Metropolitan Filaret did not recognise the Council's decision, and as reaction declared the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which he allegedly headed. On 25-26 June the All Ukrainian Orthodox Council was inaugurated, where the union of the UOC and of the UAOC in a new Church structure was announced, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate. Primate of this new Church was elected Patriarch of the UAOC Mstislav, Filaret was elected deputy Primate. Ukrainian authorities, who most likely inspired these events, supported the establishment of the UOC-KP. On 20 July, the new church was registered by the Council for Religious Affairs; the registration essentially meant the liquidation of the UAOC. Mstislav himself, who was absent from the Council and gave his consent neither to the unification, nor to his election, some months later (in November) announced the invalidity of the unification and of the liquidation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. He then sent a statement about the issue to President Kravchuk, prime minister and general procurator. The initiators of the unification on the side of the UAOC, Metropolitan Massidich and Archbishop Romaniuk were excommunicated from the Church. A significant part of the UAOC also did not recognize the union and refused to join the UOC – KP. 22 January 1993 an Episcopal meeting of Bishops, clergy and laity of the western regions of Ukraine was held in Lviv, which declared independence from the UAOC-KP and the restoration from the "liquidation state" of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. Thus, since the beginning of 1993, in Ukraine there were four churches, one way or another connected with Orthodoxy (with Christianity of Eastern rite): UOC of the Moscow Patriarchate, which embraced the majority of those in Eastern lands; the UAOC, which included parishes that did not accept the union, and that was not officially recognized by the state, UAOC-KP, which had a low number of believers, but was clearly claiming the character of the national Church; and the UGCC, headed by Miroslav-Ivan Lubachivsky, which was the main Church in the Western lands (in addition there were several other small churches of the Eastern rite with a purely local distribution). When Patriarch Mstislav passed away in October 1993 the Local Council elected as new Patriarch of the UAOC Dimitri (in the world Vladimir Yarem); at the All Ukrainian Orthodox Church Patriarch of the UOC-KP was elected Vladimir (Romanok), and as deputy Filarete (Denisenko). Relationships among the four churches were quite complicated. The attitude of the UAOC-KP seemed to be aggressive, to claim to be recognized as the national Church, feeling stronger also thanks to the state support. This led to a confrontation with the other three churches, and even to consider possibilities of a tactical union among them (and against it); in fact they stopped any kind of internal controversy. The most serious opposition was the opposition of the UOC-KP to the UOC and to UAOC. In the seizure of the Churches of the UOC from the UOC-KP, the role of force was played by the fascist UNSO, a youth paramilitary organization. The leadership of the UOC-KP prevented both its legalization and the transfer of clergy to the new Church by putting pressure on them. The UAOC, in the meanwhile, fought for its own legalization, that is for its registration by the Council for Religious Church Affairs, and for the approval of its amended *Charter*. Numerous appeals

⁵⁸⁷

The Bureau of Communication of the DECR, in the Message for structures of information of 27-05.1992 reported that he was elected with 16 out of 18 votes (Archive Metropolitan Sabodan). Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], Новый представитель Украинской Православной Церкви [New Representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], pp. 17, 27-5-92 (From the Archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

on this issue remained unanswered, for this reason the leadership of the Church decided to take a further, more extreme step. On 22 November 1993 the faithful of the UOAC started to conduct actions of civil disobedience: they conducted unauthorized prayers at the wall of St. Sophia Cathedral, and demonstrations. Participants in manifestation were beaten by police, and fined. The UAOC-KP represented by Patriarch Vladimir (Romaniuk) claimed two roles: national and Orthodox center of three Slavic nations – Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. In its opinion the Church should be national if not de jure, then de facto⁵⁸⁸. In the Church propaganda, and in the one carried out by his ideologues, the following notions prevailed: Church, Ukrainian, independent, national. Under this schema subordination of the Church to foreign centers contradicted the principles of independence. The UOC was viewed as anti-national, as schismatic and ambitious but, above all as a structure that represented no one. Indeed, they refrained from involvement in any polemic with this Church. The purpose of the UOC – KP was calling for a unification of confessions (at least Orthodox but of course was more desirable thinking also to an unification with UCGG) into a unique and independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church. It thought that the All Ukrainian Orthodox Church could be a good tool for realizing this unification. In the opinion of representatives of the UOC-KP issues regarding canonicity and recognition from the other local Churches were not real problems, because the path to autocephaly had always been, historically, a painful and complicated process. They believed that the recognition would come after the unification. This is why in that phase it was considered a non-issue. The UAOC-KP declared its readiness in conducting dialogue with the other three Churches on the matter of unification. At the same time, they asked the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate to repent for the sins of which they were stained during the totalitarian period. The UOC, according to Patriarch Vladimir (Sabodan) was trying to obtain the status of autocephalous or, at least, of local church, through in a canonical way. Vladimir Sabodan's motto was that a "legitimate state need a legitimate Church". Forces who supported the Russian Orthodox Church worked against this Church. An obstacle was that not all the hierarchs and believers shared Sabodan's ideology; moreover, also the idea of confrontation with the Church of the Kievan Patriarchate worked against this project, thus increasing gravitation toward the Russian Orthodox Church. It considered the UOAC non-canonical, but supported it in the promotion of its rights. That was the main reason why the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate never talked of "autocephaly" but preferred to use the expression "full self-representation", "status of local Church". In addition, a very solid principle on which the UOC insisted was the separation of the Church from the State. Although the UOAC was considered non canonical by the other Orthodox Churches, they supported it in defending its rights. Regarding the idea of unification of the Church instead, they reacted with coolness and preferred not to talk of it, but showed readiness to confront other Churches regarding discussion of the issue of Church properties, and the participation of a canonical All Ukrainian Council convened on canonical basis, that is with repentance of the UOC-KP. From his perspective, the UAOC considered itself to be the most disadvantaged Christian Church and claimed, first of all, for the recognition of her rights. In the *Basic Principles of Buildings the Ukrainian Local Church*, adopted by the Bishops' Council of the UAOC, were stated the following principles: strict adherence to the dogmas and canons of the Eastern Church; rejection of the idea of creating a national Church,

⁵⁸⁸

«Я считаю, что Церковь должна быть государственной если не де-юре, то де-факто»quotation, Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*, pp. 4.

separation of Church and State, state recognition and rehabilitation of juridical rights of all the Ukrainian Churches belonging to the Eastern rite. The UOAC's hierarchy considered itself to be the closest to Ukrainian national idea, in the name of which they began to build their own Church. Unlike the UOC, this Church took in consideration the idea of unification among the three Churches belonging to the Eastern rite, but was fully aware of how high the situation's level of complexity was, and manifested its willingness in an imminent convening of the All Ukrainian Orthodox Council. The UCGG tried to stay away from these conflicts, in particular from the ones regarding properties rights. UCGG chancellor I. Datsko thus formulated principles inspiring the attitude of the Church toward other Churches: the UOC – is the canonical Church, he affirmed, peace among Churches is possible only on the axis Rome-Constantinople–Moscow; he declared himself ready to confront the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate, but not with Filaret, since he was expelled from the Church⁵⁸⁹. The Russian Orthodox Church reacted sharply to Metropolitan Filaret's attempts to constitute an anti-canonical Kievan Patriarchate; after Filaret's visit to Istanbul at the beginning of June 1992, Patriarch Aleksii sent a letter to Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew, in which was pointed out that the aim of the visit was undoubtedly the legalization of the un-canonical church structure of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, hoping in the support of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in order to strengthen the positions of the schismatic, the so-called Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, to which he joined lately, successfully conducting his struggle with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. He added: "To our deep regret, Filaret Denisenko's criminal anti-canonical actions correspond to the ambitious aspirations of certain political circles in Ukraine and are actively supported by them. In order to destroy the canonical structure of the Church in Ukraine, monk Filaret Denisenko will use the church financial means seized by him. By the grace of God, this violence is currently opposed by the uncompromising rebuff of the episcopate, clergy, monastic and all the people of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In such a situation, an inevitable civil confrontation begins. In fact, the monk Filaret Denisenko uses the method of inciting his few supporters and non-ecclesiastical forces of the same mind, against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. During the days of Monk Filaret Denisenko's stay in Istanbul, some Ukrainian mass media widely disseminated messages about the allegedly successful course of his mission with Your Holiness and about the supposedly favorable end of it. These reports cause considerable concern among the Orthodox episcopate clergy and laity who are particularly in need of support and protection at the present time. ...We firmly hope that Your Holiness will support the canonical truth and our efforts to prevent the spread of a new church schism in Ukraine, which threatens to strike another blow to the Orthodox unity"⁵⁹⁰. This message further confirmed that the Russian Orthodox Church

⁵⁸⁹ «УПЦ - каноническая церковь, мир церквей возможен лишь на оси Рим-Константинополь-Москва; готовы к контактам с УПЦ-КП, но не с Филаретом, поскольку он исключен из церкви». See: Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*. pp. 5.

⁵⁹⁰ "К глубокому сожалению, преступные антиканонические Филарета Денисенко соответствуют амбициозным устремлениям определенных политических кругов на Украине и активно поддерживаются ими. Последнее получает выражение в умножающихся попытках насильственного захвата храмов, монастырей, зданий Украинской Православной Церкви. В своей борьбе в целях разрушения канонической структуры Церкви на Украине монах Филарет Денисенко использует захваченные им церковные финансовые средства. деяния Монаха епархиальных управлений Милостью Божией этому, насилию в настоящее время противостоит бескомпромиссный отпор епископата, клира, монашествующих и всего народа Божия Украинской Православной Церкви.

not only considered unacceptable Filaret's actions but had always considered unacceptable any support or joint action of the Ecumenical Patriarchate with Filaret and his Church. According to the information the DECR received by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, during the visit of Metropolitan Filaret in Istanbul, no decision regarding the religious situation in Ukraine was made. There was not any liturgical union between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and former Metropolitan Filaret and, at that moment, the great part of the Local Orthodox Churches expressed their full agreement with the election of Metropolitan Sabodan as Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, in agreement also with the removal of Metropolitan Filaret from this role and with the anathematization of him. The whole Ecumenical Orthodoxy remained unchanged in his position of supporting the canonical unity of Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches within the united Moscow Patriarchate⁵⁹¹.

2.2.3 The World Russian People's Council

The inherent link between religion and nationality that involves the expression of ethnic identity by referring to the specificities of Russians and Slavs' ethnicity is represented by the activities of the World Russian People's Council (Всемирный Русский Народный Собор)⁵⁹². The first meeting was convened in Moscow, at Danilov Monastery, on 26 May 1993, under the initiative of the World Russian Congress, the Russian Encyclopedia

Милостью Божией этому насилию в настоящее время противостоит бескомпромиссный отпор епископата, клира, монашествующих и всего народа Божия Украинской. Православной Церкви.. Начинается' неизбежное в подобной обстановке гражданское противостояние. Фактически монах Филарет Денисенко использует метод натравливания своих немногочисленных сторонников и единомышленников с ним нецерковных сил на чад Украинской Православной Церкви. В дни пребывания в Стамбуле монаха Филарета Денисенко некоторые средства массовой информации Украины широко распространяют сообщения о якобы успешном течении его миссии у Вашего Святейшества и о намечающемся будто бы благоприятном для него ее завершении. Эти сообщения вносят немалое беспокойство в среду православного епископата клира и мирян, особо нуждающихся в настоящее время в поддержке и защите. ...Мы твердо надеемся на поддержку Вашим Святейшеством канонической правды и наших усилий по недопущению распространения на Украине нового церковного раскола, угрожающего нанести очередной удар по православному единству". Information Bulletin of the Department for Church External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *К церковной ситуации на Украине [On the Church situation in Ukraine]*, 1992/18, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² During an interview with the Russian Tv channel Vesti.ru, answering to question: That is, it is not a religious or national principle (the one that inspire the Russian World People's Council a/n)? he replied: This is not a religious principle. And not a national principle. By the word "Russian" we mean our Russian culture and Russian civilization.? То есть это не религиозный и не национальный принцип? Это не религиозный принцип. И не национальный принцип. Под словом «русский» мы понимаем нашу русскую культуру и русскую цивилизацию. See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Митрополит Кирилл: Ни одна религия не призывает людей к ненависти. В день открытия X Всемирного Русского Народного Собора председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы ведущего телепрограммы "Вести. Подробности" Эрнеста Мацквичюса [Metropolitan Kirill: No religion calls people to hatred On the opening day of the 10th World Russian People's Council, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from the host of the Vesti. Details "by Ernest Matskyavichyus]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04-04-2006, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30865/>, (last accessed August 2021).

Center, the Roman-Gazeta publishing house, the Martha-Mariinsky Orthodox sisterhood of the Feodorovskaya Icon of the Mother of God, the Confederation of Refugees and Forced Migrants, the Russian Community of Tajikistan and other public organizations, under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia. Since the date of its inauguration, were held 12 Congresses, the last one on 20-22 February 2008⁵⁹³; this representative forum had played an important role in the formation of civil society in modern Russia, and in the consolidation of its spiritual values. Traditionally, the forum was attended by representatives of the highest political leadership of the country, statesmen, representatives of the government, leaders of parties, public associations, and movements, clergy from the Russian Orthodox Church, and from the other Orthodox Churches, heads of other traditional religious communities present in Russia, as well as representatives of the world of science, culture, public education, entrepreneurs, and envoys of Russian communities in the near and far abroad. Thus, the institution played an important influence on civil society. It was a meeting place for people of different beliefs, worried for future of Russia and its people, and inspired by the willingness to develop a project for the benefit of the country. Indeed, on 21 July 2005 the unique mission of the forum was internationally recognized granting People's Council of special consultative status at the UN⁵⁹⁴. The Council gathers once a year in order to discuss the most urgent issues regarding the life of Russia and of the world.

Indeed, the forum contributed to the formation of the Orthodox identity; during its meetings had been discussed issues regarding power, interreligious relations in Russia and in the world, problems related to ethical economy, human rights, international matters. As declared by Metropolitan Kirill in his speech at the Eighth World Russian People's Council *Russia and the Orthodox World* (3-5 February 2004), the civilizational individuality of Russia, could not but manifest itself in the relations of the country's with outside world. Indeed, over the centuries, it was expressed in the arrangement of foreign policy priorities, an important part of which were conducted with countries of the Orthodox tradition, Orthodox people and Local Orthodox Churches, and are the demonstrations that Russia can express its spiritual and cultural tradition in its relation with foreign countries. Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that this became evident first of all thanks to the efforts of Russian state in gathering Russians scattered around the world, outside the borders of historical Russia because of civil wars, or as consequence of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although different from Russians in terms of historical memory, these generations were considered to belong to the same Russian nation, and the same Russian tradition as Russians who lived in the Russian Federation. In fact, in this area Church and State cooperation was very active, as initiatives to protect Orthodox believers' rights in Estonia clearly showed⁵⁹⁵. This collaboration was considered by

⁵⁹³ Всемирный Русский Народный Собор (ВРНС). Справка [World Russian People Concil], ria.ru, 25.05.2010, <https://ria.ru/20100525/238031233.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁹⁴ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Всемирный Русский Народный Собор примет мировоззренческий документ, рассматривающий проблему прав и свобод человека в контексте отечественной духовной традиции* [The World Russian People's Council will adopt an ideological document considering the problem of human rights and freedoms in the context of the national spiritual tradition], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 01-04-2006, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/29810/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁹⁵ Informtion Bullettin of the Department for External Relations, *Moscow Patriarchate, Российский Парламент выступил с заявлением о дискриминации православных верующих в Эстонии* [The Russian parliament issued a statement on discrimination against pro-Orthodox believers in Estonia], 2001/6,

Metropolitan Kirill not only a manifestation of willingness in defending patriots, but an important step towards Russia's return to its historical role of protector of Orthodox countries, where Orthodox believers were a religious minority. It is worth to note that in talking of the meaning of this uniqueness based on the sharing of the same values, Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that for Russia, the Russian World is not an ethnic concept, but also "includes all peoples belonging to other regions but sharing the same values of social life together with the Russian people. It is Russia, which recognizes itself as Orthodox, that is capable of supporting various cultures in unity"⁵⁹⁶. This happens because over centuries Russia developed co-existence of various culture and religions, which shared the same values while retaining their religious identity. Indeed, making active attempts in order to consolidate the Russian World, both near and far abroad, inevitably Russia has to approach problems related to inter-church relations with the Orthodox World⁵⁹⁷, consisting of representatives of other nations ethnic groups.

pp. 44; Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл и митрополит Корнилий приняли участие в Министерстве иностранных дел России по проблеме нарушения прав верующих в Эстонии* [Metropolitan Kirill and Metropolitan Kornilij participated in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the problem of the violation of believers' rights in Estonia], 2001/6, pp. 46; Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *На конференции балтийских государств в Гамбурге министр иностранных дел РФ выразил позицию России по поводу нарушений прав верующих в Эстонии* [At a conference of Baltic states in Hamburg, the Russian foreign minister expressed Russia's position on violations of believers' rights in Estonia], 2001/6, pp. 47; Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Проблема ущемления прав православных верующих в Эстонии была обсуждена на встрече в рамках ОБСЕ в Гааге* [The problem of infringement of the rights of Orthodox believers in Estonia was discussed at the OSCE meeting in The Hague], 2001/6, pp. 48; Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Служба Верховного комиссара ОБСЕ по делам национальных меньшинств озабочена ситуацией Эстонской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата* [OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities is concerned about the situation of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate], 2001/6, pp. 50; Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Комиссар совета Европы по правам человека встревожен нарушениями прав православных верующих в Эстонии* [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Alarmed by Violations of the Rights of Orthodox Believers in Estonia], 2001/10, pp. 63; Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Подписан Документ об имущественных правах Эстонской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата* [Document on the Property Rights of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate], 2002/10, pp. 47.

⁵⁹⁶ "Но для России русский мир — это не этническое понятие. Русский мир включает в себя и все народы, принадлежащие к другим религиям, но разделяющие одни ценности общественной жизни вместе с русским народом. Именно Россия, осознающая себя православной, способна поддерживать в единстве различные культуры".

See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата, на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе «Россия и православный мир»* [Report by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the VIII World Russian People's Council "Russia and the Orthodox World"], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03.02.2004, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/27302/>, (last accessed August 2021).

it is interesting that in declaring this, Metropolitan Kirill referred to a concept denominated with the adjective *ruskii*.

⁵⁹⁷ In the words of Metropolitan Kirill Orthodox world corresponds with "The socio-political body of the Orthodox world is made up of the states of the Orthodox tradition, on the formation of cultures of which Orthodoxy has had a decisive influence. These are Bulgaria, Belarus, Greece, Cyprus, Moldova, the Republic of Macedonia, Russia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine. Also, the Orthodox world includes peoples that make up a religious minority in the countries of residence, but are stable cultural and ethnic formations. These include parts of the American, Arab, Albanian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Finnish and

According to a wide conception, the Orthodox civilization is a bridge between China and the West, actually it should be considered the heir of a civilization that “preserves and develops the best spiritual, philosophical, state and legal ideas of Greece, Rome, Byzantium. Orthodox civilization has created many states”⁵⁹⁸. For this reason, in the process of integration with the European Union, Russia considered itself as both leader and representative of the Orthodox World contributing to the development of an integration based on respect of Orthodox World’s own civilizational identity⁵⁹⁹. Indeed, conversations started within the World Russian People’s Council regarding the consolidation of the Orthodox World, found an expression in the discussions on human rights conducted within the tenth meeting of the forum. The meeting was held on 5 April, 2006, and chaired by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, the result of the discussions was the *Declaration on the Rights and Dignity of Man*⁶⁰⁰. During the meeting, the Minister of Culture of Russia highlighted the importance of the link among rights (and human rights) and spiritual and moral core of a country. Vsevolod Chaplin, deputy member of the DECR noted that the topic of human rights was raised in order to “avoid a conflict of civilization” (избежать конфликта цивилизаций)⁶⁰¹.

“Comparing various cultural and civilization models, we are convinced that the most dramatic differences between them lie precisely in the sphere of attitudes towards man, the understanding of the role of the human person in the world. It is quite obvious that the topic of man, his rights, freedoms and responsibility, is at the forefront of all ideological disputes about what our common future should be like, how to avoid conflicts between different nations, beliefs and traditions”, declared Metropolitan Kirill answering to questions of the weekly “Argumenty I facty”⁶⁰². He noted that with the beginning of

other peoples. Finally, a new and very dynamic element is the diaspora of Orthodox peoples, usually living in countries of the Western tradition”.

See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе* [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the VIII World Russian People’s Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/church-and-society/30419.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁵⁹⁸ «наследниками цивилизации, которая сохраняет и развивает лучшие духовные, философские, государственные и юридические идеи Греции, Рима, Византии. Православная цивилизация создала много государств», See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата, на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе «Россия и православный мир»* [Report by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the VIII World Russian People’s Council “Russia and the Orthodox World”], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03-02-2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/27302/>

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁰ Декларация о правах и достоинстве человека.

⁶⁰¹ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Состоялось заседание секции Всемирного Русского Народного Собора «Права человека и достоинство личности. Церковно-общественный взгляд»* [A meeting of the section of the World Russian People’s Council “Human rights and dignity of the individual. Church and public view”], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 05-04.2006, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30724/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁰² Argumenty I facty, № 14 – 1327, dated 5 April, 2006 quoted in: Митрополит Кирилл Ответил На Вопросы Еженедельника «Аргументы И Факты» [Metropolitan Kirill Answered The Questions Of The

the 21st century the world clearly entered the era of globalization and with it, the phase of the unrestrained expansion of Western civilizational standard. The Russian Orthodox Church was profoundly convinced of the need to arrest this process and to show that “all the diversity of God's creation cannot be reduced to one single model of existence. One civilization, even the most powerful and influential, which is today the Western civilization, will not be able to force the rest of humanity to live according to its laws, which are organically and historically motivated for itself, but not so for other peoples and cultures”⁶⁰³. He recalled the readiness of the Orthodox World to respect other people’s traditions and to share with the whole world the unique centuries-old Russian experience of building “its own multi-structured civilization”⁶⁰⁴.

Indeed, Metropolitan Kirill affirmed that this was exactly the aim of the World Russian People’s Council: affirming what human rights are, what dignity is, and what freedom is in terms of its culture and its tradition, overcoming the modern requirements met by the UN Declaration, and combining the “idea of rights and freedoms with the idea of moral responsibility”⁶⁰⁵.

The meaning and the defence of Orthodoxy as an integral part of Russian culture was discussed also during the eleventh meeting of the forum (5-7 March 2007), which reflected on the importance of studying the *Fundamentals of Orthodox culture* by school children both for students belonging to Orthodox faith, who represent the majority of the population, and for traditional religious minorities. This was considered as one of the most important principles in order to build a “tolerant society”⁶⁰⁶ that “overcome religious extremism”⁶⁰⁷, a dangerous manifestation of “spiritual and moral illiteracy”⁶⁰⁸. For this reason, the forum recognised the great importance of the Council of Europe’s initiative to address the educational potential of traditional religions which mitigates the threats of a secular educational system, based on a dangerous equality among secularist and atheistic conceptions of the word⁶⁰⁹. After the general discussion conducted by the

Argumenty I Fakty Weekly], Pravoslavie.Ru, 05-04-2006, <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/16922.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁶⁰³ “все многообразие Божьего творения не может быть сведено к одной-единственной модели существования. Одна цивилизация, пусть даже самая могущественная и влиятельная, коей сегодня является западная, не сможет заставить все остальное человечество жить по ее законам, органичным и исторически мотивированным для нее самой, но не являющимся таковыми для других народов и культур”.

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *В день открытия X Всемирного Русского Народного Собора председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы ведущего телепрограммы “Вести. Подробности” Эрнеста Мацкявичюса [Metropolitan Kirill: No religion calls people to hatred on the opening day of the 10th World Russian People's Council, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from the host of the Vesti. Details "by Ernest Matskyavichyus]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04-04-2006, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30865/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Резолюция XI Всемирного Русского Народного Собора «О преподавании Основ православной культуры в школе» [Resolution of the XI World Russian People's Council "On Teaching the Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture at School"], pravoslavie.ru, 07.03.2007, <http://pravoslavie.ru/21162.html>, (last Accessed October 2007).

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

participants of the eleventh World Russian People's Council, three resolutions were adopted: *On Teaching the Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture at School, On the Unity of the Church, On the Development of the Russian System of Religious Education and Science*⁶¹⁰.

The topic was discussed by the Council in the same year in which President Putin inaugurated the year of Russian language. The forum considered the promotion of language and literature as spiritual tank of Russia, as mean means of communication of all the people of Russia, a national priority; state and society should create the most favourable conditions in order to allow Russian Orthodox Church and other traditional religious cultural activities throughout their canonical territory. In fact, they need to be provided with guaranteed and appropriate resources, access to the educational system, armed forces, and media. These actions were considered essential in order to correct Russian historical path after the tragic events that stained the twentieth century, and to truly educate new generations of Russians according the values of the their Fatherland⁶¹¹. In this light of this, it is interesting to consider the discussions on the so-called *Russian Doctrine*, written at the initiative of a group of the Russian Entrepreneur Foundation, and based on a vision of the country inspired by a "dynamic conservatism" (динамический консерватизм)⁶¹². The participants in the hearing (20 August 2007) testified that the *Doctrine* reflected the ideology of the World Russian People's Council according to which traditional, moral, and spiritual values should inspire the economic, social and political development of Russia. Indeed, the preservation of spiritual and moral values, the support of Orthodoxy and of other traditional religions of Russia were considered the strategic tasks to pursue in the next future (in order to avoid the fall of the entire nation). This was the core of the document, and was mentioned by Metropolitan Kirill in his speech delivered during the hearing. He declared: "(Russian) state sovereignty has always been one and indivisible for all peoples living on its territory and has never been smeared over the "national sovereignty" of individual subjects. State building in Russia did not divide its indigenous peoples into "titular" and "non-titular" peoples, but at the same time proceeded from the recognition of the indisputable fact of the pivotal role of Russians in preserving the foundations of the Russian state and the rights of various nations and ethnic groups living on its territory to develop their national and cultural traditions [...]"⁶¹³.

⁶¹⁰ «О преподавании Основ православной культуры в школе», «О единстве Церкви», «О развитии отечественной системы религиозного образования и науки», see: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relation, *XI Всемирный Русский Народный Собор завершил свою работу [XI World Russian People's Council completed its work]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 07-03-2007 <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/03/35357/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶¹¹ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Соборное слово XI Всемирного Русского Народного Собора (Москва, 5-7 марта 2007 года) [Conciliar speech of the XI World Russian People's Council (Moscow, March 5-7, 2007)]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 07-03-2007, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/03/35350/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶¹² Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Итоговый протокол Соборных слушаний Всемирного Русского Народного Собора по теме «Русская доктрина» [Final Protocol of the Council Hearings of the World Russian People's Council on the topic "Russian Doctrine"]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 20-08-2007, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/08/37458/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶¹³ My translation:

However the Council, over the years from its existence, manifested full awareness of the fact that preserving the national and spiritual traditions of the Russian people cannot be solved without the modernization and the economic development of the country. The Eleventh World Russian People's Council also made a statement regarding the need of efforts in social and economic fields. First of all, it invited to pay attention to the growing financialization of the economy, that required Russia to develop its own system of monetary-currency relations so as to avoid serious changes in the world financial market resulting in a deep crisis of Russian domestic economy. According to the *Doctrine's* authors, in order to achieve this goal, the state must have the total control on the country's natural resources and energy's capacities, control finances, foreign trade and the defence industry. Additionally, they underlined the danger of uncontrolled foreign cultural ethnic enclaves' infiltration into the Russian statehood, that can destabilize the internal political situation⁶¹⁴. Results of economic development of the last decades was also the topic discussed at the seventh meeting of the Council (16-17 December 2002). The chosen theme *Faith and Labor: Spiritual and Cultural Traditions and the Economic Future of Russia*, offered a reflection on the turbulent changes occurred in the country in the last years, on benefits and difficulties brought by economic reforms. For this reason, the Council expressed its readiness to participate in the development of a code of ethics for national-economic management, in order to submit it to the discussion of state authorities, associations of workers and entrepreneurs, to be integrated in Russian legislation and internal regulations of professional and business communities. This should contribute to the creation of a fair and merciful economy, focused on the pursuing of people's wellness, and not only of money and goods⁶¹⁵.

As already said above, principles and priorities carried out by the Council were fully shared by representatives of the Kremlin, who considered preservation of spiritual and cultural identity one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century for the entire Orthodox civilization. When asked about the relation of this issue with Russian foreign policy, the minister for foreign affairs Igor Ivanov replied that we should think first of all "about the fact that the foreign policy of the state is built taking into account the objective features

«Её государственный суверенитет всегда был един и неделим для всех проживающих на её территории народов и никогда не размазывался на «национальные суверенитеты» отдельных субъектов. Государственное строительство в России не делило её коренные народы на «титутельные» и «нетитутельные», но одновременно исходило из признания неоспоримого факта стержневой роли русских в сохранении устоев Российского государства и права проживающих на её территории различных наций и этносов на развитие своих национально-культурных традиций». See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Вступительное слово митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата, на соборных слушаниях по проекту «Русская доктрина» 20 августа 2007 года, Москва* [Opening remarks by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the conciliar hearings on the "Russian Doctrine" project on August 20, 2007, Moscow], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 20-08-2007, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/08/37456/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

⁶¹⁵ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Вера и труд: духовно-культурные традиции и экономическое будущее России. 16-17 декабря 2002 года. Соборное слово VII Всемирного Русского Народного Собора* [Faith and Labor: Spiritual and Cultural Traditions and the Economic Future of Russia. December 16-17, 2002 Conciliar speech of the VII World Russian People's Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/church-and-society/30415.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

of its geopolitical position, economic and cultural systems, historical and spiritual roots. Only on this basis can a correct understanding of the country's national interests be developed"⁶¹⁶. He noted that the role of Russia in world affairs was determined by its unique place as bridge between West and East, Europe and Asia, Christian, Muslim and Buddhist worlds. This is why although firmly defending its own national interest Russia realized that in the global world, the defence of national interests means defence of other countries' national interests. In this situation, "Russia is convinced of the need to seek a solution to international problems through multilateral cooperation, in other words, on the basis of a collective - conciliar – approach"⁶¹⁷. Since in the modern era, the path to the realization of Russian national interest lies in the development of partnership with all states of the world, and only on this basis is possible to create favourable external conditions for socio-economic development, the growth of Russian citizens' wellness and the protection of their rights, Ivanov reminded that collaboration among the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian diplomacy was considered an integral part of the policy aimed to assert Russia's distinctive role in the world arena. Indeed, these close ties had their roots in a long historical tradition, that finds a concrete expression in the working group established among the two institutions in 2004 when, after more than two hundred years history, they met again. This meeting opened a new cooperation based on a common concern for the preservation and strengthening of spiritual and cultural ties with compatriots in the near and far abroad, ensuring their religious rights and freedoms, disseminating Russian spiritual and cultural values. Peacemaking, cultural, educational and charitable activities of the Russian Orthodox Church were considered by the MOFA an integral part of the efforts aimed at strengthening the authority of Russia in the world⁶¹⁸. Ivanov pointed out that Orthodox Church was becoming the center of attractions of Russian compatriots of the diaspora, and that this feeling of belonging to a common spiritual heritage and tradition was of great importance for the preservation and development of ties with the Fatherland. Therefore, "Russian world was a common cause both of the Russian State and of the Russian Orthodox Church"⁶¹⁹. After all, "Christianity, having spread in many "languages", created a single spiritual space for different peoples and cultures. This phenomenon has a great positive potential for the development of relations between Russia and the countries of the Orthodox tradition"⁶²⁰. Of course, the CIS countries had a fundamental importance for Russian foreign policy; borders of the Commonwealth almost coincide with boundaries of the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate. Indeed, in his speech, Ivanov expressed his full support to Russian Orthodox Church's efforts, to ensure interreligious peace and stability in the CIS countries. Although the collapse of the previously existing ties, the religious factor then retained its unifying

⁶¹⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С.Иванова на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе, [Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I.S. Ivanov at the VIII World Russian People's Council]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03-02-2004, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/6352/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

⁶¹⁸ One of this example was the management of situation in Estonia, the registration of the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the unblocking of the property problems.

⁶¹⁹ Поэтому собрание «русского мира» является общим делом Российского государства и Русской Православной Церкви.

⁶²⁰ Христианство, распространившись во многих «языках», создало единое духовное пространство для различных народов и культур. В этом явлении заложен большой положительный потенциал для развития отношений России со странами православной традиции.

and integrating significance, and Ukraine gave evidence of this. It is worth recalling that during a meeting with the episcopate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, President Vladimir Putin defined Orthodoxy as “an important component of unity of our people”⁶²¹. The MOFA pointed out that was exactly the spiritual community that created the basis for the construction of union with Belarus, Moldavia, Georgia, and allowed the strengthening of Russia’s ties with countries of the South Eastern Europe. This showed that the topic of relations between Russia and the Orthodox World was not theoretical, but a daily effort that saw close cooperation between the Church and the MOFA⁶²². Ivanov pointed out that “the experience of this joint work suggests that in the modern world the religious factor can and should not divide people, but, on the contrary, really contribute to the rapprochement of states and peoples and help eliminate those dividing lines that still exist or may arise in Europe and in the world”⁶²³ and that “through joint efforts we will be able to make full use of this resource for the benefit of Russia and the Russian people”⁶²⁴.

2.2.4 Russkiy Mir and the conception of Orthodoxy as soft power

Proceeding from these statements I would like to reflect upon the concepts of Russian World and of Orthodoxy as instrument inspiring foreign policy priorities. The Russkiy Mir Foundation was established in 2007 with a decree of the President of Russian Federation. As declared by V. Putin, the Foundation’s aim was the promotion of Russian language, as well as the dissemination and development of Russian’s rich cultural heritage⁶²⁵. On the

⁶²¹ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С.Иванова на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе*, [Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I.S. Ivanov at the VIII World Russian People’s Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03-02-2004, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/6352/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶²² The importance of this collaboration with the ROC, and of the conception of the Church as basis of unity and cohesion of Russia on the basis of spiritual and moral values, was also mentioned in the speech delivered by Sergey Lavrov at the Tenth World Russian People’s Council. Lavrov pointed out that the role of Russia was both pragmatic and spiritual, since there was no alternative to the coexistence of peoples and civilizations in the modern world, but the Russian Federation manifested its willingness to an open minded confrontation with the outside world in all its diversity, *ibid*.

⁶²³ «Опыт этой совместной работы говорит о том, что в современном мире религиозный фактор может и должен не разделять людей, а наоборот, реально способствовать сближению государств и народов, помогать устранению тех разделительных линий, которые еще существуют или могут возникнуть в Европе и мире». Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С.Иванова на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе* [Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I. S. Ivanov at the VIII World Russian People’s Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/church-and-society/30422.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶²⁴ «Убежден, что совместными усилиями мы сумеем в полной мере использовать этот ресурс на благо России и российского народа», *ibid*.

⁶²⁵ Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications, *Путин назначил исполнителем директором правления фонда по популяризации русского языка "Русский мир" политолога Никонова* [Russian President Vladimir Putin has appointed political scientist Nikonov as the Executive Director of the board of the Russian Language Promotion Foundation "Russkiy Mir"], fapmc.gov.ru, 25-06-2007, <https://fapmc.gov.ru/slabovid/newsandevents/media/2007/06/item2983.html>, (last Accessed August 2021).

Foundation's website⁶²⁶ we can read that the Russian World "is not only Russians, not only our compatriots in the countries of near and far abroad, emigrants, immigrants from Russia and their descendants. It also includes foreign citizens who speak Russian, study or teach it, all those who are sincerely interested in Russia, who are worried about its future"⁶²⁷. It continued declaring that "all strata of the Russian world - multi-ethnic, multi-confessional, socially and ideologically heterogeneous, multicultural, geographically segmented - are united through the awareness of their involvement in Russia. By shaping Russkiy Mir as a global project, Russia is acquiring a new identity, new opportunities for effective cooperation with the rest of the world, and additional impulses for its own development"⁶²⁸. As we saw above, in the words of Metropolitan Kirill and Patriarch Aleksii, the expression Russian World refers to a community based on the Orthodox faith and on Russian culture, on the historical memory, a model of moral, social, economic development, a conception of human rights based on the protection of individuals and of their own cultural roots. This description had two logical consequences: the presentation of Russia as a distinctive civilization with its own set of values different from the Western ones. Curanovic noted that in Russian conception, Western values do not always coincide with European values but, Russia considered itself as the defender of old, true European values. In addition, as we saw above, Russia considers itself the leader of Slavic Orthodox civilization whose borders coincide with the Russian World⁶²⁹. The second consequence is the conception of Orthodoxy as soft power⁶³⁰. Marlene Laruelle wrote that Russia deploys what can be defined niche soft power, resulting from "microtargeting" some specific audiences based on Russian culture, history, Soviet legacy and its status today. In her perspective, this strategy was the result of an analysis of Russia weakness and strengths, dangers and opportunities, emerged from the awareness of the country's limited outreach capacity compared to US soft power, both in financially terms and in terms of brand and cultural capacities to export worldwide. Moreover, it reflect the decentralized nature of Russia's soft power, resulting from its configuration as a state with a multitude of non-state actors involved, to different degree, in promoting Russia abroad, having sometimes thin relations with governmental structures of those countries. It is exactly these features that confirmed the existence of Russian soft power, a resource that results from the combination of classic diplomacy conducted by state actors, as well as new public diplomacy conducted by non-governmental organizations, foundations, oligarchs, ideological entrepreneurs and also celebrities promoting the country's image abroad and communicating with foreign publics. Thus, the analysis of

⁶²⁶ See the official website of Russkiy Mir Foundation, <https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/>.

⁶²⁷ Русский мир, информационный портал Фонда Русский мир [Russian World, informational portal of the Russian World Foundation], ruskiymir.ru, <https://ruskiymir.ru/fund/> (last accessed October 2021).

⁶²⁸ «Русский мир — это не только русские, не только россияне, не только наши соотечественники в странах ближнего и дальнего зарубежья, эмигранты, выходцы из России и их потомки. Это ещё и иностранные граждане, говорящие на русском языке, изучающие или преподающие его, все те, кто искренне интересуется Россией, кого волнует её будущее. Все пласты Русского мира — полиэтнического, многоконфессионального, социально и идеологически неоднородного, мультикультурного, географически сегментированного — объединяются через осознание причастности к России. Формируя «Русский мир» как глобальный проект, Россия обретает новую идентичность, новые возможности эффективного сотрудничества с остальным миром и дополнительные импульсы собственного развития», *Ibid*.

⁶²⁹ Suslov Mikhail, *Holy Rus'*.

⁶³⁰ Nye Joseph, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, PublicAffairs, 2004.

Laruelle revealed that Russia is an example of a non-universalistic conception of soft power, that merges both state and non-state's efforts in building, not necessarily in a coordinating way, a positive image of Russia. This niche soft power referred to the promotion of conservatism whose core is represented by the so-called traditional values, against cultural liberalism promoting gender equality, LGBT+ rights, gender change issues, sovereignty of the state against the liberal, multilateral world conception. Indeed, conservatism was a dominant component of Russian society in 1990s; this notion, gradually elaborated by the Kremlin, was mostly built as a counter-experience to the liberalism experienced by the country at the beginning of the decade – erected as the tip of what Russia should avoid again. Since the beginning of the second half of 2000s the domestic experience of liberal shock therapy had been associated with the so-called liberal world⁶³¹, which ranked Russia as a second tier power⁶³². From the very start of Putin's regime, the main aim was to demonstrate that his government would not be the same as Yeltsin's; authorities wanted to show not only that they opposed surrendering international positions, but also rejected the rule of repressive oligarchs and bureaucratic chaos. Conversely, the political regime formulated the goals of re-establishing the vertically integrated state power, regaining internationally prestige in international policies⁶³³. This conservatism was a synonym for centrism (sovereign democracy/managed democracy), counter-revolutionary (opposed to coloured revolutions, and any form of external interference in state management), stability (key word after the abrupt changes occurred in the 90s). On the international scene, Russia's conservative response to the West was rooted in an older ideological antagonism, that was actually nothing new, but less structured doctrinally in comparison to communism, and that took -significant inspiration from communism when it came to defining tradition and values⁶³⁴.

This description clearly shows that Orthodoxy, its identitarian role as unitarian element both for Russians who lived in Russia, and minorities who lived abroad, targeted through the idea of a shared membership in a Russian World, is one of the so-called niches of Russian soft power. Moreover, as seen above, religious sentiment had an influence on relations with Orthodox countries and communities. In the Middle East the Russian Orthodox Church had conducted active para-diplomatic activities among Eastern Christians, helping the government to frame its geopolitical return in the region in spiritual terms, as a civilizational mission. The same happened in Lebanon and more globally in the Balkans, in China and Japan. The Russian Orthodox Church shaped Russia's foreign policy agenda in several ways: using the influence of the State to advocate for the concerns of Orthodox Christians throughout the world, even if they are not Russian citizens – this aspect is in keeping with the pluricultural and transnational character of the ROC; promoting Christian moral and social values in international fora, either by itself or in conjunction with other religions (close ties had been forged with the Roman Catholic Church, with Islamic communities in Egypt and Iran). Where there is not a direct access to

⁶³¹ See: Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, kremlin.ru, 20-02-2007, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁶³² Laruelle Marlene, *Russia's Niche Soft Power Sources, Targets and Channels of Influence*, Ifri, 122, 2021, pp. 6-27.

⁶³³ Okara Andrei, *Sovereign Democracy: A New Russian Idea Or a PR Project?*, Russia in Global Affairs, 3, 2007, <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/sovereign-democracy-a-new-russian-idea-or-a-pr-project/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶³⁴ See Stoeckl Kristina, *European integration and Russian Orthodoxy*.

these, the Church turned to Russian media, to public international platforms like RT or Sputnik, that allowed it to promote its agenda; presenting the larger cultural identity it saw itself to have inherited from Kievan Rus, which is among the most important of the country's national interests promoted by the state.

Although the use of the term Russian World as defining community of Orthodox Christians living in unity of faith, traditions and customs goes back to at least the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was re-purposed as political concept in the early 1990s by Pyotr Shedrovitsky, an influential political consultant interested in the role that cultural symbols could play in politics. According to Shedrovitsky, the creation of a network of mutually reinforcing social structures in the former Soviet States, among people who speak in Russian, could be politically advantageous to Russia. "Let us venture to say that the more people and communities in the world need the Russian Federation, the more stable the country is. The more world problems are expressed, and possibly solved, in the framework of the Russian language, the more the cultural and human resources of the Russian World will be in demand. The paradox of the current situation is that any country that claims to be a world power seeks not only to satisfy the interests of its citizens, but also to work in the interests of citizens of other states and countries. The more individual citizens of other states need Russia, the more stable Russia's position in the world is. Russian statehood can and should look for the foundations of stability and necessity within the Russian World, in the policy of constructive development of its global networks"⁶³⁵. As used by the State, the expression *Russkiy Mir* is typically a political and cultural concept, to which Russian government referred to strengthen the country's domestic stability, to restore its international role, and increase its influence in the neighboring states. However, as used by the Russian Orthodox Church it is a religious concept, essential for the preservation of its canonical territory. Over the course of the past decades, the purely secular and pragmatic vision of the *Russkiy Mir* evolved from cultural to more political and even strategic, while the religious component might be stronger but still complementary.

⁶³⁵ «..Рискнем утверждать: чем большему числу людей и сообществ в мире нужна РФ-Россия, тем она устойчивее. Чем большее число мировых проблем получит свое выражение, а возможно, и решение в рамках русского языка, тем более востребованными будут культурные и человеческие ресурсы русского мира. Парадокс сегодняшней ситуации состоит в том, что любая страна, претендующая на статус мировой державы, стремится не только к удовлетворению интересов своих граждан, но и к работе в интересах граждан иных государств и стран. Чем большему числу отдельных граждан других государств нужна Россия, тем устойчивее позиции России в мире. Основы устойчивости и нужности формирующаяся русская государственность может и должна искать в пределах русского мира, в политике конструктивного развития его мировых сетей». See: *Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Русский мир. Возможные цели самоопределения [Russian world. Possible goals of self-determination]*, 14, 2000.

3.

Inter-Church relationship and its implications in Russia's international relations: Ukraine's independence and the origin of the crisis in faith.

This brief introduction offers a presentation of the religious scenario of the country in the years immediately after the recognition of the Ukrainian state's independence, introducing events but especially the protagonists of the twenty-year period in which issues of autocephaly, ecclesiastical unity, were bound up with political autonomy, the role of Ukraine on the international stage, civil religious rights, fights for freedom of belief. At same time it highlights the character of the involvement of Russia in the Ukrainian religious and political narratives, whose roots reach back to the heritage of the Baptism of Vladimir in 988, and Ukraine's historical self-conception as the base of Holy Rus.

On 29-30 August 1990, a sub-commission⁶³⁶ of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church met in Kiev in order to discuss the issue of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's autonomy. During his meeting with the President of the Council for Religious Affairs, Nikolaj Afanacevich Kolesnikov, Metropolitan Kolesnik, reflected upon the seriousness of the Russian Orthodox Church' split in Ukraine, and on the importance of unifying the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church⁶³⁷, and the Ukrainian Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. He highlighted the Russian native roots of the Ukrainian Church, and urged the decision on the concession of autonomy in order to allow an outflow of the Autocephalists. In the same meeting, Metropolitan Filaret highlighted the need to see the issue from an historical perspective going back to the time of Petr Mogila. He declared that the autonomy of the Ukrainian Church should have relations with the Moscow Patriarchate and with all the Orthodox Churches. In his opinion, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, connected with the Ecumenical Patriarchate since the time of Saint Vladimir, would never be an autocephalous Church. Indeed, only the Mother Church can grant autocephaly, recognized by all the other Orthodox Churches; this meant that autocephaly proclaimed by Bondurak had to be considered non-canonical⁶³⁸. After the election of Mstyslav as Patriarch of the UAOC, the Russian Orthodox Church decided to grant more autonomy, though not full independence, to its Church in Ukraine.

⁶³⁶ The president of the Commission was Metropolitan of Krutischi and Kolomenschi Iuvenali, the secretary was C. N., Skobei. In addition the sub-commission was formed by Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia, Filarete, Archbishop of Ivan-Francus and Kolomischi Feodosi, Archbishop Ternopolschi and Kremenischi Lazar, bishop of Pinschi and Drogobischni Andrei, archpriest Petr Vlodek, Rector of the Kiev Theological Seminary.

⁶³⁷ *Дневник. Пребывания в Киеве 8-членной Подкомиссии Священного Синода РПЦ по вопросам расширения самостоятельности Украинской Православной церкви (УП) 29-30 августа 1990 г. [DIARY. The staying in Kiev of the 8-members of the Subcommittee of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the issues of expanding the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (USH) on August 29-30, 1990], 05 September 1990, pp. 2-15 (Documents from the archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).*

⁶³⁸ Справка. Об Украинской Православной Церкви. 1990 – 1994 гг. [Information. About the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. 1994-1994], 13 May 2014, pp. 2-6, (Documents from the archive of Metropolitan Sobodan).

The status changed from exarchate into the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate, thus indicating its communion with the Moscow Patriarchate. The new status meant that the Synod of the UOC-MP could govern the Church independently, and this move was viewed as a good compromise among believers who wanted to be more an Ukrainian Church and those who wanted to remain in communion with Moscow. However, when it became clear that Ukraine would become an independent state⁶³⁹, the call for an autocephalous Church grew louder as well. Some UAOC's bishops addressed the UOC-MP asking them to break ties with Moscow and joining them in restoring the historical Church of Kiev as Patriarchate. This created tensions not only in the UAOC – not everyone was happy to have contacts with Metropolitan Filaret, indeed Filaret himself, by the end of 1991, demanded from the Moscow Synod that the UOC-MP become autocephalous⁶⁴⁰. The Extraordinary Bishops' Council convened in Moscow from 31 March to 4 April 1992, discussed this Ukrainian Orthodox Church's appeal to grant the maximal status of autonomy, that is autocephaly, to his Church. The Council noted that after October 1990, when the Ukrainian Orthodox Church received independence in self-administration, the inter-church and inter-confessional situation in Ukraine did not change, conversely the threat of new divisions appeared in the Ukrainian religious landscape. Moreover, the Council was unanimous in declaring that Metropolitan Filaret, Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, had the largest part of responsibility for what was happening in the country. During the press-conference held on 14 April at the "Ukrinformagentstvo" in Kiev, Metropolitan Filaret declared that the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church violated the *Statute* of the administrations of the Russian Orthodox Church as well as the Regulations; he pointed out that "the blow in the fight against granting independence to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was directed against him, since he was the main spring moving the Church towards its full canonical independence"⁶⁴¹ and that "at the Council he was forced to make statement about his retreat but he cannot leave his duties since he was responsible for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church before God"⁶⁴². These statements provoked a strictly negative reaction in the broad circles of Churches' public opinion: many parishes stopped commemorating Metropolitan Filaret at worships, and the clergy of the parishes of Odessa addressed his petition to the Patriarch with a request to accept the monastery of Assumption directly to the Patriarchal jurisdiction as well as the whole plenitude of the diocese of Odessa and

⁶³⁹ Lukianiuk Volodymyr, Проголошення незалежності України [Declaration of independence of Ukraine], Цей День В Історії, <https://www.jnsm.com.ua/h/0824M/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁴⁰ Bremer Thomas, "Religion in Ukraine: Historical Background and the Present Situation", in Krawchuk Andrii, Bremer Thomas, *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, Springer Nature, Springer International Publishing, 2016; Denysenko Nicholas, *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine*. pp. 3-19.

⁶⁴¹ Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], Message from Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Episcopate, Clergy and Lay Believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 7-5-92, pp. 3-4. Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sobodan. Original translation in English.

⁶⁴² Ibid.

Izmail. On 30 April, in Zhitomir the meeting of bishops, clergy, monks, representatives of Orthodox fellowships, and laymen of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place. At this gathering, Metropolitan Filaret's declarations were severely criticized; he was even accused of blackmailing the Bishops' Council and of violating its solemn oath. On 17 April, Patriarch Aleksii sent a letter to Metropolitan Filaret, with a request of clarifying whether the information spread out through the mass media about the change of his decision to leave the duties of the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church corresponded to reality. The official answer to this request, as well as the answer to the invitation to take part in a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on 6 May were not received⁶⁴³.

These are the events that led to the Council of Karchov (27-28 May 1992) where Filaret was defrocked and Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan was nominated new Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. In a conversation conducted with Patriarch Filaret in February of last year, he confirmed that the events were determined by political affairs and by the intention to not allow the formation of an independent Church in Ukraine, although he clearly pointed out that since Ukraine became an independent state, it should be expected to gain also ecclesiastical independence. With respect to the letter of resignation he signed, he stated that during the Soviet period, under the unity of the Communist Party, there was an unspoken division between the Politburo and the KGB (where Nikodim Kratov played an important role). For the election to the post of Patriarch, Aleksii was the candidate of the KGB, and Filaret was the candidate of Poliburo. This stance of the KGB was due to Filaret's refusal, which came out during a conversation, to obey them in matters of faith and church. Upon Filaret's declaration that he would not recognize the KGB's overriding religious authority, the security agency reacted by putting a gun against him and threatening to shoot him. This happened in 1952, while Stalin was still alive.

Nevertheless, his candidacy fell when he decided to sign the letter against the revolution conducted by Kharchev Konstantin Mikhailovich, who begun to remove all the members from the Synod. It happened that Filaret, along with others members (Aleksii as well), signed a letter against this "revolution". Going against Kharchev caused him to fall out of favor with the Poliburo. According to Filaret, this meant that the KGB strongly influenced the election of the Patriarch, because there was no alternative to its role⁶⁴⁴. During an

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ From the interview to Patriarch Filaret made, on 28 February 2020, at his residency together with Sergei Chapnin. Min. 63.43-67.10. "[...]"[...] когда Харчев начал менять постоянных членов синода, первым, кого удалили из Синода, был Филарет. У Харчева был план, все они: Алексей, Ювеналий и Владимир [...] Все они были удалены указами Патриарха, а затем КГБ сообщил членам Синода, что они тоже должны быть удалены. и они написали знаменитое письмо и обратились ко мне с просьбой подписать его, и я его подписал. [...] Почему вы подписали? если бы вы не подписали, вы были бы Патриархом, и вы подписали это. И почему вы подписали? Я сказал (ему): Я подписал, потому что вы действовали не по церковным канонам. вы нарушаете церковную традицию, церковные каноны. церковная традиция с тех пор, как ты нарушил, я говорил против тебя. вам не следовало этого делать. а потом он сказал мне, что если бы вы не подписали, то это письмо было расценено как бунт синода против патриарха [...] поэтому вы спрашиваете меня, почему; я тоже был местоблюстителем и выступал за единство церкви, почему я выступал за единство церкви. потому что я знал, что если бы существовало единое государство, Советский Союз и советские власти не допустили бы

interview with Filaret, Sergei Chapnin insisted on asking him why he signed that letter, highlighting that if he did not sign it, he would have retained the possibility to become the new Patriarch; Filaret stated that he signed it first of all because Kharchev did not act according church canons and traditions, and because he firmly believed that building another autocephalous Church in the Soviet Union was not possible because Soviet government would have destroyed it, but since Ukraine became an independent State,

существования на своей территории другой автокефальной православной церкви, поскольку она уничтожила автокефалию в 30-е годы, уничтоженную во второй раз в 43-м. [...]. Мы не объявляли себя автокефальной церковью на поместном соборе, но решили, что церковь должна быть автокефальной. и обратился к патриарху Московскому и всем епископам с просьбой согласиться на автокефалию Украинской церкви. и тогда, если бы русская церковь пошла правильным путем, как другие государства Болгария Румыния Сербия. если бы они пошли этим путем, то не было бы той проблемы, которая сейчас существует в православии". Когда его спросили, был ли у него разговор с Патриархом Алексеем, и чтобы подтвердить, что не было критики или отказа, а просто молчание, он сказал: да, я не хотел, но я получил это обращение для рассмотрения на архиерейском соборе, затем они начали рассматривать не апелляции по существу обращения об автокефалии Украинской церкви, но они начали уговаривать меня, чтобы убедить меня отказаться от Киевской кафедры. Мне сказали, что в любом отделении Украины в России, где угодно, только не в Киеве. и поэтому архиерейский собор не был посвящен рассмотрению вопроса об автокефалии, а дал Украине возможность иметь автокефалию. в связи с возникновением государства. или нет, этот вопрос не рассматривался. и они пытались убедить меня добровольно отказаться. а когда я добровольно не отказался, они стали обвинять меня во всевозможных грехах, в том, что у меня якобы есть жена, есть дети и что я такой жестокий. и почему тогда, если я. Я не аморальный человек, у меня есть семья. почему бы не посадить митрополита за то, что у него есть семья, и не убрать его с кафедры? нужно было сделать то же самое, но они сделали это по-другому. они попросили меня отказаться от себя. так что целесообразность была, нужно доказать, что целесообразность есть. и причина была в том, что я выступаю за автокефалию, за отделение Украинской Церкви от Московского Патриархата. но скажи так, и. резолюция собора состояла в том, чтобы выразить благодарность митрополиту Филарету. если вы благодарны, значит, вы не нашли ничего плохого, но спасибо вам дополнительно. сама эта доброта указывает на то, что у меня нет никаких негативных причин для ухода. поэтому они попросили об этом добровольно. и у нас в уставе есть концепция, что хорошо, что я был избран примасом на всю жизнь. а потом было постановление архиерейского собора о рассмотрении вопроса об автокефалии Украинской церкви. на следующем местном совете, как и после этого Карельского совета, был прием, и премьер - министр Советского Союза был на этом приеме. кто был там премьер-министром? затем они живут там постоянно. поэтому он поблагодарил Патриарха Алексия за сохранение единства церкви. чего они не могли сделать как государство. это главная причина, по которой сейчас идет борьба за Украину. как по линии церкви, так и по линии штата. есть только одна причина подчинить Украину России, как это было более трех веков назад. вот в чем причина. так что эта сила любит ее в церкви, что и стало причиной разделения на восточную и западную церкви. это вершина разделенной любви, которая затем привела к смене аргументов. так что сейчас сила любви не к Московскому патриарху, вообще не к Москве это приводит к тому, что она к этому не ведет, а приводит к тому, что Православие тоже можно разделить надвое на две части, и вы видите, и сейчас мы находимся в таком состоянии". (min. 41.57- 56.35) «не знаю вы знаете или не знаете но я знаю что в верхах в верхах советской власти при единстве коммунистической партии было разделение негласное между политбюро и кgb. и никодим кротов на этом очень хорошо играл в свое время. так вот я был кандидатом от политбюро а алексей был кандидатом. почему я не был кандидатом. потому что с самого начала контакты мои. я сказал что я подчиняться вам не буду. в вопросах веры и церкви не буду подчиниться. меня тогда пистолет положили сказали может мы можем расстрелять вас. в какие же годы такое было. это был второй сталин еще был [...] поэтому они знали что я не буду выполнять их требования если они противоречат интересам церкви и божьим законам. я не буду этого делать. они знали это и поэтому с таким патриархом не хотели сотрудничать. и поэтому вы сошлись с характером который не был ставленником кgb. так вот в харченко он же был от политбюро. поэтому он и выдвигал меня а меня выдвигала в политбюро. а когда я пришел против харченко то это отпал. то есть кgb оказалось в ситуации выборов патриарха сильнее сильнее потому что не было альтернативы его духовного».

the time had arrived to build an autocephalous Church in the country. I think it is worth highlighting this aspect, because the Patriarch confirmed that in the Soviet Union the Church was under the control of the State and of the Services (Специальная служба) and although there were ideas of forming independent Churches, no plans were developed (he confirmed this statement that Sergey Chapnin reported from his conversation with Konstantin Mikhailovich Kharchenko), because the principle of Church unity was one of the main principles driving Soviet policy. But in the 90s, although he had been one of the most obedient Soviet bishops, he nonetheless started to fight for an independent Church because he believed that to be the right path to follow after gaining national independence, as had happened in other States (Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia).

The Council of Kharkov

The Kharkov Bishops' Council was held on 27-28 May 1992 in the bishop's residence of the territory of the Pokrovsky Monastery in Kharkiv. The Council was convened by the oldest hierarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Nikodim of Kharkiv and Bogodukhov, to discuss the situation developed in connection with the schism in Ukraine. The Ukrainian bishops then elected the Metropolitan Vladimir of Rostov and Novocherkassk as Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, who was blessed by the Patriarch of Moscow Aleksii⁶⁴⁵. According to representatives of the schismatic group, the Council was convened in total misreading of the canonical precepts (rules: 6th First Ecumenical Council; 19th 4th Ecumenical Council, 16th and 19th Antioch Council)⁶⁴⁶, and of Canon 34 of the Holy Apostles according to which "the bishops of every nation must acknowledge him who is first among them and account him as their head, and do nothing of consequence without his consent; but each may do those things only which concern his own parish, and the country places which belong to it. But neither let him (who is the first) do anything without the consent of all; for so there will be unanimity, and God will be glorified through the Lord in the Holy Spirit"⁶⁴⁷. The Russian Orthodox Church pointed out that in that moment the oldest bishop by consecration took over the governance of the Church and convened the Bishops' Council, which was done by His Eminence Nikodim, Metropolitan of Kharkov and Bogodukhov. This confirmed, according the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, that the Kharkov Council was held in perfect accordance with

⁶⁴⁵ Patriarchia.ru, *В Киево-Печерской Лавре отпраздновали шестнадцатую годовщину Харьковского Собора [The Kiev Pechersk Lavra celebrated the sixteenth anniversary of the Kharkiv Cathedral]*, 28-05-2008.

⁶⁴⁶ Evseeva Tatiana, *Архієрейський Собор УПЦ в Харкові [UOC'Archbishops Council in Karkhov]*, *Цей День В Історії*, <https://www.jnsm.com.ua/h/0527T/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁴⁷ «епископам всякого народа подобает знати первого в них и признавати его яко главу и ничего превышающего их власть не творить без его рассуждения». See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Синода Украинской Православной Церкви по случаю десятой годовщины Харьковского Архиерейского Собора 1992 года [Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops' Council in 1992]*, [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84087/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84087/), (last accessed August 2021).

the Holy Canons and with the *Charter of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church*⁶⁴⁸. During the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the Council, Aleksii mentioned that participants in the Council had a huge responsibility: separating truth from falsehood, not succumbing to external pressure, thus preserving the canonicity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, expelling the schismatic Filaret (Denisenko)⁶⁴⁹. The acting chairman of the State Committee of Ukraine for Nationalities and Religions G.D. Popov, noted that the Council of 1992 “laid the foundation for the large-scale activity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church”, outlining the fundamental principles of the “interpretation of national and church history”⁶⁵⁰. Metropolitan Kirill emphasized that the providence of the decision taken in the Council was especially felt by participants in the celebrations, when they looked at Metropolitan Vladimir blessing President and Prime Minister of Ukraine. He added “when you stood between two political leaders, as the personification of the thousand-year spiritual tradition of the people, as the personification of the reconciling mission of the Church, it was obvious that the stronger Christian values are in the minds of people, including politicians, the more peace and harmony there will be in society”⁶⁵¹. He added two other important things: that such an event was difficult to imagine about fifteen years earlier, and that the past fifteen years determined not only the “fate of Orthodoxy in Ukraine at the turn of the century and for the next decades”⁶⁵², but also the “main trends in church-state relations and inter-church relations in Ukraine”⁶⁵³.

According to article 35 of the Constitution which set forth principles of state-church relations in Ukraine, “The Church and religious organizations in Ukraine are separated from the State, and the school – from the Church. No religion shall be recognized by the State as mandatory”⁶⁵⁴. This means that Ukraine declared itself a secular state which would not intervene in the life of religious communities unless they asked for its protection. The principle imposed a reflection on the issue of secularity and on its conception in Eastern European countries. Ukraine was the successor of both the Russian Empire and Soviet Union and heir of a separate Ukrainian tradition, whose foundations laid down in the time of Kievan Rus, and in particular since Rus became Christian in the tenth century. Three aspects here deserve particular attention.

⁶⁴⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Послание Синода Украинской Православной Церкви по случаю десятой годовщины Харьковского Архиерейского Собора 1992 года* [Message from the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Kharkov Council of Bishops in 1992], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84087/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁶⁴⁹ Sedmina.ru, *Украинская Православная церковь отмечает 15-летие Харьковского Архиерейского Собора* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church celebrates the 15th anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops' Council], 21.05.2007.

⁶⁵⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Киеве прошли торжества по случаю 15-летия Харьковского Архиерейского Собора* [Celebrations on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops' Council were held in Kiev], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/69280/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁶⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁴ Druzenko Gennadiy, “Religion and the Secular State in Ukraine”, In J. Martínez-Torrón & W. C. Durham Jr. (Eds.), *Religion and the secular state: Interim national reports*, Provo: International Center for Law and Religion Studies, 2010, pp. 724

The Dnieper baptismal font was considered the source of Holy Russia, the Motherland of Russian Orthodox Church's civilization space. Kiev enjoys, from the perspective of the Russian Orthodox Church, a special connection with Russia but is also the spiritual center of the whole Orthodox World. In his speech before the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held in 2008, Metropolitan Vladimir brought up the theory of Samuel Huntington according to which Ukraine is a country formed by two different cultures. In Ukraine it is possible to see two different poles of civilization, the eastern and the western. The first one corresponding to the left side of Dnieper was the result of interaction with the Russian culture, the latter, on the right side of the river, was the result of the interaction with Austrian, Polish, Lithuanians and other European cultures. These two communities, in the perspective of the head of the Ukrainian Church of the Moscow Patriarchate were tied together by a unique font: the Baptism of Vladimir⁶⁵⁵. The core of the issue led exactly here: the claim to unilateral appropriation of this Baptism's inheritance. Not only because to division among Ukraine of the right side (правобережная) and Ukraine of the left side (левобережная), additional divisions are added: the significant numbers of Russian-speaking Ukrainians, the presence of ethnic Russians in Eastern Ukrainian territories, the existence of other Ukrainian regions with their particular identities (Galizia, Transcarpazia, Crimea, Bucovina). Adriano Roccucci wrote that regarding Ukraine the main question has been understanding where legitimacy of a Ukrainian state lay and how its separation from the Russian State should be considered, given that this territory is mainly home to a Russian population or, at the very least, to a Slavic population culturally oriented toward Russia. He defined this aspect "an historical paradox that allow the understanding of the complexity of Ukrainian issue"⁶⁵⁶. From this perspective, I think that the angle from which the issue should be approached is considering that the Baptism of Vladimir happened in the city of Kiev, capital of the Rus. Indeed, "Kiev is neither Russian nor Ukrainian, but is Russian-Ukrainian"⁶⁵⁷, and referring to it as mother of all the Russian cities means referring to it as "Mother of cities which came from Rus"⁶⁵⁸. Seeing the issue from this perspective, would allow understanding why the Baptism, while united all people of these cities, does not justify the subjection of Kiev to Russia. Aside from historical and cultural ties with Russia, it does not establish a connection on the basis of which is possible to think to this city and Ukraine as part of Russia⁶⁵⁹. Roberto Morozzo della Rocca wrote that it was not possible

⁶⁵⁵ «Украинское Православие на рубеже эпох. Вызовы современности, тенденции развития». Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 г. ["Ukrainian Orthodoxy at the turn of the epochs. Modern challenges, development trends". Report of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2008], pravoslavie.ru, 25-06-2008, «Украинское Православие на рубеже эпох. Вызовы современности, тенденции развития». Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 г. / Православие.Ru (pravoslavie.ru) , (last accessed June 2021).

⁶⁵⁶ Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca.*, p. 265. My translation.

⁶⁵⁷ Merlo Simona. *All'ombra delle cupole d'oro.* pp.17.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ A recent sociological analysis conducted by Sergey Bortnik among Ukrainians, confirms that the issue of legacy/succession is still very important, although sometimes perceived in an "abstract" way. See: Academic Initiative, On the succession of Kievan Rus and common space of Ukraine with Russia: analysis of

to imagine a fading of religious identity in Eastern Europe, and that referring to these territories it is not possible to think of secularization and globalization as processes similar to those in Western societies. "Religious identity will continue to be strong, because they are the basis of national identity. It won't be possible to conceive of a process of national development without religious identity until the day when Russian will mean Orthodox, Polish will mean Catholic, Serbs will mean Orthodox, Croatian will mean Catholics, Bosnian will mean Muslims and so on...Therefore, in order to live together not the fading these identities will be important, but rather the acceptance of and respect for each other as you are"⁶⁶⁰. It follows that in the case of Kiev the crux of the issue is the fighting for the appropriation of one identity, and for an interpretation of it that can legitimate this appropriation. The role of Kiev as cradle of Orthodox Christianity lies at the core of Russian history as well as of Ukrainian nation building, in a rhetoric of interplay between ecclesiastical and national independence. Patriarch Filaret stated several times that once the Ukrainian State became independent, it was important to have a united, autocephalous Church. Metropolitan Kirill highlighted that the fall of the Soviet Union, where several people lived together in a unique and united cultural, spiritual and geographical space, was perceived by some as a real tragedy⁶⁶¹. Indeed, the collapse of the Union corresponded to the collapse of this common space, home not to ethnic Russians but to that single population, whose ancestors were baptized in the Dnieper. For this reason he strongly promoted the idea of a unification of the three main Slavic states – Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. The idea of unification of the three states was proposed as a measure to reform part of that space, whose partition had been interpreted as a manifestation of democracy, on one hand, but from the perspective of Russia, on the other, was viewed simply as the dissolution of a single community, equated to the division of a family.

The rebirth of the Greek – Catholic Church, which Soviet authorities in 1946 incorporated within the Moscow Patriarchate⁶⁶², caused deep tensions among the Catholic Church and the Moscow Patriarchate. These tensions developed on the wake of the already existing problems connected with proselytism, but became more serious because of the status of believers in the regions of Lviv, Ivano-Frankovsk and Ternopol, where the biggest part of believers belonged to the Greek-Catholic Church which reclaimed buildings that had previously belonged to its Church. The participation of the Uniates in the narrative of the Baptism was testified to by the participation of the Greek-Catholic Church in the celebration for the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of the Rus. This gesture was not insignificant considering the proposal advanced by the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church to include this holiday among the date of public state celebrations,

sociological data. Foundation for supporting academic theology in Ukraine, On the succession of Kievan Rus and common space of Ukraine with Russia: analysis of sociological data, [https://www.academic-](https://www.academic-initiative.org.ua/en/2021/08/19/common_space_of_ukraine_with_russia/?fbclid=IwAR1Rt6SFhkKv6ndXaLE81eA6HI-i-PqeZIEv7fkbIj-EjK0YbuWd419Z03o)

[initiative.org.ua/en/2021/08/19/common_space_of_ukraine_with_russia/?fbclid=IwAR1Rt6SFhkKv6ndXaLE81eA6HI-i-PqeZIEv7fkbIj-EjK0YbuWd419Z03o](https://www.academic-initiative.org.ua/en/2021/08/19/common_space_of_ukraine_with_russia/?fbclid=IwAR1Rt6SFhkKv6ndXaLE81eA6HI-i-PqeZIEv7fkbIj-EjK0YbuWd419Z03o), (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁶⁰ Morozzo Della Rocca, *Nazione e religione in Europa orientale prima e dopo il 1989*, pp. 30.

⁶⁶¹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church 8 November 2000*, mospat.ru, 08-11-2000, В Москве завершил работу Съезд славянских народов Беларуси, России, Украины: новость ОБЦС (mospat.ru), (last accessed August 2021).

along with the day of Slavic Literature and Culture celebrated on the feasts of Saints Cyril and Methodius Equal to the Apostles. At the same time it is important to keep in mind the strong disappointment of the Moscow Patriarchate with the plan of moving the See of the Greek-Catholic Church from Lviv to Kiev, and with the idea of establishing a Greek-Catholic Patriarchate in order to strengthen the status of Ukrainian Catholicism and promote growth in the number of believers. Roman Nebozhuk commenting the issue of the heritage of the baptism pointed out that Kiev is one, the heritage is one, but that as declared by the Pope John Paul II during his visit to Ukraine in 2001, Kiev received its heritage both from Byzantium and from the West. As far it concerns the influence received from Byzantine, this went wider than Kiev, up to the North, the East and Vladivostok. This meant that in the perspective of the Pope the baptism of Byzantium for Kiev was not limited to the current Ukrainian State. Regarding the position of the Greek Catholic Church in this heritage, he referred to the message of the then Patriarch Lubomir Guzar, who recalled that of course Kiev had a special role, but that their Church can continue to have relations with historical realities that then developed, that is with the First Rome, the Second Rome, and with the Third. Along this path it was important remove the geopolitical aspect. Finally, these relations preserve only confessional affiliations. According to him this problem was urgent in particular from the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate which saw its relation with Kiev through the lens of religious exclusiveness, the idea according to which “the whole of Kiev belongs to only one church. It began in Kiev and continued in Moscow as the Third Rome, and in this regard no one else can claim that this is his legacy and have different approaches and position on it”⁶⁶³.

The roots of divisions in the country can be traced not only to the different interpretations of the baptism of Kiev, but also to different interpretations of national-political participation in its heritage. The statement of the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations revealed not only a different of conception of the secular theory (as has been noted above and in the first chapter), but unveiled worries of the Moscow Patriarchate that in Ukraine a friendly government was established, which recognized that the only canonical Church was the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, which had broad rights of autonomy, its Synod, its Bishops Council, and its Charter. According to the Department for External Church Relations, this statement was considered a significant result of the participation in the celebration of the Baptism of Metropolitan Vladimir and of both Presidents of Russia and of Ukraine. Indeed, Moscow considered those political organizations or political leaders who carried out meetings together with leaders of the Ukrainian Church of the Kiev Patriarchate and of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in order to realize the unification of Churches and gain the ecclesiastical independence from Moscow to be supporters of schismatic Churches. On the other hand, Patriarch Filaret expressed appreciation for Ukrainian nationalism, considering that his conception could have an exclusively negative connotation (as it did in modern times), but rather thought it referred to love for his own nation and struggle for its independence, in order to give priority to people of that

⁶⁶³

Interview with Roman Nebozhuk, done on 13 March 2020 in Kiev (McDonalds), min. 11.34 – 11.35.

country⁶⁶⁴. In Filaret's view, a negative attitude cannot be applied to this feeling, because it merely means fighting for the country where a person lived. For this precise reason, he did not see any negative feature in the nationalism of Orthodox Churches in Ukraine: this is what the heroes of Soviet Union did, as Bandera who fought for what now Ukrainians had, an independent state. And this was exactly what Ukrainian Churches continued to do: fight for an independent Church within an independent State⁶⁶⁵. Indeed, although with different degrees, political leaders had been always involved themselves in the religious events in Ukraine in this period, illustrating the idea that the concept of autocephaly⁶⁶⁶ is both a Church and political concept. Drabinko stated that Krawchuck promoted the idea of an independent Church, and perfectly understood the need to establish an independent state and an independent nation. Conversely, Kuchma was a more ideological president, a president of post-Soviet Ukraine, and although Ukraine was an independent State, it was under the strong influence of Russia. Nevertheless, he sought to follow an independent policy but actually supported the Moscow Patriarchate. The process inverted in 2000, when during the trip to the Holy Land Kuchma found himself in the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church: at that point he felt the need to have an independent Church with an independent Metropolitan. At that point the main issue was not defining its own status, but gaining the recognition of the Orthodox World, not only as an independent structure within the framework of the Moscow Patriarchate—a formula that was invented by Metropolitan Kirill. With Yuchenko

⁶⁶⁴ From the interview to Patriarch Filaret made, on 28 February 2020, at his residency together with Sergei Chapnin, min. 14-55-16.08.

⁶⁶⁵ From the interview to Patriarch Filaret made, on 28 February 2020, at his residency together with Sergei Chapnin, min. 18.03-19.05.

⁶⁶⁶ The problem of autocephaly, while relevant to this discussion, goes far beyond the limits of this chapter. In the years to which this work refers, the struggle for autocephaly was mainly discussed as an aim of the schismatic Churches which sought to reach a plan in order to establish a unified and then autocephalous Church, this means that it was not so burnt as it became after Majdan. Over the 90s, the discussions which took place in 1993 and later in 2009-2010 had a fundamental importance. At the the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission for the agenda of a Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, at that moment head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, expounded the work of the Commission in an interview to the editor-in-chief of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate, S. V. Chapnin. He stated that: "The issue of church autocephaly was already considered by the Preparatory Commission in 1993. At that time, it was agreed that autocephaly asked by a certain part of a Local Church can be granted on the basis of the consent given by the Mother Church to be followed by a search for pan-Orthodox consensus with the Patriarch of Constantinople as coordinator. It was the procedure for declaring autocephaly that came under discussion at the December meeting, and it was not an easy task to reach an agreement on this matter". He added that "the principled stand of the Russian Orthodox Church, expressed by our delegation, was that this procedure should conform to the principle of *sobornost*, traditional for the Orthodox Church, in making decisions on important common church matters. In this understanding, a Tomos on Autocephaly should be signed by the heads of all the Local Churches. The same stand was taken by the delegations of the Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian and Polish Orthodox Churches as well as the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia. At the same time, the delegations of some Churches insisted that the signature of the Ecumenical Patriarch alone was sufficient for granting autocephaly".

See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Мы достигли консенсуса в вопросе о предоставлении автокефалии». Интервью председателя ОБЦС Журнала Московской Патриархии [We have reached consensus on the autocephaly procedure' – DECR chairman's interview with the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/57316/>, (last accessed August 2021).

returned stronger the idea of unifying Orthodoxy, and with it occurred a breakthrough in relations with Patriarchate of Constantinople. The role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate can be understood by considering the competition with the Moscow Patriarchate for the hegemony in the Orthodox World. The Moscow Patriarchate claimed that for more than three centuries the Ukrainian Church was under its jurisdiction, since the Ecumenical Patriarchate passed the jurisdiction over the Metropolis of Kiev to Moscow with an Act in 1686. From the perspective of Moscow challenging such an ancient ecclesiastical document was not in agreement with the practice of Orthodox tradition. This principle found confirmation when the Moscow Patriarchate condemned Filaret for being schismatic, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate considered the issue to be one of internal affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate and agreed to pronounce the sentence of excommunication on Filaret. Conversely, the Ecumenical Patriarchate maintained its claim to be the Mother Church of Orthodox Churches in a broader sense since it gave the Orthodox faith to Ukrainians but also to Russians. Moreover, it thought that although the Act of 1686⁶⁶⁷, the Metropolis of Kiev was still under its supervision because that Act was signed because of historical circumstances: this meant that the subjection was “in trust”⁶⁶⁸ and had provisional character. Furthermore, although since 1589 the status of Patriarchate was allocated to the Metropolis of Moscow thanks to the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, the Ecumenical Patriarchate did not see this as a reason to exclude its supervision over Kiev. The Ecumenical Patriarch considered certain advantages brought about by this decision, for instance, when, after the entire synod of bishops agreed to the Union of Brest in 1596, he demonstrated his interest for the majority of Orthodox population in Ukraine who was left without a hierarchy and sent the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophanis III to consecrate new Orthodox bishops, to restore the eparchial Council of Ukraine and elect new Metropolitan with the sanction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate⁶⁶⁹. This further struggle for the identity of the Kiev Metropolia was the foothold for leaders of the two schismatic Churches who involved the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the meeting aimed to realize the unification process with the hope that Constantinople might recognize the legitimacy of a new united Church and put an end to the ecclesiastical subjection of Ukraine to Moscow. Well aware of the problems associated with the involvement of Constantinople in the Estonian issue, Moscow sought always to ensure that the Ecumenical Patriarchate would respect its canonical territory and its historical, and spiritual relation with Kiev, renouncing initiatives that could exacerbate the divisions.

The issue of political fidelity to the Church had the same degree of importance with regard to political involvement of the Kremlin, as the statement Metropolitan Kirill did during the celebration of the Baptism confirmed. This found a further confirmation in the political and economic agreement of Russia with Ukraine, and in attempts of

⁶⁶⁷ See: Čentsov Vera, *Синодальное Решение 1686 Г. О Киевской Митрополии [Synodal Decision Of 1686 About The Kiev Metropolia]*, Pravoslaviye i Tserkov, pp. 89-110; Ponkin Igor, *Opinion on act (decision), adopted by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on 11 October 2018*, Stato, Chiese e pluralimso confessionale, 2, 2019, pp. 1-11.

⁶⁶⁸ Kouskouvelis Ilias, Serafeim Pavlos, *The Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Church Crisis*, E-International Relations, 14-11 -2018, pp- 1-6.

⁶⁶⁹ Denysenko Nicholas. *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine*.

rapprochement after problems raised, for instance, in relation to the gas issue, but in the continued confirmation of the value of historical bilateral relations as declared by Medvedev in 2008: “there should be special relations between Russia and Ukraine - fraternal relations, relations based on a thousand-year history, on common values, close ties of economies, genetic ties between people”⁶⁷⁰.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Russian Orthodox Church

The first Local Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church headed by the new Primate of the UOC, Metropolitan Vladimir, was held on 26 June 1992, in the Holy Dormitory Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. The Council was attended by the entire episcopate of the UOC, representatives of the clergy, laity of all dioceses, monasteries and theological schools. The Local Council decided to recognize the Bishops' Council held in Kharkhiv on 27-28 May 1992 as canonical, and to approve all its acts and resolutions as legitimate. Moreover, the Council unanimously approved all the amendments made during the Kharkhiv Council to the text of the *Charter for the Administration of the UOC*, and testified its unwavering unity and loyalty to the Holy Ecumenical Orthodoxy. The participants in the Council unanimously condemned the activities of the former Metropolitan Filaret and confirmed the decision to release him from the post of Primate of the UOC and his ejection from the Holy Dignity. The Council stated that the election of the new Primate by secret ballot was democratic and legal, therefore his Beatitude Vladimir, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine, was recognized as the only legitimate and canonical Primate of the UOC by the Primates of All the Local Orthodox Churches of the World. In addition, the Council addressed a request to President Krawchuk to help Metropolitan Vladimir in “all the official matters to restore the order and peace in the Church”⁶⁷¹. The Council made a statement regarding the All Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council held on the day before: it was noted that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church did not send anyone and did not give anyone the authority to speak on its behalf regarding the idea of an Unification Council. Therefore, the so-called idea of an unification with UOAC did not have any relation with the UOC. In the perspective of the Ukrainian Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, this union was accomplished not on a canonical basis, but on a purely political basis and was a personal matter of Mikhail Antonovich Denisenko. In addition, the fact that the UOAC had accepted Filaret into its ranks dashed the hopes of the UOC for a dialogue with this Church regarding perspectives of unification on a canonical basis. The Council called on the unity of the entire Ukrainian Orthodox Church not to enter in any relation with the former Primate of the UOC, guilty of not having respected the Russian Orthodox Church Council's decisions.

⁶⁷⁰ Интервью ведущим российским телеканалам [Interviews with leading Russian TV channels], kremlin.ru, 24-12-2008, <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/2602>, (last accessed October 2018).

⁶⁷¹ My translation. “во всех служебных делах по наведению порядка и мира в Церкви”. See: Drabinko Alexander, *“Православие в посттоталитарной Украине” [Orthodoxy in Post-Totalitarian Ukraine]*, Kiev Theological Academy, 2002, pp. 136. (from the website of pereeslavparchia.kiev.ua).

Participants in the Council also asked to take appropriate actions to liberate the Cathedral of St. Vladimir and to return it to the believers of the UOC; unfortunately, this request was not heard. Metropolitan Vladimir recalled: “three days after my arrival, I was summoned by Staliy I., who was then the head of the Kiev city administration, through a messenger”⁶⁷². Vladimir remembered that the conversation was about the settlement of the Ukrainian split, in whose resolution Staliy was instructed to act as a conciliator. At the moment of the meeting, Metropolitan Filaret and Antony (Masendich) were probably waiting in the next room when they were called; they entered and Metropolitan Vladimir turned around and left without saying goodbye. Thus, the attempt to reconcile “through the knee”⁶⁷³ did not take place. The meaning reason of this failure was explained by Metropolitan Drabinko,: Metropolitan Vladimir’s decision was a manifestation of his will to not allow the Church to be manipulated. Indeed in a hope of finding a legal solution to the property issue, the Local Council adopted a resolution to appeal to the prosecutor’s office. The statement put forth a request to curb the illegal actions of Filaret and initiated a criminal case against him on the basis of comma 4.28 of article 86 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, which provided for “misappropriation of property and loans of the UOC in large amounts and using them for their own needs”⁶⁷⁴. Soon after a response was received in which was stated that actually there was no reason to initiate a criminal case. This letter was signed by the Deputy Prosecutor of Kiev, Senior Adviser of Minister of Justice V. B. Tantsyura in the name of the administrator of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, archbishop Zhytomyr and Ovruchsky Iov. The absence of sufficient data on the evidence of a crime in the actions of Denisenko M.A. justified the refusal, although this statement indirectly meant that the prosecutor’s office still recognized their existence. As evidence, the prosecutor’s office demanded to submit acts of audit or inventory, references to the baseless transfer of funds from the accounts of the UOC, etc. Groups against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church initiated a period against the church, the purpose of which was to destroy by force the leading structures of the UOC and transferring its properties and churches to the Church of the Kievan Patriarchate. To ideologically cover their illegal actions, the opponents of the UOC used slogans like “protect the property of the UOC from Muscovites”⁶⁷⁵, “fight for the independence of the UOC”⁶⁷⁶, “restoring historical justice with relation to the UOAC”⁶⁷⁷. The clergy and believers of the UOC, citizens of a state, declared as a democratic system, at the end of the twentieth century experienced the severity of persecutions, at level that remembered what happened during Soviet time. The faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church were recklessly declared “agents of Moscow”. In June-July 1992 a striking chronicle of events took place: on the night of 15-16 June, an attack was made on the diocesan administration and on the Cathedral of Rivne. At the same time, the faithful managed to take back the diocesan center and the Cathedral, although many people were injured. On the night of 18-19 June a well planned and well secured attack on the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra

⁶⁷² Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине.*

⁶⁷³ Ibid, p. 139.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁵ ibid

⁶⁷⁶ ibid

⁶⁷⁷ ibid

was carried out, with the aim of capturing it. The robbers were neutralized by the Kievans after the alarm sounded. UNSO armed militants inflicted serious injuries on many believers and monks. On the night of 22-23 June an attack was made on the diocesan administration in Ivano-Frankivsk. On 5 July there was an attempt to capture the Holy Dormition Pochaev Lavra, the day after a group of militants broke into the diocesan administration in Vinnytsia with the intention of seizing it. On 12 July a similar event took place in Dnepropetrovsk with the aim of seizing the Trinity Cathedral. On 18 July an attempt was made to seize the Transfiguration Cathedral in Zhytomyr. On the night of 12-13 August, the militants seized the Cathedral, the Seminary, and the Diocesan Administration in the city of Lutsk. This situation contributed to creating a gap of distrust between the UOC believers on the one hand, and the governing structures at all levels, on the other. Indeed, the UOC believers felt the disregard of their legitimate demands and the complete lack of legal forms of protections. Therefore, in order to avoid an escalation of the conflict which could lead to a violation of civil peace in Ukraine, the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Vladimir made a statement on behalf of the episcopate, clergy, and laity of the UOC, asking to the President of Ukraine L. Kravchuck, to the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Ukraine I. Plyushch and People's Deputies of Ukraine to use all necessary measures to restore the violated religious freedom and rights of believers belonging to the UOC. In addition, he asked for a meeting with the President in order to discuss the situation; such a meeting took place on 3 July at 12:00 in the afternoon. This took place after episcopates, clergy, monks and laity stood for three days near the Supreme Council, demanding that Metropolitan Vladimir, the legitimate Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, be received by the President, who categorically refused to do this. Finally, during a 35-minute conversation the discussion turned to the difficult situation of the UOC, the relations between the confessions, and questions about the numerous attacks on diocesan centers. As said above, inter-church ties and conflict cannot be understood without considering the role played by political leaders and party. President Krawchuck certainly set this attitude: he considered the Council of Karkhov's decisions illegal, and declared that he would not recognise them. Moreover, he decisively supported the All-Ukrainian Council which established the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate. The best explanation of the policy conducted by the President with regard to Churches' issue was summed up in his statement: "the Church should be independent from religious-political centers"⁶⁷⁸, and in the shorter slogan "independent Church in an independent state"⁶⁷⁹. The growing public opposition to the idea of forming a state church forced Krawchuck to switch to more conciliatory formulations. Indeed he replied to Metropolitan Vladimir Sobodan's appeal affirming that he categorically opposed any forms of discrimination against the UOC, and that he considered any attacks against this Church as a harmful attack against millions of believers. In the statement of the press-service of the President, released in May 1993, it was declared that the position of the President with regard to the Church remained based on the Constitution, on national law, and international legal acts signed by Ukraine, and that the state was an institution separated from the Church. In his Easter address, he repeated: "we do not

⁶⁷⁸ Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*, pp. 5.

⁶⁷⁹ ibid

have and cannot have our own and foreign churches”⁶⁸⁰. However, in practice, the President and other top leaders provided unilateral support to the UOC-KP; the appeal that in October 1993 the President addressed to Patriarch Bartholomew with a request for recognition of independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and his declaration about the state’s will to contribute to the unifying process was seen by the other Churches as a violation of the principle of Church-State separation, above all because for several years the provisions on separation of the Church from the State had been stubbornly not included in the drafts of the Constitution of Ukraine, despite repeated demands to include it in the text. Some Churches were also alarmed by the amendments to the law *On freedom of conscience and religious organizations* adopted by the Supreme Council at the end of 1993. In particular, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was alarmed by the provision which granted to local administrations the right to appoint the alternating use of churches by several confessions, contrary to the canons of the Orthodox Church. Therefore, 28 bishops decided to send a letter to the Presidency in which they warned that this provision would lead to a complete destabilization of the religious situation in Ukraine. For the Churches of Ukraine (with exception made for the position of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kievan Patriarchate), the main object of criticism remained the Committee for Religious Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers. Indeed, it was exactly in this office that the policy aimed at transforming the UOC-KP into a state Church was carried out. The great part of the Churches, at that moment, aimed at the liquidation of this organism (as had happened in Russia) and at the transfer of all his functions to the Minister of Justice⁶⁸¹. Another consideration that seems to be important for the scope of this analysis is the one made by M. Danilievich (UOC-MP) during our meeting in March 2020. He pointed out that President Krawchuck, being a “man of Soviet times”, as responsible for the ideological work in the Communist Party of Ukraine in the Central Committee was absolutely familiar with Orthodoxy and with the significance of religious components for the process that was taking place, that is, the process of building an independent state. Therefore, he knew perfectly that this process had begun and that it was an “expression of the Ukrainian society at that time divided”, and that was not smart to hinder it. In fact he “saw that was happening a process of returning of Orthodoxy and Greek-Catholic faith and he decided to use the Church as electoral constituency”⁶⁸². Therefore, although his promises to introduce the process into a legal channel, the wave of robberies against the UOC rolled further and with a greater force. Taking into account the difficult situation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which claimed full independence on a canonical basis, the Holy Synod decided to convene an international scientific symposium on the canonical independence of the UOC in the Holy Dormition Kiev-Pechersk-Lavra. The conference, on the theme “The Church, its nature, Local Orthodox Churches” was held on 29 December 1992; 103 delegates took part in it from all the regions of Ukraine who represented the episcopate, clergy, monasteries, theological schools and the flock of all dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The

⁶⁸⁰ "У нас нет и не может быть 'своих' и 'чужих' церквей", Ibid.

⁶⁸¹ Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*, pp. 5.

⁶⁸² Interview with Mykolay Danylevych, done in his office at Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, on March 3, 2020, min. 57.05-57.25.

discussion showed that the attitude of participants regarding the issue of independence was ambiguous, and sometimes sharply contradictory. The Conference stated that the UOC, which in that moment was independent in its administration, had such canonical rights that far exceeded the status of traditional canonical autonomy, and actually can be assimilated to the character of an autocephalous church. The All-Ukrainian Orthodox Conference was unanimous in the opinion that granting the UOC self-governance, and independence in the administration would play a positive role in the establishment of legal relations between the multinational Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the independent Ukrainian state. At the same time the conference condemned the interference of non-church forces in resolving the issue of the full independence of the UOC, which wished to force the canonical process of granting autocephaly by resorting to illegal actions and violence against Orthodoxy in Ukraine. This violence complicated the understanding of the processing of acquiring the status of the Local Ukrainian Orthodox Church within the framework of the church's canonical law. Patriarch Aleksii II was acquainted with these and other thoughts; he considered it "necessary to continue the understanding of the ways and means for canonical improvement of the independence of the UOC, which met the aspirations of its episcopate, clergy, monks and laity, and that a successful solution to this pressing problem can be achieved only if any political factor was completely excluded from this process"⁶⁸³. He added that the issue of the canonical status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church will be included in the program of the next Local Council. Meanwhile, Metropolitan Vladimir tried to explore possibilities of healing the schism through dialogue with the UOAC and UOC-KP, the Synod held on 8 December 1992 expressed the hope that these Churches could show genuine intention to carry out this path, and considered it reasonable to immediately start this dialogue under the following conditions: the end of violence by the supporters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate in relation with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; the restitution of cathedrals, churches, and diocesan centers seized with the use of violence to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; non-interference of the central and local authorities, people's deputies in the internal life of the Church; excluding Filaret (Denisenko) from this process. These four conditions had been forming the basis for further negotiations on possible unifications of the Churches in the country. The cornerstone of them was certainly the fourth. Drabinko pointed out that if Denisenko had retired from church affairs at that time, he would not had been accepted into the UAOC which he reorganized into the Kievan Patriarchate. Then with a constructive dialogue with representatives who sincerely wanted autocephaly for the Ukrainian Church, mutual understanding would surely have been reached, and the issue of further improving the independence of the UOC would have been already resolved. Therefore, in his perspective, the idea of autocephaly of the UOC was compromised by Filaret's personality and his schismatic activities. Another important step towards reaching unity of the Church was the meeting

⁶⁸³ «считает необходимым продолжение осмысления путей и средств канонического совершенствования самостоятельности УПЦ, отвечающего чаяниям ее епископата, клира, монашествующих и мирян. Успешное решение настоящей насущной проблемы может быть достигнуто лишь при полном исключении из этого процесса какого то бы ни было политического фактора». My translation. See: Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине"*, pp. 145.

held on 14 November 1995 between the UOAC's Primate, Dmitry, and Vladimir, head of the UOC-MP. In order to reach an agreement on the unification, the delegations decided to create a joint commission and to further discuss the issue at the Local Council of the UAOC (5-6 July 1996)⁶⁸⁴. Patriarch Filaret called the plan for unification into a single Church carried out by the UOAC and the UOC-MP "false", and declared that this was a "step of Ukraine's accession to Russia"⁶⁸⁵. He added that Russian authorities would not ever allow the Patriarch of the Russian Federation to grant autocephaly to the UOC⁶⁸⁶.

Both the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church got actively involved in the electorate campaign of 1994: two bishops of the UOC received a blessing for the pre-election campaign from the Synod of their Church on 8 March; a similar blessing was given by Patriarch Demetrius to the UAOC's Chancellor O. Y. Boyko. This decision, motivated by the will to counter-balance the powerful lobby who supported Filaret, was quite natural for the UAOC, but quite unexpected for the UOC, especially given the position of the Russian Orthodox Church that considered the work in Parliament as an obstacle to priestly activity. The UOC-KP, on the other hand, accepted the decision about the non-participation of its clergy in the campaign, but manifested its participation in the active support of the politicians allied with the Church, in particular members of the Church Council as Chervoskiy, Porovskiy, O. Schevchenko, and others. This support included frequent campaign trips of Patriarch Volodimir Romanok and Metropolitan Philarst, and appeals to believers to vote for the true Ukrainian patriots. With the election of Kuchma, the confessional situation in Ukraine changed. The public role of the Kievan Patriarchate significantly decreased; in particular, its plans to acquire the status of State Church were being destroyed. At the same time, the period of artificial isolation of the UOC came to an end, which finally granted the UOC the opportunity to address society through mass media, thus allowing it to play a more prominent role in believers' lives. A few days after the election, the first program of Ukrainian television broadcast a message from Metropolitan Sabodan, which called upon the faithful and upon the entire people of Ukraine to refrain from inter-confessional and national hostility, and to support the newly elected President. On behalf of all the Ukrainian Churches, the President was congratulated by the Bishops Council of the UOC, which looked to the newly elected President to justify the hopes of the electorate who voted for him in the hope of building and developing an independent Ukrainian State on a legal basis. In the address it was argued: "the election of Leonid Kuchma to the presidency, [...] the public role of the "Kiev Patriarchate", the creation of which was largely inspired by L. Kravchuk and his structures that pursued political, ideological and personal goals, significantly decreased. In particular, its plans to acquire the status of a state church are

⁶⁸⁴ Interfax, *Киевские Иерархи Проведут Переговоры О Возможности Объединения Двух Самостоятельных Православных Церквей Украины* [Moscow, Kiev Hierarchs To Hold Talks On The Possibility Of Uniting Two Independent Orthodox Churches Of Ukraine], 14-11-1995.

⁶⁸⁵ Express Agency, *Украинская Православная Церковь Киевского Патриархата Не Может Перейти В Оппозицию К Нынешней Власти Потому, Что Церковь Поддерживает Украинское Государство* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Kiev Patriarchate Cannot Go Into Opposition To The Current Government Because The Church Supports The Ukrainian State], 18.11.1995.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

being destroyed"⁶⁸⁷. One of the most important structural changes realized by Kuchma was the liquidation of the Council for Religious Affairs under the Cabinet of the Ministers of Ukraine. Representatives of all Christian denominations (except the UOC-KP) and a number of organizations for the defence of human rights had long insisted on this liquidation. Its functions were transferred to the Ministry of Nationalities, Migration and Religious Affairs, which was created from the Ministry of Nationality and Migration. From its side, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church started to make several attempts to eliminate the consequences of the Church policy conducted by L. Krawchuk in 1992-1993. Thus, the episcopate of the UOC appealed to the Supreme Council of Ukraine with the request to cancel the decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Ukraine taken on 16 June 1992, on the non-recognition of the decisions adopted by the Karkhiv Council of the UOC. In this way, the episcopate was both interfering in the UOC's internal church life, and supporting Filaret, thus deepening the conflict. These requests from the UOC clashed with the position of the Supreme Council which, although the Council recognized that the declaration under discussion was legally incorrect, considered it inappropriate to return on it. The second trace of Krawchuk's policy that was important to correct was the additions and amendments to the law *On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations*, adopted by the Supreme Council on 15 December 1993, thanks to which authorities tried to regulate alternative worship services in those Churches where there was a conflict among rights of different denominations. In this regard, the episcopate, clergy, and laity sent to President L. Kuchma and to the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Ukraine a request to cancel these amendments in order to prevent the complete destabilization of the country. However, these initiatives were not supported by state authorities: the Chairman of the Supreme Council instructed the Commission on Culture and Spirituality to consider and study the request of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; its chairman, M. Kosiv, sent a letter to Metropolitan Vladimir in which, without giving a direct answer, he made clear that the issue would not be resolved in favour of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and that the campaign for seizing Churches belonging to the UOC conducted by Uniates, autocephalists and Filaretovites was legalized. This indicated that, although Kuchma decided to deprive the UOC-KP of the State support, in general its administration assumed a neutral position towards religious affairs⁶⁸⁸. The issue of interference of political authorities in relations between the Churches and in the settlement of the religious situation of the country, represented a serious issue in these years, although Metropolitan Vladimir in a declaration released during the celebrations for the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus', pointed out that with respect to the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Moscow Patriarchate

⁶⁸⁷ «Многомиллионная паства Украинской Православной Церкви, — говорилось в обращении, — возлагает большие надежды на то, что в конце концов с приходом нового Президента будет положен конец межрелигиозной вражде, когда проблемы церковной жизни решаются путем насилия с ведома и при поддержке избранных народом представителей власти как в центре, так и на местах...Мы хотим, чтобы в законном государстве была законная Церковь». My translation. See: Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине"*, pp. 161.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid.

perceived the weight of this interference in different ways⁶⁸⁹. In an interview delivered to the newspaper “Truda” Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that the UOC-MP found itself in a difficult position, since it was considered that the Church became the target of nationalistic forces’ attacks, which believed that any communication with Moscow damaged the interests of their country. Kirill pointed out that this interpretation depicted the role of the Church as quite “ferocious”, especially considering that the UOC-MP was a completely independent institution with its own inner life, and that connection with Moscow was a connection in prayers (the name of Patriarch Aleksii was remembered during divine services)⁶⁹⁰. Speaking at the annual meeting of the International Public Foundation for Unity of Orthodox Nations (March, 2000), Patriarch Aleksii commented on the attempts of Ukrainian statesmen to create an independent Orthodox Church, and stressed that the UOC-MP had been granted with administrative and financial independence⁶⁹¹, and that the Orthodox faithful of Ukraine and Russia are united by close spiritual ties, which cannot be broken⁶⁹².

It is worth underlying that on 27 June 2002, talking to Itar-Tass, Patriarch Aleksii pointed out that having obtained the state registration did not mean that the UOC-MP was a structure independent from the Moscow Patriarchate. Indeed, he explained that “in all sovereign states, our Church is obliged to obtain state registration in order to have the right to a legal entity”⁶⁹³. The UOC-MP in 1990 was granted broad autonomy, as well as educational, economic and financial independence, which was confirmed by the Bishops Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, and inserted in the Russian Orthodox Church’s Charter. By taking this decision, the Russian Orthodox Church “ha[d] preserved a spiritual,

⁶⁸⁹ Patriarchia.ru, Митрополит Киевский Владимир заявил, что президент Украины не создает политического давления на Церковь [Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev said that the President of Ukraine does not create political pressure on the Church], 21.02.2008.

⁶⁹⁰ Trud, Митрополит Смоленский И Калининградский Кирилл: Надежда На Спасение Есть Даже На Дне Пропасту [Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad: There Is Hope For Salvation Even At The Bottom Of The Abyss], 7, 06-01-1999.

⁶⁹¹ It is worth noting that although this established financial independence, it used financial assistance of Russian President Vladimir Putin for the construction of new cathedrals in cities where Churches of the Moscow Patriarchate were seized by the schismatics. This was announced by Metropolitan Vladimir at the time of his visit to Sevastopol. Indeed, in June 2004, in pursuance of a presidential order, the Russian Vnesheconombank handed over to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church a check of the amount of 10 million rubles. According to Metropolitan Vladimir, the financial assistance of from Russia was primarily an act of moral support. See: Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, Украинская Православная Церковь использует финансовую помощь, поступившую от России, для строительства кафедральных соборов [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church uses the financial assistance received from Russia for the construction of cathedrals], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 16-07-04, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/07/7319-1/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁹² Ria Novosti, Патриарх Московский И Вся Руси Алексий П Высказался Против Попыток Создания Независимой Православной Церкви На Украине [Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Aleksii P Spoke Out Against Attempts To Create An Independent Orthodox Church In Ukraine], 29-03-2000

⁶⁹³ Itar Tass, Религия и общество (оперативная лента), Украинскую православную церковь нельзя считать независимой от Московского Патриархата, считает Патриарх Алексий [Religion and society (operational tape), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church cannot be considered independent of the Moscow Patriarchate, Patriarch Aleksii believes], 27-06-2002.

prayerful connection”⁶⁹⁴, and “no one has the right to break this old connection of fraternal Orthodox peoples of the same faith”⁶⁹⁵.

Ecumenical Patriarchate

Another important issue was represented by the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and by the initiative the Church of Constantinople conducted in order to heal the divisions of Churches in Ukraine. The Bishops’ Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, held on 18-23 February 1997, not only pointed out that relations with Ukrainian authorities were complicated by the “non-constructive involvement of state authorities in internal Church conflicts”⁶⁹⁶. The Council confirmed its readiness to dialogue, on the condition that the rights of Ukrainian Orthodox Church (MP)’s believers were respected⁶⁹⁷. In addition it authorized the Holy Synod to begin bilateral consultations with the Local Orthodox Churches on the ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine and on the future of Orthodoxy in this country. Concerns was also expressed regarding relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Indeed, on 21 August 1995, the DECR issued a communiqué regarding the position of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s decision to host a group of hierarchs from the schismatic non-canonical group called the “Ukrainian Autocephalus Church in the United States and in the diaspora” who was in communion with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate (verify). The admission to the episcopate of the Patriarchate of Constantinople of persons, the legality of whose ordination was not previously recognized by any Orthodox Church in the world, was considered an obvious violation of Orthodox canons, and significantly complicated the process of reunification of the Orthodox Christians in Ukraine, because these persons’ attitudes toward the religious situation in Ukraine were extremely nationalistic. On May 1995, Patriarch Aleksii II expressed an official protest against the Patriarch of Constantinople’s act on the recognition of the legitimacy of this Church’ status in Ukraine; the Patriarchate of Moscow indicated his intentions to not enter in communion with the hierarchs of this Church, which in fact meant the non-recognition of them as canonical bishops, and created a danger of a violation of pan-Orthodox unity⁶⁹⁸. The visit of 20-25 September 1997 was the first hierarchical visit of Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia to the Odessa diocese of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. pDuring his visit he was accompanied by Archbishop Sergius of

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Из доклада Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия Второго на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 18-23.2.1997* [From the report of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church on 18-23.2.1997], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86249/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"К вопросу о действиях Константинопольского Патриархата в связи с религиозной ситуацией на Украине и в Эстонии". 21.08.1995* ["On the question of the actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in connection with the religious situation in Ukraine and Estonia." 08.21.1995], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86254/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Solnechnogorsk, Administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate. Answering to questions of Russian and Ukrainian media he declared: “the Odessa diocese has become the sixty-first diocese of those that I have visited in the seven years of my Patriarchal service and, after the formation of independent sovereign states on the territory of the former Soviet Union, this is the first visit to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine”⁶⁹⁹. Talking of the ways to overcome the split in Ukraine, the Patriarch stressed that the Bishops Councils of the Russian Orthodox Church had repeatedly taken decisions to overcome the schism, but unfortunately no concrete results had been achieved. He affirmed that the schism represented a “heavy burden on the shoulders” of Ukrainian Orthodox believers, and pointed out that the choice of granting full autonomy to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was aimed to resolving the internal issues, but the Moscow Patriarchate kept a spiritual connection with Church in Ukraine and that breaking this connection was impossible. In Odessa Patriarch Aleksii also met with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople (24 September). The meeting revealed a coincidence of views and positions of the two Primates regarding the overcoming of the schism that violated Church unity and seriously hindered the witness mission of Orthodoxy in the world⁷⁰⁰. The importance of this result was discussed by the Russian Orthodox Church’s Holy Synod held on 2 October 1997 which noted the importance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s support to the canonical Orthodox Church in Ukraine, headed by the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir (Sabodan). Indeed the Primates of the two Churches expressed their conviction that a solution to the problem of schism was possible only on the basis of a canonical tradition common to all Orthodox Churches, and reaffirmed the need for constant mutual contacts in order to overcome the crisis⁷⁰¹. In a talk delivered at the Jubilee Bishops Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (13-16 August 2000), Patriarch Aleksii confirmed that the schism in Ukraine continued to be the most painful in the Orthodox world, and that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the direction of Metropolitan Vladimir was the only canonical Orthodox Church in the country, although it had to carry out her ministry in the difficult atmosphere of opposition created by the schismatic churches (UOC-KP and UOAC), who were in turn further supported by political circles of nationalistic orientations. He pointed out that since the UOAC’s active attempts to find support in the person of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in order to avoid the danger of any confrontation between the two Patriarchates on the Ukrainian issue, the ROC decided to enter in negotiations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, with the hope that through

⁶⁹⁹ «Одесская епархия, - сказал он, - стала шестьдесят первой епархией из тех, которые я посетил за семь лет своего Патриаршего служения и, после образования независимых суверенных государств на территории бывшего Советского Союза, это первый визит в Православную Церковь Украины».

See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Поездка Святейшего Патриарха в Одесскую епархию [Trip of His Holiness the Patriarch to the Odessa diocese]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86216/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷⁰⁰ This is consistent with the final communiqué signed by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the Patriarchal residency of Danilov Monastery in July 1993, whose main point was the condemnation of Church schism in Ukraine. Indeed, during the meeting with the members of the Holy Synod, the Patriarch condemned the withdrawal of Filaret and his supporters from the Moscow Patriarchate, and spoke in support of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Bartholomew declared that the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized only one canonical Metropolitan and this was Vladimir (Sabodan) of Kiev and All Ukraine.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

cooperation of the two Churches, it would be possible to find a solution able to overcome the schism and unite Ukrainian Orthodoxy.

Indeed the topic of the creation of a single Ukrainian Church was discussed in June 2000 during the meeting among representatives of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates held in Zurich (Switzerland), from which resulted a deep disagreement on the resolution of the issue. The Russian Orthodox Church considered Ukraine part of its canonical territory, and therefore insisted on its exclusive prerogative in deciding the fate of Orthodoxy in the country. In its turn, the Ecumenical Patriarchate decided not to recognize the joining of the Kiev Metropolis to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1686 as legal, and therefore still considered Ukraine its canonical territory. In particular, the Ecumenical Patriarchate considered it appropriate to unite Ukrainian Orthodox Churches and to recognize the autocephaly of the Local Church of Ukraine. The discussion led to the decision to hold a meeting of all representatives of interested parties, included representatives of Ukrainian government (the meeting, initially planned on 15 July, was postponed to 20 August, when the ROC's Bishops' Council was already planned). Patriarch Filaret saw in the meeting the first real step towards the end of schism, although he recognized difficulties connected with the political influence of the Moscow Patriarchate in the country, and with its use of the autonomous status granted to the UOC-MP as instrument to disrupt the unification process⁷⁰². In addition, on 22 November 2000, during his visit to Turkey, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma met with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and discussed with him of the formation of an Ukrainian Local Church. Two weeks earlier, with the participation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, delegations of the UOC-KP, and UAOC agreed to establish a mixed inter-church commission, to be closely involved in the coordination of all the problems associated with preparations of the unification of Ukrainian Orthodoxy into a single Church. Patriarch Filaret expressed regret that the UOC-MP did not participate in the unification process, indeed at the meeting held on 28 July at the Kiev Lavra, bishops of the ROC said that they sought only to confirm the status granted to Ukrainian Orthodoxy in 1918 by Patriarch Tikhon, and the Moscow Patriarchate during the last Council of the ROC denied the autocephaly of the UOC—again—, both to the Ukrainian Church itself, and to the President of Ukraine, who had addressed them with a special letter. Patriarch Filaret declared that Moscow had decided to withdrawal from the unification process despite several assurances from the side of Constantinople that both the Moscow Patriarchate and the UOC-MP would be been involved in the unification process. However, this decision did not stop the path to the resolution of the issue, and during the meeting among the UOC-KP and the UOAC held in Constantinople, the two delegations clearly said that the unification could not be delayed more than 2-3 years. Commenting on the reaction of Moscow, Filaret pointed out that although there was no official declaration of the Moscow Patriarchate, secular actors who dealt with Church issues reacted to the Constantinople agreements; among others, he gave the example of Frolov, who defined the recognition of the Autocephalous Ukrainian Church, a disaster, and not only for

⁷⁰² Zerkalo nedeli, *Патриарх Филарет: "Объединение Украинских Церквей Может Произойти Уже В Этом Году"* [Patriarch Filaret: "The Unification Of The Ukrainian Churches Can Happen Already This Year"], 05-08-2000.

Russia. From the perspective of Filaret, this idea of disaster was connected to the fact that the UOC-MP was the “outpost”⁷⁰³ of Russia in Ukraine; this conception was due to an old way of configuring international relations, a way blind to the fact that “we want to live in an independent state, and have our independent church”⁷⁰⁴. The head of the UOC-KP highlighted that he was against returning to the Moscow Patriarchate; he further observed that anyone who got acquainted with the new version of the internal church Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church would immediately notice that this document introduced the centralization of the Moscow church authority. Moreover, he noted a contradiction in President Kuchma’s policy, who constantly emphasized that Ukraine needed a single local, that is, an autocephalous church, but sent a letter to the Moscow Bishops’ Council with a request to grant the UOC-MP the status of autonomy nevertheless⁷⁰⁵.

Commenting on the position of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in Ukrainian Churches’ situation, Metropolitan Vladimir pointed out that the UOC-MP’s decision about this was made on 27 July, during the Archbishop Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which requested the Ecumenical Patriarchate not to interfere in the internal problems of Ukraine, because this concerned only Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Additionally, he stressed that Estonia was the perfect example that Constantinople’s interference was the cause of a schism⁷⁰⁶. After this declaration, the journal “Ukrainskoe slova” and the web site Pravoslavnie 2000 reported the news regarding the claim of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on Ukraine. In response to this publication, the Secretary of the Patriarchate of Constantinople issued an official statement in which he denied his claim to rule the Ukrainian Church. The statement pointed out that in relation to the message which was circulating on internet regarding the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s alleged proclamation on 27 July 2000 that Ukraine is under its canonical jurisdiction, the Holy Synod considered important to communicate that this declaration was absolutely not correct⁷⁰⁷.

On 26-30 May a joint delegation from Moscow and Constantinople visited Kiev in order to examine the Church situation in Ukraine. Greek and Russian priests who were part of the delegation met with the Chairman of the Ukrainian State Committee on Religious Affairs⁷⁰⁸, V. Bondarenko, and with the Primate of the UOC-MP, as well as with leaders of

⁷⁰³ Eksèress, “Я Противник Возвращения В Московский Патриархат” [*Patriarch Filaret: "I Am Against Returning To The Moscow Patriarchate"*], 01.12.2000.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Киевский И Всея Руси Рассказал О Положении Церкви На Украине* [*Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine talks of Church situation in Ukraine*], 2000/9, pp. 10-11.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid pp. 9.

⁷⁰⁸ The committee was established with the decree N° 944/95 of the President of Ukraine, on 11 October 1995. During the period 1995-2005, there were no changes in the name of the organization, but there were in its structure. The main tasks of the Committee were: participation in the formation and implementation of state policy on religion, and religious organization, ensuring the respect of the right of freedom and thought of each person, observance of the principles of separation of Church and State, and of schools from the Church, formation and regulation of relations between the State, Church and religious organizations, as well as preventing the interference of state authorities in religious affairs. See: Tsdao, Фонд 5252, опис 6. Спр. N°3, 64 in Фонд 5252, опис 6, роки 1991.2000, Передмова [Preface], pp. 1

the schismatic groups⁷⁰⁹. Commenting on the meeting, Nikolai Balashov pointed out that no joint decision was made, since the mandate of the delegation was limited in accordance with the agreement reached on 20 April in Zurich (which oversees joint actions of the two Patriarchates). Moreover, he noted that the status of the meeting with representatives of the canonical Church differed from the status of the meeting with representatives of schismatic groups. In this case it was important to “get a first-hand expression of their position so to inform our hierarchy in order to make further decisions and take concrete actions. However, while we visited His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine, the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, at his official residence, we did not consider it possible to meet with representatives of other religious organizations in their religious centres. They simply came to our hotel, these were unofficial meetings, not accompanied by any prayers”⁷¹⁰. He added that the delegation did not meet with the anathematised Patriarch of Kiev, Filaret Denisenko, but with three bishops who represented the so-called Kiev Patriarchate and with representatives of the UOAC. Particular attention was drawn to the fact that talking of Church schism meant referring to “thousands of people who attend their church, for different reasons: some because this church is the only one in their village or small town, others simply because they are used to going to this church and are not aware of canonical issues, others are in the same delusion as the pastors who led them away [...]”⁷¹¹, but pointed out that the Russian Orthodox Church “imagines the resolution of this crisis on the canonical field and nothing else”⁷¹², and that in this respect, the Moscow Patriarchate expressed satisfaction that “the representative of the Ukrainian state, the head of the State Committee on Religious Affairs, Mr. Bondarenko, noted that there is a need for a solution that would be in harmony with church canon law”⁷¹³. Regarding possibilities of creating a single united Church, he considered the desire of the Ukrainian State to see the united Church in Ukraine understandable and natural, even though after all the “Ukrainian Orthodox Church is endowed with rights of wide independence in government”⁷¹⁴.

Unification

The position of the Church on the issue of unification of Ukrainian Churches, and of autocephaly was formulated in a meeting held by the UOC-MP on 28 July in Kiev. According to Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan), the process was not so simple as presented by other parties indeed, in his opinion the All Ukrainian Orthodox Council was

⁷⁰⁹ Itar Tass, *Religiya i obshchestvo, Религия и общество (оперативная лента), Совместная делегация Московского Константинопольского Патриархатов посетила Киев для изучения церковной ситуации на Украине [Religion and Society (operational tape), A joint delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate of Constantinople visited Kiev to study the church situation in Ukraine]*, 30-05-2001.

⁷¹⁰ Itar Tass, *В Киеве прошли беспрецедентные встречи с представителями неканонических церковных образований [Unprecedented meetings were held in Kiev with representatives of non-canonical church formations]*, 01-06-2001.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

not the means by which to carry out this process, but rather represented the end result of a completed unification. The head of the UOC-MP confirmed their readiness to participate in negotiations, although the UOC-KP, led by the schismatic Filaret, represented the main obstacle to its realization⁷¹⁵. The Bishops' Council adopted an appeal signed by 35 bishops of the UOC and addressed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate asking him not to interfere in the UOC, because this would negatively affect his authority; however, instead of receiving a response, Patriarch Bartholomew declared himself unhappy with the fact that the UOC-MP had addressed the appeal to him directly without the mediation of Patriarch Aleksii. In the former's opinion, since the UOC was a Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Vladimir could not address him directly. In the letter Bartholomew sent to Aleksii he expressed his distress that the Patriarch did not interfere in the affairs of the UOC-MP, and pointed out that the UOC was responsible for the schism⁷¹⁶. However, "the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate remains unchanged - the problem of schisms must be solved only on the basis of the canons of the Orthodox Church"⁷¹⁷. The importance of these bilateral meetings exploded when, during the conference *Orthodoxy and public life: restoration of traditions of the social service of the Church* (22 July 2001)⁷¹⁸, the Moscow Patriarchate was accused of schismatic acts and of obstructing the process of unification of the Ukrainian Churches. In the statement disseminated by the UOC-KP, with his visit, Metropolitan Kirill "violates the previously reached agreement on the equality of the parties who take part in the negotiation process on the unification of Ukrainian Orthodoxy"⁷¹⁹. In addition, in the statement the participation of the UOC-MP in the Zurich agreement was questioned; while, as Metropolitan Kirill pointed out, the participation of Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail was a representative of the Ukrainian Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. Conversely, from the perspective of the other Churches, since Metropolitan Agafangel was part of the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate, he did not represent the UOC-MP, and Metropolitan of this Church should have participated in the meeting. Another accusation put forward by the authors of the statement was that the Moscow Patriarchate allegedly did not allow the Chairman of the State Committee for Religious Affairs Viktor

⁷¹⁵ Religioznaya zhizn' v Rossii, *В Киеве Идет Борьба За Единую Украинскую Православную Церковь* [Religious Life In Russia, There Is A Struggle For A Single Ukrainian Orthodox Church In Kiev], 17-08-2000.

⁷¹⁶ Nezavisimaya Gazeta-Religii, *Перспективы Самостоятельности* [Perspective of independence], 23.08.2000.

⁷¹⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Пребывание членов делегации Константинопольского Патриархата в Украинской Православной Церкви* [Staying of members of the delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84235/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷¹⁸ "Православие И Общественная Жизнь: Воссоздание Традиций Социального Служения Церкви". The conference was organized by the "Union of Borders", the largest public organization in Ukraine uniting former frontier guard (Kiev) and the Russian Socio-Political Center (Moscow). The aim of the Russian-ukrainian forum was to demonstrate believers of Ukrainian and Russian Churches can preserve the unity of the two Churches despite all schismatics' attempts to destroy it. See: Strana.ru, *В Киеве открывается российско-украинская православная конференция* [Russian-Ukrainian Orthodox Conference opens in Kiev], 22-07-2001.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

Bondarenko, on whose support representatives of non-canonical Churches counted, to participate in the negotiations. From his perspective, the DECR considered Patriarch's Filaret defence of the rights of believers of the UOC-MP absurd, and saw in this reaction an indication of the UOC-KP's fear that the issue of Church division in Ukraine would be resolved canonically with the participation of the Mother Church⁷²⁰. A further problem was that Metropolitan Kirill met with President Kuchma without the participation of representatives from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The conference also represented the first occasion for conducting a wide discussion in Ukraine on the Fundamentals of the Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church adopted by the Bishops Council in 2000. For the first time after several years, Metropolitan Kirill spoke in Kiev together with representatives of a delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate (the UOC-MP was represented by Metropolitan Onufriy of Chernivtsi and Archbishop Augustine of Lviv, as well as other members of Orthodox public organizations)⁷²¹.

On 9 November 2004, Metropolitan Vladimir on the TV channel "Iner" expressed UOC-MP support for Viktor Yanukovych at the upcoming presidential election. In the opinion of Metropolitan Vladimir, Patriarch Aleksii as well supported Yanukovych. According to what the press reported, the meeting held on 8 November between Viktor Yushchenko and the primate of the UOC-MP was not connected with political reasons⁷²². Indeed, Patriarch Aleksii expressed worries that the victory of Yushchenko could worsen the situation of the UOC-MP. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reported that a couple of days before this declaration, Viktor Yushchenko was received by Metropolitan Vladimir. News agencies reported that at end of the meeting the Primate of the UOC-MP blessed Yushchenko. However, a few hours later the UOC-MP issued a communication that all participants in the meeting received the blessing, not only the candidate at the election⁷²³. Yushchenko became President of Ukraine in 2004 thanks to the victory of the Orange Revolution. He defeated Yanukovych and became Ukraine's president under increased international scrutiny due to the explosive revolution in Kiev when observers questioned the validity of election noting numerous instance of false reporting and when Yushchenko became ill and permanently scarred from an unsuccessful assassination attempt via dioxin poison⁷²⁴. The Church was heavily involved in the new round of voting: Denisenko referred to numerous reports of clergy instructing people on how to vote. This support came not only from the Moscow Patriarchate parishes, but also from Patriarch Filaret and UGCC Primate Archbishop Lubomyr (Husar), who sought to deepen Ukraine's ties with Europe and the West. The Moscow Patriarchate's support was manifested when its bishops accompanied him on visits to holy places such as Jerusalem and Mount Athos. Indeed Yushchenko was seen as the face of church-state independence and freedom.

⁷²⁰ Strana. Ru, *Визит митрополита Кирилла испугал Филарета Денисенко* [The visit of Metropolitan Kirill frightened Filaret Denisenko], 31-07-2001.

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² Religia i Smi, *Митрополит Владимир (Сабодан) благословил только Виктора Януковича* [Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan) blessed only Viktor Yanukovych], 10-11-2004.

⁷²³ Rupor.info, *Ющенко получил благословение Московского патриархата* [Yushchenko received the blessing of the Moscow Patriarchate], 10.11.2004.

⁷²⁴ Levi Clifford J., *Ukrainian Prime Minister Reinvents Himself*, New York Times, 30.09.2007, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/world/europe/30ukraine.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

From the perspective of the Patriarchate of Kiev he was the “son” of the Orange Revolution, a moment of truth for the Churches. The Moscow Patriarchate, on the other hand, needed to befriend a candidate that was not a champion of closer relations with Russia and the Russian Church, as Yanukovich sought to be⁷²⁵. On 26 July 2005 a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra under the chairmanship of Metropolitan Vladimir. The Holy Synod adopted an appeal to the new elected President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko concerning the problem of overcoming the schism in Ukraine. The appeal brought up the complexities of interfaith situation in Ukraine, and the aggressive behavior of representatives of the Kiev Patriarchate towards believers of the UOC-MP. The Holy Synod expressed the hope that Prince Vladimir’s light and symbol could help reconcile Christians in Ukraine and be a unifying principle for all citizens of Ukraine⁷²⁶. Hope of non-interference of the state in religious issues was expressed also by the UOC-MP Holy Synod held on 9 March 2005. The appeal for overcoming the schism mentioned that on 8 December 1992, Metropolitan Vladimir made a proposal to hold a theological dialogue with representatives of the UOC-KP and of the UOAC to heal the divisions. In particular, the UOC-MP made a list of conditions required for a dialogue with the other churches present in the country: 1) the end of violence of the UOC-KP against the UOC-MP; 2) the restitution of religious buildings seized with the use of the force; 3) non interference of political authorities in Church’s internal life; 5) exclusion of Patriarch Filaret from talks and negotiations. However, the document expressed a negative attitude towards “the artificial creation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Local Church by a mechanical unification of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church [...] with schismatics who fell away from canonical unity”⁷²⁷. The appeal added that “when the canonical order is violated, church discipline is also violated and this, in turn, leads to schisms, heresies, destructive and totalitarian sects, as a result of which the essential properties of the Church suffer: unity, holiness, canonicity, apostolicity (as happened in Ukraine)”⁷²⁸. The dialogue with the UAOC was resumed thanks to a decision of the UOC-MP’s Holy Synod, which blessed the continuation of the work of the Commission created at the meeting of the Synod held on 22 November 1995, and renewed its composition⁷²⁹. In an interview with “New Region”, Archbishop Mitrofan expressed worries about the desire of President Viktor Yushchenko to include in the agreement with leaders of parliamentary factions a clause on the need to create a Local

⁷²⁵ Eurasia Daily Monitor, *Yanukovich Has Moscow Patriarchate On His Side*, 1:127, 15.11.2004.

⁷²⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Священный Синод Украинской Православной Церкви направил Президенту Украины В.А.Ющенко обращения по вопросам преодоления раскола и провозглашения дня памяти св.Владимира Национальным праздником [The Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church sent appeals to the President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko on the issues of overcoming the schism and proclaiming the day of remembrance of St. Vladimir as a National holiday]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78067/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷²⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялось внеочередное заседание Священного Синода Украинской Православной Церкви [A regular meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79417/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷²⁸ *ibid.*

⁷²⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Прошло заседание Священного Синода Украинской Православной Церкви [Meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/75726/>, (last accessed August 2021).

Church in the country. He argued that the UOC-MP had a negative attitude toward the initiative of unification undertaken and led by political organizations and parties, although they were fully aware of the need to heal the Ukrainian split⁷³⁰.

Commenting the status of the UOC-MP, Metropolitan Kirill emphasized that the past 16 years confirmed the correctness of the decision to grant of autonomy to the Church. Indeed, he pointed out that the UOC-MP honourably carried out “its saving mission, the number of her parishes [was] growing steadily, her educational ministry, as well as her authority in society, [were] expanding”⁷³¹. He added that special courage was required in a period in which the Church was continually under the attacks of schismatics, and the defence of canonical unity of the Church became more important than it was in other periods. For this reason, he emphasized the importance of celebrations for the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus’ in order to remember the special significance of Kiev as mother of cities, and in order to “strengthen the relationship between the two capitals of Russian Orthodoxy”⁷³². For this reason, he invited the Council of the UOC-MP to appeal to the leadership of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus with a proposal to include the day of Prince Vladimir not only as church but also as state holiday “just as the Day of Slavic Written Language and Culture is celebrated in our states on the feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius equal to the apostles”⁷³³.

The UOC-MP’s deep ties to the Russian Orthodox Church was confirmed in the speech delivered by Patriarch Aleksii in honor of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus’ (Patriarch Aleksii was in Ukraine from 26 to 28 July). He pointed out that the celebration of twenty years earlier portrayed a new era in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church, marking the beginning of a period of freedom, and the improvement in church life in the canonical territory of the Church, and pointed out that this was true especially for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which endured the struggle against the schisms and the divisions, and was able to overcome the temptation of them thanks to the broad rights of self-government, which allowed it to promote a spirit of unity and peace in relations between countries, peoples, and individuals thus “preserving the indivisible heritage of Holy Russia, bequeathed to us by the holy fathers”⁷³⁴. In connection with the events related to the celebrations of the anniversary of the Baptism of the Rus’, the Holy Synod of the UOC-MP adopted an *Appeal to the Holy Archbishop of Constantinople – New*

⁷³⁰ Obozrevatel, *Московский Патриархат возмущен универсалом Ющенко* [The Moscow Patriarchate is outraged by the universal Yushchenko, Kiev, 28-07-2006].

⁷³¹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий призвал всемерно поддерживать каноническую Украинскую Православную Церковь в ее стоянии за церковное единство* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii called on to support the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church in every possible way in her standing for church unity], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64495/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷³² Ibid.

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Речь Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия на торжественном заседании в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси Киев, дворец «Украина», 28 июля 2008 года* [Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia at a solemn meeting in honor of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus Kiev, Ukraine Palace, July 28, 2008], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64096/>, (last accessed August 2021).

*Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I*⁷³⁵, and an *Appeal to the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the visit to Ukraine of Primates and Representatives of Local Orthodox Churches*⁷³⁶. The appeals addressed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate pointed out the importance of not interfering in the process of healing the schism, and in particular, the importance of avoiding political interference. Indeed the last *Appeal* expressed the desire that all the initiatives to solve the religious issue in Ukraine should be coordinated with the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, which was the only officially recognized Ukrainian Church⁷³⁷. Talking of the interference of Ukrainian authorities in the celebrations, Metropolitan Kirill underscored that although in his speech to the Ukrainian nation delivered in Sofia Maidan on 25 July, President Yushchenko said that the state would not interfere in the life of the church, during the evening service of Patriarch of Constantinople at St. Sophia Cathedral, it was the presidential protocol that determined where certain representatives would be. It so happened that Metropolitan Vladimir's chair was pushed back a row, and the number of people who were allowed to attend this service did not reach ten people. Moreover, he raised other issues with the placement of Patriarch Aleksii's portraits in the streets of Kiev, and how before his arrival at the airport it was forbidden to raise the flags of the Patriarchates, Ukraine and Russia⁷³⁸.

However, according to some observers, the reason for Patriarch Aleksii's visit to Kiev, besides the desire to not put himself in a losing position next to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, above all was due to the former President of Russia's wish. Indeed during a meeting held on 14 April referring to bilateral relations between Russia and Ukraine, Patriarch Aleksii stated "we have many issues in the economic sphere. If there is any progress on the church front, we will be only too happy and will support it in every possible way"⁷³⁹. Then, thanks to the efforts of the DECR, it was possible to reach an agreement on the non-participation of the UOC-KP and of the UOAC in joint divine services. The same demand came from the Ecumenical Patriarchate through its representatives. With the help of Russian Foreign Ministry it was also possible to convince Archbishop Chrysostom II of New Justiniana and All Cyprus, who was then in Moscow on a

⁷³⁵ «Обращение к Святейшему Архиепископу Константинополя – Нового Рима и Вселенскому Патриарху Варфоломею I».

⁷³⁶ «Обращение Священного Синода к верным чадам Украинской Православной Церкви по случаю визита на Украину Предстоятелей и представителей Поместных Православных Церквей».

⁷³⁷ See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялось внеочередное заседание Священного Синода Украинской Православной Церкви [A regular meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79417/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷³⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24.07.2008/ «Власти Украины оставляют визит Алексия II в тени». Интервью митрополита Кирилла РИА «Новости» (опубликовано 24 июля 2008 года, [24.07.2008/ "The Ukrainian authorities are leaving the visit of Aleksii II in the shadows." Metropolitan Kirill's interview with RIA Novosti (published on July 24, 2008)], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64119/>, (last Accessed August 2021).

⁷³⁹ «У нас много вопросов в сфере экономики. Если по церковной линии тоже будут подвижки, мы будем только рады и будем это всячески поддерживать». See: Nezavisimaja gazeta, *Между Москвой и Константинополем [Between Moscow and Constantinople]*, 24-07-2008.

visit, to refuse to participate in the celebration of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia together with Bartholomew I⁷⁴⁰.

In his report at the 2008 Bishops' Council, Metropolitan Vladimir argued that thanks to the courageous opposition to the ideology of nationalism and the maintaining of the spiritual connection with the Russian Orthodox Church, the UOC-MP became the true Church of the Ukrainian people. Among the reasons of the schism, Vladimir mentioned the "politicization of Church life, the penetration of the nationalist ideology of ethnophyletism into the life of the Church, human pride and cultural polarization of Ukrainian society to the east and west, where the social base of the schism was the Western Ukrainian region, which became the focus of movement towards autocephaly"⁷⁴¹. Exactly for this reason, in December 2007 the Bishops' Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church condemned attempts to politicize church life, and Metropolitan Vladimir expressed the hope that representatives of the Kiev Patriarchate as well, whose platform was based on political Orthodoxy, took a similar step. Moreover, he pointed out that the UOAC substantially revised many positions that, according to him, previously "caused confusion among the clergy and believers of the Church"⁷⁴².

In the Post-Soviet period, the UOC-MP's position on the dialogue with the other Churches had been indeed determined by its fidelity to the Moscow Patriarchate, and by the support to Moscow Patriarchate's relation with Filaret. Indeed, a fundamental aspect that inspired Sabodan's policy was the respect of the canonical norms and traditions, and this for instance the reason why the work of the commission on dialogue with the UAOC created in 1995 had not continued because of problems within the UAOC. In fact he was happy to resume dialogue in 2005, under request of Methodius (Kudryakov)⁷⁴³. Nevertheless, Metropolitan Vladimir declared to be satisfied of the changes occurred within the UAOC with the denial of ethnophyletism, which for decades had been the basis of the autocephalous movement, and the statement that the claim to be the national Church of the Ukrainian people, should be understood on the basis of canonical tradition of Orthodoxy⁷⁴⁴.

I find it interesting to reflect upon three other aspects of Metropolitan Vladimir's speech. First of all, he pointed out that it was a mistake to declare that autocephaly was destructive for Church unity, because this statement was fundamentally in contradiction with the Orthodox teaching about the Church. Secondly, he considered the position

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid; Sedmina.ru, *Патриарх Константинопольский Варфоломей отказался совершать богослужение в Киеве в присутствии раскольников-филаретовцев* [Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople refused to perform a divine service in Kiev in the presence of dissenters-filaretovites], 15-07-2008.

⁷⁴¹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Автокефалия не может быть инструментом достижения консолидации Церкви»* [His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir: "Autocephaly cannot be an instrument for achieving the consolidation of the Church"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64465/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁷⁴² Ibid.

⁷⁴³ His Beatitude Vladimir Sabodan, *Доповіді, Звернення, Промови* [Reports, Addresses, Speeches], Tom XI, 2014, pp. 38.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 39.

according to which autocephaly was the only and uncontested way to solve out the Ukrainian issue equally ridiculous. Indeed, he pointed out that autocephaly cannot be an instrument for achieving the consolidation of the Church, but it can only help to consolidate a consensus already reached. Finally, he pointed out that for the two reasons mentioned above, the UOC-MP at that moment preferred to consider the issue of healing the schism in a pastoral way, which meant discussing problems related to the overcoming of the schism, but not discussing the status of the UOC-MP, because this was premature and not useful to Church life. He further added that the participation of the state in resolving Church problems might lead to new schisms, especially when, as was happening in Ukraine, “the actions of authorities go beyond the limits provided by the Constitution of Ukraine in the field of church-state relations”⁷⁴⁵.

In a recent “Zois spotlight”⁷⁴⁶, Andrew Fert highlighted that since 2008, “it was the UOC that campaigned for a widescale celebration of the event’s 1020th anniversary, this can be considered the then Church leader, Metropolitan Vladimir’s first step towards the independence from Moscow”⁷⁴⁷. A further sign of UOC-MP’s support for autocephaly was the appeal to Metropolitan Vladimir published by the Holy Synod of the UOC-MP on 20 December 2008, in which Vladimir was declared to be a worthy candidate as Patriarch and ensured their support during the voting at the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. The deputy head of the DECR immediately pointed out that this candidacy was illegal since according to the Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church the announcement of the list of candidates was possible only at the Bishops’ Council. This decision of the Ukrainian Synod was important not only in relation to the election of the next Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, but above all from a perspective of foreign relations. Other observers, such as Kirill Frolov, thought that this initiative indicated the UOC-MP’s intention to not be separated from the Moscow Patriarchate⁷⁴⁸. And, a further confirmation of this intention I think can be understood in the call of the Holy Synod of the UOC-MP on Patriarch Bartholomew to stop interfering in its affairs, delivered at the extraordinary meeting held on 23 July, and in its pointing out that the recent history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate showed how the interference of politics in Church affairs led to painful Church divisions⁷⁴⁹. Initiatives conducted with other Ukrainian Churches in order to solve the religious schism, and relations with the Moscow Patriarchate in terms of political affinity and collaboration did not hide Metropolitan Vladimir’s ambition to defend the autonomy of his Church from the Moscow Patriarchate, and Moscow Patriarchate’s aim to not break the unity with the Church of Kiev. Several times, talking of the issue of autocephaly, he argued that speeding up this historical path was not safe, and

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁶ Fert Andriy, *Never-ending Competition: Orthodox Celebrations in Ukraine*, Zois Spotlight, 29/2021, <https://en.zois-berlin.de/publications/never-ending-competition-orthodox-celebrations-in-ukraine>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Newru, *Украина выдвинула своего кандидата не по уставу [Ukraine has put forward its candidate not according to the charter]*, 23.12.2008.

⁷⁴⁹ Semina.ru, *Синод Украинской Православной Церкви призвал Патриарха Константинопольского прекратить вмешательство в ее дела [The Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church called on the Patriarch of Constantinople to stop interfering in its affairs]*, 24.07.2008.

that his main aim was to ensure that the formation of the local Church took place in accordance with spiritual canons. However, he was also sure of the difficulties of avoiding another split, since several dioceses and parishes wanted to remain under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. In general, in his opinion the issue was not urgent since the UOC-MP already had a broad autonomy with respect to the Moscow Patriarchate both in financial and administrative matters⁷⁵⁰. For instance, on 19 October 1998, the Christian People's Union sent a letter to the Patriarch of Moscow Aleksii II which was proposed to study and positively resolve the issue of granting autocephaly to the UOC. The letter noted that the UOC-KP and the UOAC planned to unite the three branches of Orthodoxy, but the UOC considered this solution irrational, considering the "non-canonical" status of the two Churches. Indeed, the Christian People's Union was not the first party to try this way to solve out the problem of uniting Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Commenting on the situation, the Primate of the UOC noted that regarding the granting of autocephaly, the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church could consider only the presentation of a request by the Bishops Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; of course, he noted that besides asking bishops, the expression of the will of believers was also necessary in carrying out the path through the independence of the Church⁷⁵¹. In this sense, celebration of the 1020th anniversary confirmed the policy led for twenty years, and did not reveal a stronger attitude toward independence. Regardless, as highlighted by N. Denisenko⁷⁵², one of the most significant symbols of the UOC-MP's loyalty to Moscow in this period was the withdrawal of the official petition for autocephaly to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1996. The following developments that occurred under the leadership of Metropolitan Vladimir confirmed the loyalty of the Ukrainian Metropolia to the Moscow Patriarchate under Vladimir's leadership, although he initiated a modest Ukrainization of parishes that desired to begin this process (that is, to liturgize in Ukrainian, and its definition as local Orthodox Church connected to its autonomous status). As for autocephaly, the Metropolia appeared to have defined the canonical path as one requiring absolute and unanimous support for autocephaly in the Church⁷⁵³. A further confirmation of this came from the interview to Drabinko, personal assistant to Metropolitan Vladimir, who pointed out that as they had been moving towards their status of independent Church, autonomous or autocephaly was not important, because the most important status for them was the status of unity, and not being used as an instrument of the Moscow Patriarchate. He pointed out that the policy of the Moscow Patriarchate, conducted in the country when Metropolitan Vladimir headed the Church, respected society and met its support, but the policy conducted since Metropolitan Kirill became Patriarch changed this fundamental pillar in the bilateral relations among the

⁷⁵⁰ Blagovest.info, *Митрополит Владимир Сабодан - За Автокефалию, Но "Малой Кровью"* [Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan-For Autocephaly, But With "Little Blood"], 21-11-1996.

⁷⁵¹ Estonian Agency of News, *Христианско-Народный Союз За Автокефалию Упц* [Christian-People's Union For Autocephaly Of The Uoc], 19.10.1998.

⁷⁵² Denysenko Nicholas, *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine*.

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

Ownership of church properties

Another important issue that characterized these years had been the dispute tied to the property of Kiev Pechersk Lavra. On 29 October 1994, monks of Kiev monasteries, representatives of the clergy, and laity of thirty dioceses (a total of about two thousand people) of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP, marched in a procession from the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra to the building of the Verkhovna Rada and the presidential administration of Ukraine. Two People's Deputies, N. Vitrenko and V. Marchenko, joined the procession. Participants demanded to stop the intervention of some members of the Parliament in the affairs of the Church, and to implement the President's order on the transferring of

754

From the interview to Alexander Drabinko, done on 4 March 2020, Spaso-Preobrazhensky Sobor. «но позиция есть московский патриархат в украине в общем то начиная с 90 91 го года задекларировал свое движение к автокефалии. был собор в 91 м году и было решение собора просить автокефалию от московского патриархата. после этого собора филарет был смещен на его место был избран митрополит владимир с которым я много лет трудился. наша была концепция такая мы украинская православная церковь это наша идентичность которая в единстве с вселенским православием. то есть мы украинская церковь. но мы если не если нас признают мы но мы киев. в этом смысле. поэтому даже во времена ющенко у нас не было проблем. то есть мы в общем то декларировали и двигались к определенному православию статусу. кто то из нас хотел автокефалии кто то из нас хотел оставаться автономным в рамках русской церкви то есть как исторически и был была позиция митрополита владимира. для нас важен не статуса единства. мы не хотим потерять единство но мы. поэтому нас первостепенной является и детства. но мы движемся к своему независимого статуса. а будет он автокефальной или автономным. это неважно. мы сами тут определимся с этим вопросом. сначала смерть митрополита владимира война в общем то изменила историю немножко получается на сегодняшний день. скажем так московское руководство московского патриархата декларирует что им не нужен автокефальной статус. насколько это соответствует мнению всех священников и верующих это сомнительно. потому что этот вопрос не рассматривался и на соборах. но даже если с другой стороны это право верующих принадлежать к той или иной церкви по тому или иному патриархату я не думаю что это очень принципиальный вопрос. мне кажется если бы московский патриархат и россия не использовали церковь как инструмент». (min: 48.19-50.59). «мне кажется что сейчас ситуация изменилась но она очень зависима от. той политике которую проводит кремль и той политике которую сегодня проводит патриарх кирилл. потому что скажем так к сожалению его политику мудрой назвать нельзя потому что когда его избирали мы надеялись что он будет как раз демонстрировать что то более скажем так разнообразное более мудрое. но получилось что он оказался более имперским более советским чем можно было ожидать. это к сожалению так произошло. возможно такая конъюнктура политической ситуации возможно такая плата его за возможность быть московским патриархом. но мы живем в другом немножко измерении нам не все понятно. но это точно не способствует авторитету московского патриархата. свежие исследования буквально сегодня мне прислали свежая социология. фактически доверие к православной церкви украины среди украинцев %78 недоверие %50 плюс 55 процентов доверия к греко католикам. плюс в плюс. а у московского патриархата минус. но это говорит о настроениях в обществе. и к сожалению та политика которую проводит московский патриархат сегодня для ну по крайней мере не приемлет с украинским обществом та политика которую московский патриархат проводил митрополита владимира принималась обществом. и московский патриархат совершенно спокойно мог быть не только самой большой по количеству общин церкви но и по уважению по отношению к которую никто не называл не украинское. а вот за эти несколько лет. та политика та позиция те заявления те действия которые были сделаны не знаю умышленно и умышленно так сложилось не с мая или под диктовку это неважно. но факт остается фактом падение доверия падение отношения к церкви как к моральному авторитету. это происходи» (min. 00.10-02.39).

five buildings and three Churches of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, at that moment owned by a museum-reserve to the use of UOC- MP. In addition, they asked that the Italian embassy and the representative office of the Philip Morris Tobacco company, and other commercial structures be evicted from the territory of the Lavra, as soon as possible. Official sources revealed that, as result of negotiations between the head of the Department of Internal Policy of the administration, President Sergey Teleshun and head of the State Committee of Regions, Anatoly Koval, reached an agreement with representatives of the clergy of the UOC-MP to conduct an inventory of all the premises present on the territory of the Lavra, and of those transferred to the Church⁷⁵⁵. In mid-October 1996, in Kiev, The Union of Writers of Ukraine, and the All Ukrainian Society "Prosvita" named after Taras Shevchenko held a press conference dedicated to the transfer of several buildings of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). The back-story was the decision of President of Ukraine Kuchma, who on 2 October, instructed the head of the Kiev administration O. Omelchuck to investigate the reasons why the decision of transferring the buildings under the jurisdiction of the museum was not implemented in time. Speaking at a press conference, the director of the "Kiev-Pechersk Reserve" S. Krolevets told the audience how badly the barbarians from the UOC-MP treated the Lavra buildings previously transferred to them, indeed, back in 1991-92 they demolished a two storey building of the nineteenth century, and built a new house in its place. Worse, in January 1996, the iconostasis of the Krestovozdvizhenskoy Church was re-gilded, causing irreparable damage to that monument to the decorative arts of the eighteenth century. In addition, he added that in July during the electrical work in the Trapesnoy Church, the monumental painting of the Church was damaged. Afterwards Krolevets spoke with the writer Y. Mushketik, academician P. Tronko, historian L. Silin, and the head and the expert of the analytical Council of Kiev, Maxim Strykha, who unanimously stated that the transfer of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra to the UOC-MP would have been a "terrible outrage on the Ukrainian national shrine"⁷⁵⁶, thus contributing to further aggravating inter-confessional relations and leading to "unforeseen consequences"⁷⁵⁷.

Speaking of the procession for the transfer of the building of the Lavra to the UOC-MP, Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan) called the transferring "necessary" and inspired only by the believers' will, not by political reasons. He denied that his Church was a financial feeder of the Moscow Patriarchate, and pointed out that it gained financial independence even before the split created by Metropolitan Filaret. On 21 April 2003 probably in accordance with the decree of the President of Ukraine on the return of the property, 12 monks of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate settled in the corridor of the building number 68 of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra. They demanded to transfer the premises of the reserve to the Church. Metropolitan Vladimir expressed his support

⁷⁵⁵ Blagovest.ru, *Верующие Упц-Мп Требуют Передачи Церкви Помещений Киево-Печерской Лавры* [Believers Of The Uoc-Mp Demand The Transfer Of The Premises Of The Kiev Pechersk Lavra To The Church], 04-11-1994.

⁷⁵⁶ Blagovest, *Передача Зданий Киево-Печерской Лавры Упц-Мп: Украинская Интеллигенция Негодуем* [Transfer Of The Buildings Of The Kiev-Pechersk Lavra Of The Uoc-Mp: The Ukrainian Intelligentsia Is Indignant], 23-10-1996.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

to them. Indeed, since 1990s the Kiev Pechersk Lavra had been divided in two parts: the upper Lavra remained under the jurisdiction of the state, and was an historical and cultural reserve, the lower was transferred to the UOC's monks⁷⁵⁸.

On 29 July 2004, Metropolitan Vladimir in the course of his arch pastoral visit to the Donetsk diocese, met with Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich; the meeting was held at the Holy Dormition Svyatogorsk Lavra. The meeting aimed to discuss the progress of the restoration of the Lavra, which on 9 March 2004 by a decision of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church received the official status of "lavra". At that moment, Viktor Yanukovich personally headed the Board of Trustees for the restoration of the Churches destroyed during the totalitarian regime⁷⁵⁹.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) – Russian Orthodox Church

On 12 November 1993, the Chairman of the armed forces of Ukraine Ivan Ily met with the newly elected Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch of Kiev and all Rus'-Ukraine Vladimir I. Ily assured the Patriarch of his and his authorities support, and discussed with him also some of the issues on financing the activities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Vladimir and his Deputy Filaret affirmed that they would seek the unification of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev and Moscow Patriarchate⁷⁶⁰.

As mentioned above, in 1994 Krawchuk lost to Kuchma, who during the election campaigns was sharply criticized by the Church of the Kiev Patriarchate. Having come to power, the President started to pursue a more balanced religious policy than his predecessor, in fact he did not provide any explicit support to any of the Orthodox jurisdictions in Ukraine. Nevertheless, he well remembered the insults the Church of the Kiev Patriarchate addressed against him, when he was labeled as an apparatus with brainchild⁷⁶¹. For the UOC-KP this declaration meant the end of state support, and of course the beginning of a period in which it felt a serious threat to its position. In the meanwhile, dissatisfied with his policy, in 1994 the "autocephalous" bishops began to leave the "schismatic" Filaret. Some joined Demetrius (Yarema), others (the majority of them) came back to the canonical Church. One of the most influential false bishops

⁷⁵⁸ Russkaja linija, *Митрополит Владимир поддержал киево-печерских монахов [The Russian Line (St. Petersburg), Metropolitan Vladimir supported the Kiev-Pechersk monks]*, 02-04-2003.

⁷⁵⁹ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского Владимира с премьер-министром Украины Виктором Януковичем [Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/07/7406-1/>, (last Accessed August 2021).

⁷⁶⁰ PostFactum, *Патриарх Киевский Владимир Намерен Объединить Украинскую Православную Церковь Киевского И Московского Патриархатов [Patriarch Of Kiev Vladimir Intends To Unite The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Kiev And Moscow Patriarchates]*, 12-11-1993.

⁷⁶¹ "чисто аппаратным детищем". My translation. See: *Интервью С Кандидатом В Президенты Украины Леонидом Кучмой [Interview With Ukrainian Presidential Candidate Leonid Kuchma]*, 22-06-1994, https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/segodnia_93_95_98_99/1121896.htm, (last accessed August 2021).

(лжеархиепеев), Antony (Masendych), returned to the Moscow Patriarchate. He was received in the presbyterian of which he was a part before he left, and soon after penance he was consecrated bishop of Bernaul. Together with him, the Archbishop of Vinnytsia and Bratslav, Spiridon (Babsky), the "bishop" of Zhytomyr and Ovruch Sofrony (Vlasov), the "bishop" of Kharkiv and Poltava Roman (Balashchuk), and the "bishop" of Yagotinsky John (Siopko) announced their withdrawal from the UOC — KP. They motivated their withdrawal with the lack of apostolic succession in the schism and with the lack of ecclesiasticism as such. They declared: "during the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Council in Kiev, the bishops who left the schism wrote in a statement — 'we became aware that our ordinations were invalid, which until now has been carefully hidden from us'"⁷⁶². Filaret was not particularly worried for their decision to leave, on the contrary, he was glad to replace them with clergy who had not blocked his path. Their departure, meant that bishop Vladimir Romanyuk was to remain completely without support; Drabinko reported that in that situation, the Patriarch decided to appeal to the metropolitan department citing the fact that Filaret was trying to poison him and he was afraid of him and of his entourage, and thus asked for protection. Such fears were not unfounded: the security guards allocated during the Synod held on 19-21 May, stopped five attempts of people from Filaret's entourage and of his deputies to dispatch the Patriarch, who had deviated from their control. Romaniuk spoke about Filaret's connections with criminal structures located in Kiev and intended to carry out an audit about the financial and economic activities of the diocese of Kiev headed by Filaret. He asked the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Kiev for assistance in conducting the audit: Romaniuk was particularly interested in the fate of the cash desk of the Kiev Exarchate assigned to Filaret. On 4 May 1995 he issued a Decree on the dismissal of Filaret for gross violation of the subordination he had to respect from his post of "deputy". Filaret refused to fulfill the terms of it, arguing that since he was elected to the post of "deputy Patriarch" by the Council without the Council's confirmation, Romaniuk's decree was to be considered invalid. Supporters of Filaret organized a picketing of the residence of the Patriarch, who after some actions of pressure, decided to withdraw his Decree. In June 1995, with the intent of finding a way out from that situation, Romaniuk turned to the Patriarch of the UAOC and an oral agreement was reached among them on the mutual recognition of their patriarchal powers, in the event of an unification of the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. However, Romaniuk could not finish any of the cases he started: he passed away on 14 July under mysterious and unclear circumstances.

The events occurred during the funeral of Romaniuk worsened the already difficult religious and political scenario in Ukraine. Plokhyy⁷⁶³ explains that the incident was caused by the fight among the UOC-KP and the Moscow Patriarchate about ownership of church properties. In fact, while the Moscow Patriarchate had rooted itself in the Kievan Caves

⁷⁶² Postfactum, *Группа Священнослужителей Украинской Православной Церкви Обратилась К Патриарху Московскому И Всея Руси С Просьбой О Присоединении К Московскому Патриархату* [A Group Of Clergymen Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Appealed To The Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia With A Request To Join The Moscow Patriarchate], 23-02-1994; Drabinko Alexander, "Православие в посттоталитарной Украине. pp. 118.

⁷⁶³ Plokhyy Serhii, *Church, State and Nation in Ukraine*.

Monastery, the Kiev Patriarchate had taken hold of the less prestigious Vydubychi Monastery. However, the main prize was the Cathedral of St. Sophia, which remained under the complete control of the state. In Kiev rumors circulated about the government's readiness to assign the churches of St. Cyril, St. Andrew, and a number of other city churches to the UOC-MP. Given that situation, the UOC-KP decided to do an attempt to bury its patriarch on the grounds of St. Sophia, thereby gaining at least a foothold on its territory, and doing an attempt to "stake a claim to the "greatest shrine of East Slavic Christendom"⁷⁶⁴. The government of course opposed the interment of the Patriarch at the Cathedral (it was under the pressure of the UOC-MP toward which shifted the balance of religious policy with the Kuchma's election). However, Filaret decided to yield to the demands of the paramilitary Ukrainian National Assembly-Ukrainian National Self-Defense (UNA-UNSO), and to nationalist deputies including the former president Kravchuck, and thus decided to process to St. Sophia for the burial despite government opposition. The conflict that followed was a real tragedy. Plokyh reported that: "a police cordon was brought down en route, but a special-purpose police squad barricaded itself on the territory of St. Sophia, preventing the funeral procession from entering. Lengthy negotiations between the deputies and government representatives were unproductive. It was then decided to dig the patriarch's grave and bury him at the entrance to St. Sophia. The government reacted by ordering the militia to clear the area in front of the cathedral and not to permit the interment of the patriarch on St. Sophia Square. But by the time the police made their way onto the square and began beating and violently dispersing those present, singling out UNA-UNSO members, it was too late: the casket had already been lowered into a hastily dug grave"⁷⁶⁵. These tragic events, known as "Black Tuesday", according to Plokyh contributed to transforming, in one day, the figure of Filaret, from a suspected murder, to a symbol of the national democratic forces of the country, whose support set the stage for his election as Patriarch at the future UOC-KP's sobor.

During the meeting with journalists, the People's Deputy of Ukraine, Taras Stetskiv, argued that he did not rule out the possibility that the massacre which took place on 18 July 1995 in Kiev, during the funeral of the Patriarch of the UOC-KP Vladimir, had indirect relations with the involvement of the Moscow Patriarchate which was trying to compromise the position of the Church of the Kievan Patriarchate, and which could count on the support of President Kuchma. The same point of view was shared by the leaders of the People's Movement Vyacheslav Chornoi, who pointed out that the President of Ukraine was obliged to apologize with thousands of believers for the event of the "bloody Tuesday". He added that the tragedy should become an occasion for the beginning of negotiations between representatives of all faiths existing on the territory of Ukraine, with the aim of building an "independent state"⁷⁶⁶.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid, pp. 20.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 21.

⁷⁶⁶ Press Lvov, *В Событиях На Софийской Площади В Киеве Замешана Православная Церковь Московского Патриархата? [Is The Orthodox Church Of The Moscow Patriarchate Involved In The Events On Sofia Square In Kiev?]*, 27-07-1995.

Disappointment for the events on 18 July was expressed also by President Kuchma, who pointed out that, although the Church in Ukraine was legally separated from the State, and although he, as President, was against the attempts to create a State-Church (he referred to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate), he, as person, would be happy for the unity of Churches in Ukraine. At the same time, former President L. Kravchuck, accused of having incited clashes during the funerals, on 18 July sent a statement in which he accused Moscow of opposing Ukrainian authorities and the Kiev Patriarchate. The events also led to a serious split between the President of Ukraine and his Prime Minister, Yevgeny Marchuk, indeed confidential sources revealed that instructions about the attack on the funeral procession came from the presidential administration, bypassing the government⁷⁶⁷. Metropolitan Kirill commented on the all situation as "evidence of catastrophe, chaos and disorder in religious life of Ukraine"⁷⁶⁸. He stressed that "the deceased was not a canonical Patriarch, although he had led a schismatic group that emerged on a nationalistic wave"⁷⁶⁹. He presented the incident as the "attempt of authorities to protect the national shrine, the St. Sophia Cathedral, from one of these groups [...]"⁷⁷⁰. According to him, "such groups, relying on political forces, sow enmity among believers"⁷⁷¹, and added that the events were a "violence in response to violence, a visible sign of what society can become if issues of interfaith and inter-religious life are not properly addressed"⁷⁷². He stressed "Ukraine is an Orthodox country, the absolute majority of people belong to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, this church has full autonomy, but its ties are traditionally connected with the Moscow Patriarchate, and through it with all its fullness the Russian Orthodox Church"⁷⁷³. Finally, he warned that when Churches and religion are used for political purposes, the results are destructive consequences.

During the press conference held on 4 October 1995 at the residence of the Kiev Patriarchate, it was reported to journalists that there were two candidates for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate. The two candidates were the patriarchal *locum tenens*, Metropolitan Filaret, and Metropolitan Andrey of Galicia, administrator of the Diocese of Ivano-Frankivsk. There were problems with the venue of the Council, also because all the three Orthodox denominations that currently existed in Ukraine claimed

⁷⁶⁷ Sevodnya, Леонид Кучма Выразил "Сожаление И Озабоченность" В Связи С Событиями 18 Июля Конфиденциальные Источники Сообщают, Что Указания Об Атаке Похоронной Процессии Шли Из Администрации Президента [Leonid Kuchma Expressed "Regret And Concern" In Connection With The Events Of 18 July Confidential Sources Report That Instructions About The Attack Of The Funeral Procession Came From The Presidential Administration], 28-07-1995.

⁷⁶⁸ Itar Tass, Ситуацию в религиозной жизни на Украине прокомментировал митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad commented on the situation in religious life in Ukraine], 19-07-1995.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ «Украина - православная страна, абсолютное большинство людей принадлежит к Украинской Православной Церкви, - подчеркнул митрополит. - Эта церковь имеет полную автономию, но своими узами традиционно связана с Московским Патриархатом, а через него со всей полнотой Русской Православной Церкви», Ibid.

rights to celebrate in St. Sophia of Kiev⁷⁷⁴. The Holy Synod of the UOC-KP decided that the question of electing a new Patriarch would be discussed by the Local Council convened for 20 October. The Holy Synod pointed out that the elections should be held no sooner than three months after the death of Patriarch Vladimir (Romanyuk). The *locum tenens* of the patriarchal see, Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko), declared to the correspondent of “Ukrinform” that he was going to run for the post of head of the UOC-KP along with other candidates. Members of the Synod appealed to the highest representative of the Republic with a request to allow the Local Council to be held in St. Sophia Cathedral, where the previous Patriarch of the UOC-KP was elected⁷⁷⁵. Opening the Local Council, the *locum tenens* of the Patriarchal See of the UOC-KP, Metropolitan Filaret, stated that not only the future of the Kiev Patriarchate, but also the fate of the united Orthodox Church in Ukraine depended on how the Council would develop. He added: “Patriarch Vladimir in his entire life did not do as much as he did with his death, because after the events on Sofia Square, all national democratic forces united around the Ukrainian Orthodox Church –Kiev Patriarchate”⁷⁷⁶, and that the guarantor of the UOC-KP path toward the independence should be a Ukrainian Local National Church. The Council was attended by representatives of the Orthodox Churches from the United States, Canada, and a number of other countries. The day before, the Council had nominated Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko) as the only candidate for the post of head of the UOC-KP⁷⁷⁷. During the Council the return of the St. Sophia Cathedral, of churches and buildings of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, the Pochaev Lavra, the Vydubych Monastery, buildings of St. Michael’s Monastery, St. Andrew’s Cathedral, and a number of other religious buildings was also discussed. In the resolution adopted, the Local Council also insisted that the authorities of Ukraine decided to rebury Patriarch Vladimir. On 18 July, adherents of the UOC-KP voluntarily, without the permission of the authorities, tried to send a funeral procession to St. Sophia Cathedral and bury the body of Vladimir there. The funeral procession ended with a bloody clash between participants and the police. After two days of negotiations with the government and the presidential administration, it was communicated to the UOC-KP that not only was not possible to rebury Patriarch Vladimir in St. Sophia, since the Cathedral was the oldest architectural monument in Ukraine under the UNESCO patronage, but it was furthermore not possible to organize the ceremony of enthronement of the new Patriarch Filaret there, because the Cathedral was under renovation. In his final speech at the Council, Filaret declared that his only task was the creation of a national Church in Ukraine and pointed out that the schism was inspired from the outside. However, the Patriarch refused the proposal of some delegates to create a reconciliation commission with four bishops of Western Ukraine’s regions; as result of the refusal, the delegates declared their withdrawal from the UOC-KP⁷⁷⁸. In the

⁷⁷⁴ Itar Tass, *На патриарший престол Украинской Православной церкви претендуют два кандидата* [Two candidates are applying for the patriarchal throne of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 04-10-1995.

⁷⁷⁵ Itar Tass, *Рубрика: Украина-Россия-Религия* [Rubric: Ukraine, Russia, Religion], 27-09-1995.

⁷⁷⁶ Interfacs, *В Киеве Проходит Поместный Собор Украинской Православной Церкви - Киевский Патриархат* [The Local Council Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church - The Kiev Patriarchate Is Being Held In Kiev], 20-10-1995.

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ ItarTass, *Украина-Церковь-Собор* [Ukraine, Church, Council], 21-10-1995.

press conference held in Kiev on 24 October 1995, Filaret attributed the decision of the 4 bishops to join the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to a lack of support for the election of Filaret as Patriarch of the UOC-KP, who according to Moscow was just a monk because he did not keep his vow of celibacy and was a former agent of the KGB, further proof of Moscow Patriarchate's attempts to destroy the establishment of an independent national Church in Ukraine. In addition, Filaret argued that his Church would seek the reburial of Patriarch Vladimir on the territory of St. Sophia Cathedral by any means⁷⁷⁹, since in his opinion this was the only admissible residency of the UOC-KP. Problems with the burial of Patriarch Vladimir continued further though: the newspaper "За вільну Україну" reported that on the night of 15 October 1995 the grave of the Patriarch of Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate, Vladimir, was desecrated by a supporter of the UOC-MP. As declared by Vyacheslav Seregin, ataman of the Ukrainian Cossacks who was on duty near the grave at that moment, a woman who allegedly came to clean the grave, partially excavated it, scattered the wreaths, stole the portrait of the Patriarch, and tried to escape. She told the police office that she was a nun of the Pokrovsky Monastery⁷⁸⁰.

Persecutions of believers

In October 1996, the head of the UOC-KP decided to send a letter to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, asking him to "make every possible effort" to stop the persecution of the parishioners belonging to the UOC-KP. Indeed, Filaret described the policy of the Moscow Patriarchate towards Russian Orthodox communities under the jurisdiction of the Kiev Patriarchate as religious intolerance. The reason for the appeal addressed to the head of the Russian State was the new meeting of the Moscow Regional Arbitration Court scheduled for 8 October which should decide the issue of ownership of the Epiphany Cathedral in Noginsk, near Moscow. This Church, headed by Archbishop of Bogorodsky Adrian (Starina), was the Cathedral of the Russian "Filaretovites". According to Denisenko, this Church was the "main shrine of the Kiev Patriarchate in the Russian Federation"⁷⁸¹. On 6 April 1996, the Moscow Regional Arbitration Court dismissed the claim of the Moscow Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church and assigned the right to use the Epiphany Church to the community of the UOC-KP. However, the Prosecutor General's Office protested the arbitration ruling, and the Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation annulled it. Patriarch Filaret wrote to President Yeltsin: "By owning thousands of Orthodox churches in Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarchate is inciting the Russian authorities against the parish of the Ukrainian Church operating in the Moscow

⁷⁷⁹ Postfactum, *Московский Патриархат Делает Все, Чтобы На Украине Погибла Независимая Национальная Церковь, Считает Патриарх Упцкп* [The Moscow Patriarchate Is Doing Everything To Ensure That An Independent National Church Uoc-Kp], 24-10-1995.

⁷⁸⁰ Postfactum, *Сторонница Украинской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата Осквернила Могила Патриарха Владимира* [A Supporter Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Moscow Patriarchate Desecrated The Grave Of Patriarch], 17-10-1995.

⁷⁸¹ Blagovest, *Церковный Конфликт В Подмосковном Ногинске: Филарет (Денисенко) Апеллирует К Ельцину* [Church Conflict In Noginsk, Near Moscow: Filaret (Denisenko) Appeals To Yeltsin], 04-10-1996.

region”⁷⁸². The head of the UOC-KP also threatened to use his influence on the Ukrainian State’s leadership in order to respond with adequate measures to the “persecution” of the Moscow Patriarchate⁷⁸³.

On 8 October, also Gleb Yakunin former priest and nationalistic deputy, appointed by the head of the UOC-KP Filaret (Denisenko) as a priest of the Epiphany Church in Noginsk on 7 February 1994, threatened the Moscow Patriarchate with the seizure of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra by Ukrainian nationalistic organizations. In his opinion, the seizure of the Lavra was possible in the case of the transfer of the Epiphany Cathedral in the Moscow suburb of Nogisk to the administration of the Moscow Patriarchate. However, according to people who have known Gleb Pavlovich for long time, he previously very much disliked Adrian (Starina), who was elected by Patriarch Filaret to the rank of Archbishop of Bogorodsky⁷⁸⁴. In any case, on 8 October, the Moscow Regional Arbitration Court did not make any decision; judges took a break, and communicated that they needed more time to study the case⁷⁸⁵.

On 19 November 1996, President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma received Patriarch Filaret, who had requested to meet with him. A source reported that they discussed the territory on which the St. Michael’s Golden-Domen Cathedral and the monastery under the same name had formerly been located⁷⁸⁶. Patriarch Filaret asked the President of Ukraine to transfer the territory of the monastery to the UOC-KP in order to allow the restoration of the cathedral, but the President replied that the issue raised was not easy to solve since there was still no place available to transfer the organizations currently located on the site. During the conversation, Filaret raised questions about the establishment of chaplains in the Ukrainian army, about the teaching in the schools of the Law of God, and about the need of creating a State Committee to prepare the celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the nativity of Christ. Indeed, the meeting among Kuchma and Filaret represented a sort of turning point in the tactic of the President: since he understood that in case of elections he could not hope for the support of the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, he was trying to establish contacts with the UOC-KP and with the UCGG. Kuchma’s distrust of the UOC-MP’s electorate was caused by the recent religious procession of this Church to the presidential palace (the procession was a reaction to the presidential decree with which was canceled the transferring of all Lavra’s buildings to the UOC-MP), this suggested that in the possible presidential elections of 1997, the UOC-MP might support the then current Prime Minister Pavel Lazorenko⁷⁸⁷.

On 19 February 1997, the Ukrainian Orthodox Brotherhood of St. Andrews (UOC-KP),

⁷⁸² Ibid.

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ Blagovest.info, *Глеб Якунин Снова Угрожает [Gleb Yakunin Threatens Again]*, 08-10-1996.

⁷⁸⁵ Blagovest.info, *Конфликт Вокруг Ногинского Храма: Суд Берёт Паузу [The Conflict Over The Noginsky Temple: The Court Takes A Pause]*, 11-10-1996.

⁷⁸⁶ The cathedral was blown up by the Bolsheviks in the 30s; in the 90s, the remaining buildings became the office of the UOAC, of the Christian Bank and of a number of other organizations.

⁷⁸⁷ Blavest.info, *Президент Украины Встретился С Патриархом Филаретом [The President Of Ukraine Met With Patriarch Filaret]*, 21-11-1996.

represented by its chairman, former deputy of the Supreme Council Alexander Gudyma, issued a statement regarding the untimely request of autocephaly from the ROC presented by the UOC-MP's Bishops' Council on 15 February 1996. This decision of the Bishops' Council was considered by the author of the statement as proof of the lack of the UOC-MP's "declared independence and autonomy in the administration"⁷⁸⁸. The statement pointed out that the activities carried out by the pro-Moscow hierarchy of the UOC-MP were becoming more and more threatening for Ukrainian states and its society. Indeed, in their opinion, the UOC-MP's hierarchy, by sowing uncertainty among believers, speculating on temporary economic difficulties, manipulating the consciousness of society, corrupting public morality, clearly demonstrated its anti-state, anti-Ukrainian anti-social essence. Therefore, the statement's authors called on President of Ukraine and government and Supreme's in order to protect the state and the society from the harmful influence of UOC-MP's pro-Moscow hierarchy⁷⁸⁹.

On 2 December 1996, Metropolitan Kirill released to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* an interview in which he declared that the decision of depriving Patriarch Filaret of his Episcopal dignity was definitive⁷⁹⁰; however he did not rule out the possibility of accepting him as a simple monk. Kirill pointed out that in his opinion Filaret had his own way to repentance⁷⁹¹. The Bishops' Council held on 18-23 February 1997 stated with sorrow that the monk Filaret did not answer the call to repentance addressed to him on behalf of the Mother Church and, after having been warned by the Bishops' Council held in 1994 that "in case of continuation ... of the atrocities, he will be excommunicated from the Church through anathematization"⁷⁹², he continued his "schismatic" activities, and extended them beyond the boundaries of the Russian Orthodox Church, thus contributing to the deepening of the schism in the fraternal Bulgarian Church and entering in communion with schismatics from other Local Orthodox Churches, thus criminally neglecting the justified reproach on the part of the legitimate Church authorities – despite the deprivation of dignity he continued to perform "sacrilegious divine services"⁷⁹³, including

⁷⁸⁸ Blagovest.info, *Украинское Православное Братство Святого Андрея Первозванного Выступило С Заявлением Об Антигосударственной Деятельности Упц-Мп [The Ukrainian Orthodox Brotherhood Of St. Andrew The First-Called Issued A Statement About The Anti-State Activities Of The Uoc-Mp]*, 21-02-1997.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ although according to the rules of the Orthodox Church, persons who were expelled from the Holy order for having committed serious crimes, cannot be rehabilitated to their rank, there are many precedents of canceling this decision. Examples may be considered the Patriarch Nikon (XVII century), the priest G. Petrov subjected to heavy punishment for being close to the party of Social Revolutionaries, and then restored to the rank of priest by the Local Concil held in 1917-1918, Vladyka Jonathan (Yeletsikh) restored to the rank of bishop after having been defrocked by Patriarch Filaret (Denisenko) for presumed machinations against him. See: Blagovest.info, *Митрополит Кирилл: Филарету Денисенко Архидиаконский Сан Не Будет Возвращен Ни При Каких Условиях [Metropolitan Kirill: The Episcopal Dignity Will Not Be Returned To Filaret Denisenko Under Any Circumstances]*, 02-12-1996.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² «в случае продолжения... бесчинства он будет отлучен от Церкви через анафематствование». See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Итоговые документы Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви 18/23-2-1997 [Final documents of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church 18/23-23-1997]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86248/#1>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁷⁹³ «святотатственные богослужения», *ibid.*

blasphemous false ordinations. Moreover, another guilt of Filaret was that without having a holy dignity, he, to the temptation of many, dared to call himself Patriarch of Kiev and All Russia-Ukraine, while there was already a canonical Primate in Ukraine who, in the rank of Metropolitan lawfully occupied the ancient Kievan pulpit. The Council added that unfortunately monk Filaret did not stop blaspheming the episcopate, the clergy and the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that was “in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate and through it with the Entire Ecumenical Orthodox Church”⁷⁹⁴ thus continuing to damage Orthodoxy in Ukraine with his criminal acts⁷⁹⁵. In the statement of the UOC-KP published on 20 February 1997, it was pointed out that no decisions, resolution, or any other actions of the Russian Orthodox Church have any canonical or legal force for either the UOC-KP or its flock. The statement was released in relation with the Russian Orthodox Church Bishops’ Council’s decision on the excommunication of Patriarch Filaret (beside Patriarch Filaret, the Council also excommunicated the former ROC’s priest Gleb Yakunin)⁷⁹⁶. It is worth highlighting that the UOC-KP’ statement emphasized that the UOC-KP was a national, local, autocephalous Orthodox Church in which no local Church can interfere, including the ROC. In addition, the UOC-KP’s statement called the Bishops’ Council’s decision “surprising”, since Patriarch Filaret was excommunicated from a Church to which he did not belong anymore⁷⁹⁷. Indeed, Patriarch Filaret confirmed that in his opinion the Ukrainian Orthodox Church should not be submitted to the Moscow Patriarchate, and this kind of subordination would be tantamount to subordinating the Verkhovna Rada to the Russian Parliament. He pointed out that if Ukraine and Russia are equal and independent states, then their Churches should also be independent⁷⁹⁸.

Indeed the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate published a comment to an interview released by Patriarch Filaret to the Ukrainian newspaper “Literaturnaya Ukraina”: the comment was actually a list of the lies of which Patriarch Filaret was guilty in the ROC’s opinion. First of all, it was highlighted that Filaret’s declaration according to which “a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was held in Istanbul, at which it was officially confirmed that Ukraine is the canonical territory of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople”⁷⁹⁹, was a clear misinformation, officially refused by the Patriarchate of Constantinople on 8 August 2000.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, *Акт об отлучении от Церкви Глеба Павловича Якунина [The act of excommunication from the Church of Gleb Pavlovich Yakunin]*, Official site of the Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/417802.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁷⁹⁷ Intefax, *Решения Русской Православной Церкви Не Имеют Юридической Силы Для Упц Киевского Патриархата - Заявление Синода Упц-Кп [The Decisions Of The Russian Orthodox Church Have No Legal Force For The Uoc Of The Kiev Patriarchate-Statement Of The Synod Of The Uoc-Kp]*, 20-02-1997.

⁷⁹⁸ ImaPress, *Подчинение Упц Московской Патриархии Равносильно Зависимости Верховной Рады От Российского Парламента, Считает Патриарх Филарет [Subordination Of The Uoc To The Moscow Patriarchate Is Equivalent To The Dependence Of The Verkhovna Rada On The Russian Parliament, Patriarch Filaret Believes]*, 26-06-1998.

⁷⁹⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Очередная ложь лжепатриарха Филарета (Денисенко) [Another lie of the “false” Patriarch Filaret]*, [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85059/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85059/), (last accessed August 2021).

Moreover, it was stressed that back in July 1993 Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople unambiguously confirmed the illegality of the UOC-KP, by affirming during a visit to the Russian Orthodox Church that “the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognizes only the canonical Metropolitan of Kiev – His Eminence Vladimir (Sabodan), Metropolitan of Kiev. There was no Orthodox Church with the name “Kiev Patriarchate”⁸⁰⁰. In addition, it was highlighted that in its approach to resolving the Ukrainian Church crisis, the Moscow Patriarchate proceeded from the premises that the process of restoring the unity of Orthodoxy in Ukraine should proceed in accordance with Church canons, therefore it remained obvious that only the UOC-MP, which had the canonical and hierarchical succession and was recognized by the other Local Orthodox Churches, can be the point of departure of the unification process⁸⁰¹.

The Local Council of the UOC-KP held on 9 January in Kiev expressed support to the leadership of Ukraine “in strengthening stability of the Ukrainian society, in the building of the Ukrainian state, especially in the sphere of spirituality, in the strengthening of morals of people on the evangelic-Christian basis, preservation and expansion of the range of communication in the Ukrainian language”⁸⁰². They also thanked the leadership of the state for promoting the idea of creating a local Ukrainian Orthodox Church and for inviting the Ecumenical Patriarchate to visit the country. In addition, the Council addressed an appeal to the UOAC as well as to people of Ukraine for creating a single Ukrainian Church. Patriarch Filaret noted that the invitation of the Council was “favourable and appropriate”⁸⁰³ considering that Patriarch Bartholomew had already received the invitation to visit Ukraine from President Leonid Kuchma, from the Chairman of the Supreme Council Ivan Plyusch and 240 members of parliament as well as from Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko.

Ecumenical Patriarchate

On 8 November 2000, representatives of the Kiev Patriarchate, and the UOAC in a meeting in which participated also the Secretary of the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia, signed an agreement, the Symphonitikon, according to which mutual accusations and an uncoordinated transition from one jurisdiction to another were stopped between the two Churches. In addition, the Churches agreed to “avoid performing canonical actions”⁸⁰⁴ until the completion of the full unification. The document also stipulated that at each stage the unification commission would closely cooperate with the Patriarchate of Constantinople on all issues, and that after the unification of the UAOC and the UOC-KP was completed, it was supposed to appeal to the Patriarch of Constantinople with the question of recognizing the church hierarchy and creating an independent state. Indeed, in the meeting with

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Strana.ru, *Сторонники преданного анафеме раскольника Филарета Денисенко провели в Киеве свой собор* [Supporters of the anathematized schismatic Filaret Denisenko held their own cathedral in Kiev], 10-01-2001.

⁸⁰³ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁴ Chibisova Anastasia, *The Ukrainian question»in the relations between Constantinople and Moscow at the beginning of the 21st century*, St Tikhon's University Review, 55:5, 2014, pp. 9-25.

representatives of both Churches, Patriarch Bartholomew, guaranteed to grant autocephaly to the newly created Church in case of unification between the two Churches. Therefore, a “conciliation commission” was formed consisting of representatives of Patriarch Bartholomew, UAOC, and UOC-KP⁸⁰⁵. Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, answering a question from Ria Novosti, said that the Patriarchate of Constantinople did not notify the Moscow Patriarchate with such intentions. He added that “the possible unification of non-canonical groups remains their internal affair. Both the UOC-KP and the UAOC separated from the Orthodox Church, violating canonical regulations. Therefore, they do not have church communion either with us or with other Orthodox Churches”⁸⁰⁶. Balashov expressed additional worries for the news regarding the participation of Constantinople in the unification process, because this would mean that the Ecumenical Patriarchate decided to reject the previous agreement of coordinating actions of both Patriarchates in order to overcome the schism. Finally, he stated that the unity of the Churches would be possible only on the basis of the sacred canons⁸⁰⁷.

At the same time Patriarch Aleksii, in an interview delivered to Interfax news agency, pointed out that since the Russian Orthodox Church had a strong desire to restore the unity of Orthodoxy in Ukraine, it was ready to conduct dialogue with the schismatic Churches, and confirmed the willingness to discuss of the issue in order to “heal the schism” with everyone who wants to give help, as was happening with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. He admitted that the Moscow Patriarchate was not surprised when knew of the visit of representatives of this Church to Constantinople, or of the participation of Constantinople in the joint commission created by them aimed at the creation of a single local Church in Ukraine. The Patriarch recalled that both the ROC and representatives of the UOC-MP were not informed about the meeting, and only when answering to questions of journalists a representative of the ROC expressed bewilderment about this, they received an official message from Constantinople, and this happened two weeks after the meeting⁸⁰⁸. A similar misunderstanding happened on 6 November when, during

⁸⁰⁵ Strana.ru, *Патриарх Константинопольский стремится к установлению своей юрисдикции на Украине* [The Patriarch of Constantinople seeks to establish his jurisdiction in Ukraine], 09-12-2000.

⁸⁰⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Перспектива создания на Украине “единой поместной церкви” с нарушением церковных канонов может вызвать кризис мирового Православия, считает представитель Русской Православной Церкви* [The prospect of creating a “single local church” in Ukraine in violation of church canons may cause a crisis of world Orthodoxy, the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church believes], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84835/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *“Визит Папы Не Принес И Не Мог Принести Умиротворения В Межконфессиональную Напряженность На Украине”*. *Ответы Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на вопросы информационного агентства «Интерфакс»* [“The Visit of the Pope Didn’t Bring And Could Not Bring Pleasure To Interconfessional Tension In Ukraine”. Answers of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II to the questions of the Interfax news agency], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84804/>, (last accessed October 2021).

It is worth remembering that in a conversation with Strana.ru, Archpriest Nikolai Balashov acting secretary for inter-Orthodox relations and foreign institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, mentioned that the only canonical Orthodox Church on the territory of Ukraine was the Ukrainian Orthodox Church headed by Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan), and that Patriarch Bartholomew was agreed on this point although in the last period for reasons political

a joint press conference of Patriarch Filaret and the deputy of the Verkhovna Rada P. Movchan, the latter said that in January Patriarch Bartholomew received a delegation of several deputies of the Verkhovna Rada and assured them that Ukrainian Church led by Patriarch Filaret would receive autocephaly within the year. Therefore, the DECR sent a letter to Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia, with a request to clarify the statement. The reply was received on 14 December 2001, and Metropolitan Meliton on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate categorically denied what was argued by Movchan⁸⁰⁹. Another important meeting in which the UOC-MP did not participate was the meeting of the Pope with the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches (the UOC-MP was the only Church which did not participate in it). Representatives of the UOC-KP and of the UAOC regretted not having received the expected support in the struggle against the Moscow Patriarchate. Patriarch Filaret pointed out that although the Moscow Patriarchate saw the visit of the Pope as proselytism, he considered that trip as an important help in order to promote the development of the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, and not deepen the division. It was reported that during the meeting Patriarch Filaret also made other critical remarks about the Moscow Patriarchate and this provoked the Pope's disapproval. Representatives of the UOC-MP interpreted the reaction of the Primate of the Roman Catholic Church as an awareness of the need of conducting a dialogue with the only canonical Church present in Ukraine. Despite the Pope's conciliatory gesture, the Moscow Patriarchate did not change its sharply negative attitude to the visit and commented on the coverage of the event by the Ukrainian media by affirming: "For our Church, for Orthodox believers, what has been launched in the Ukrainian media today is clear propaganda for Catholicism. We have never been given such opportunities: live broadcast of divine services, statements on the main TV channels"⁸¹⁰.

It is worth noting that as reported by Strana.ru, in his talk with the Pope, Filaret made clear that he and those who strongly supported him considered Russia and not the Russian Orthodox Church to be their main enemy, since Filaret Denisenko, not accidentally, said "Moscow" and the ROC, therefore their attacks against the Moscow Patriarchate were directed primarily against Russia. Indeed, since Russian authorities were beginning to realize this fact, Russian ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin refused to participate in the ceremony of welcoming the Pope at the airport, and upon his

and not ecclesiastical there were some shifts in the position of Constantinople. Balashov underlined that the Moscow Patriarchate considered sometimes unacceptable the approaches proposed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate on the relationship among the UOC-MP and the other schismatic Churches. See: Strana.ru, *Сторонники преданного анафеме раскольника Филарета Денисенко провели в Киеве свой собор [Supporters of the anathematized schismatic Filaret Denisenko held their council in Kiev]*, 10-01-2001.

⁸⁰⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Константинопольский Патриархат категорически опроверг заявление депутата Верховной Рады Украины П.Мовчана [The Patriarchate of Constantinople categorically denied the statement of the deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine P. Movchan]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84458/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁸¹⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Украинские раскольники не получили очевидной поддержки Папы Римского [The Ukrainian schismatics did not receive the obvious support of the Pope]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84826/>, (last accessed August 2021).

arrival in Kiev, immediately outlined its position in support of the UOC-MP⁸¹¹. In an interview released to Economic News, Patriarch Filaret declared that the condition for the unification of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine was the separation of the UOC-MP from the Moscow Patriarchate. Indeed, he stated that Moscow considered the Church in Ukraine to be an instrument of influence on Ukrainian politics and society. In his opinion, this position was supported above all by people who promoted the project of annexation of Ukraine to Russia. He added that the Moscow Patriarchate categorically prohibited the UOC-MP to enter in a dialogue with the Church under the jurisdiction of the Kiev Patriarchate and that he considered it unacceptable to demand that Filaret resign and that the UOC-KP should hand itself over to the UOC-MP as a condition for starting dialogue⁸¹².

On 19-20 April 2001, the official delegations⁸¹³ of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow held talks in Zurich⁸¹⁴. It was decided to take joint actions of the two Patriarchates to normalize the church situation in Ukraine. As a first step, it was considered necessary to send a joint delegation to Ukraine to study the situation of the Church in Ukraine and discuss possible joint actions aimed at overcoming existing schisms. In accordance with this agreement, a delegation of both Churches, consisting of Archpriest Nikolai Balashov and Archimandrite Athenagoras (Pekstadt), a representative of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, accompanied by two assistants, visited Kiev on 26-30 May. The delegation was received by the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Vladimir. The members of the delegation also had introductory meetings with representatives of groups outside the church communion. The delegation visited the State Committee of Ukraine on Religious Affairs and had a conversation with its chairman V. D. Bondarenko. On 12-14 June⁸¹⁵, representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church visited Phanar and had a meeting with Patriarch Bartholomew and the hierarchs of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. During the meeting at the Patriarchate of Constantinople, representatives of the UOC-KP and the UAOC reached an agreement on the formation of a joint unification commission under the auspices of Archbishop Vsevolod of Skopellos,

⁸¹¹ Strana.ru, УПЦ КП и УАПЦ добиваются признания у Папы Римского [UOC-KP and UAOC are seeking recognition from the Pope], 25-06-2001.

⁸¹² GlavRed, Филарет готов объединиться с УПЦ МП с одним условием [Filaret is ready to unite with the UOC MP with one condition], 04-12-2006.

⁸¹³ the Patriarchate of Constantinople was represented by Metropolitan John of Pergamon and Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia, General Secretary of the Holy Synod. Russian Orthodox Church delegation was made up of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate and Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Acting Secretary of the DECR for Inter-Orthodox Relations and Foreign Institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church.

⁸¹⁴ In March, in Geneva, the Ecumenical Patriarchate agreed with Patriarch Aleksii on a six-party meeting with representatives from Constantinople, Moscow, the three Orthodox Ukrainian Churches and a governmental delegation, but according to a declaration of Patriarch Filaret, Moscow postponed the meeting because it was aware that it should conclude any such meeting with a final solution. See: Vremia Novastei, Киевский Патриарх Филарет: Алексий Загоняет Русскую Православную Церковь В Угол [Time of news, Patriarch Filaret Of Kiev: Aleksii Drives The Russian Orthodox Church Into A Corner], 17-11-2000.

⁸¹⁵ See also next paragraph.

which was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople⁸¹⁶. On 8 July 2001, a meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held, and on 9 July 2001, the Bishops' Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was convened. The Council adopted a statement on dialogue with the UAOC and the UOC-KP, in which it expressed its readiness to continue the negotiation process with schismatic groups. In addition, the statement said that any unilateral interference of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in church life in Ukraine can only aggravate the situation, and not lead to its resolution. On 13-14 July 2001, at a regular meeting of the official delegations⁸¹⁷ of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow in Zurich, consultations were continued with the aim of finding ways to overcome the existing church schisms in Ukraine. Representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were alternately invited to the joint meeting of the official delegations, who outlined their vision of the situation in Ukraine. Both delegations agreed to continue joint efforts to heal the church schism. The participation of representatives of Orthodox Christians from Ukraine was considered important for further study of emerging canonical issues. After the report of the head of the DECR was heard, the members of the Synod adopted a resolution which expressed regret over the unilateral contacts of the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople with representatives of non-canonical groups in Ukraine outside the agreed program of joint actions of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates. However, it considered the meetings of the delegations of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates on the situation of Orthodoxy in Ukraine, as well as introductory consultations with representatives of groups outside the church communion, useful⁸¹⁸. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the UOC-KP, and the UOAC who presented their vision of the situation in Ukraine. Their participation was recognized as an important contribution to improve the studying of the religious conflict of the country⁸¹⁹. In accordance with the previously reached agreement, another meeting in Zurich was held on 29-30 October 2001. One of the subjects under discussion was the position of the Government of Ukraine on the situation in Ukraine, which was presented by the chairman of the Ukrainian State Committee for Religious Affairs, V. D. Bondarenko⁸²⁰. However, in September 2001 during the celebrations of the 950th anniversary of the Kiev-

⁸¹⁶ Sinod.ru, *Синод принял решение по украинскому вопросу [The Synod made a decision on the Ukrainian issue]*, 17-07-2001.

⁸¹⁷ The delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was composed of Metropolitan John of Pergamon, Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia and Archimandrite Athenagoras (Pekstadt). The Moscow Patriarchate was represented by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail, a permanent member of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, as well as Archpriest Nikolai Balashov.

⁸¹⁸ Sinod.ru, *Синод принял решение по украинскому вопросу [The Synod made a decision on the Ukrainian issue]*, 17-07-2001.

⁸¹⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Коммюнике о встрече официальных делегаций Константинопольского и Московского Патриархатов [Communiqué on the meeting of the official delegations of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84803/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸²⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Священного Синода 26-27 декабря 2001 года [Meeting of the Holy Synod on December 26-27, 2001]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84421/>, (last accessed August 2021).

Pechersk Lavra⁸²¹, another problem arose among the two Patriarchates. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and all Russia sent messages to Primate of the fraternal Local Orthodox Churches, in which he cordially thanked them for participating in the celebrations. In the letter addressed to Patriarch Bartholomew, the Patriarch expressed his bewilderment at the fact that the General Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Melito of Philadelphia, left the monastery before the end of the Divine Liturgy and at the moment when President Kuchma arrived. In addition, he drew attention to the fact that the text of the *Epistle in connection with the 950th anniversary of the founding of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra* which was distributed under the name of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, did not even mention the head of the only canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and its initial words were “Beloved brothers and children in the Lord (Возлюбленные о Господе братья и дети)”⁸²². That epistle looked more like a nationwide address to believers than a fraternal greeting coming from the Primate of a fraternal Church. He added that the most important problem of the *Epistle* was that it contained a call for unity, but not a distinction between the canonical Church, with which the Ecumenical Patriarchate was in complete communion, as the participation in the celebration should confirm, and a schismatic Church, which arbitrarily broke Church unity⁸²³.

On 19 May 2007, the Bishops’ Council of the UOC-KP adopted a text of declaration on the reasons for the split of the UOC-MP. Filaret explained that the declaration had two main goals: to confirm to episcopate, clergy and believers of the Kiev Patriarchate that the Church from the point of view of doctrine, moral teaching, canons and history was on the right path. And also to show to the clergy, the hierarchy and the faithful of the Moscow Patriarchate that conversely they were not in the right path. The release of the declaration was timed to the 15th anniversary of the Karkhiv Bishops’ Council which opposed the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, considered illegal by the UOC-MP. The document confirmed that the Kiev Patriarchate remained open to a direct dialogue both with the UOC-MP and the UOAC regarding the formation of a single Local Orthodox Church in Ukraine, but maintained that it should take place based on mutual respect. During the press conference, Filaret noted that in Ukraine there was not a split, but rather a division of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, indeed according to the Orthodox doctrine, schisms “occur when a part of the Church changes the moral teaching, canons or rituals, and if this does not concern only the dogmatic teaching of the church, but also the canons and moral teaching, this is an ordinary division”⁸²⁴. The declaration issued in a form of a

⁸²¹ Palveleva Lilya, 950th anniversary of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra against the background of the split of Orthodox churches in Ukraine, Svoboda.org, 28-08-2001, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/24223165.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸²² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Благодарность Предстоятеля Русской Православной Церкви за братскую поддержку Православия на Украине [Gratitude of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church for fraternal support of Orthodoxy in Ukraine]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84604/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸²³ Ibid.

⁸²⁴ Ukrainform, *Патриарх Киевский И Всей Украины-Руси Филарет Обнародовал Историко-Каноническую Декларацию Архиерейского Собора Упц Киевского Патриархата [Patriarch Filaret Of Kiev And All Ukraine-Russia Has Published The Historical And Canonical Declaration Of The Bishops ' Council Of The Uoc-Kyiv Patriarchate]*, 01-06-2007.

book of more than 160 pages; it was distributed both among representatives of the UOC-MP and of the ROC's faithful⁸²⁵. On the evening of 20 December 2007, on the eve of the Bishops' Council of the UOC-MP the meeting of Archbishop Pereyaslav-Khmelnitsky of the UOC-KP Dimitriy with the head of the UOC-MP Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan) took place. Archbishop Dimitry was accompanied by the press secretary of the Kiev Patriarchate, Archimandrite Evstratiy. Archbishop Dimitriy handed over to the head of the UOC-MP the official text of the Appeal to the episcopate, clergy and faithful signed by members of the Holy Synod and bishops of the UOC-Kiev Patriarchate on 14 December. Metropolitan Vladimir accepted the text of the appeal, and announced that it would be considered at the Bishops' Council of the UOC-MP planned for 21 December⁸²⁶. Metropolitan Drabinko recalled that as result of the meeting a commission was created in order to reach more practical results; then in 2008, Moscow simply forbade the commissions to continue their work⁸²⁷. Burega reported that of course several informal meetings were held before that meeting, and the proof can be considered the official meeting among Dimitri Evstratiy Zorya and Bishop Antony, rector of the Theological Academy of Kiev to look for ways to carry out dialogue. He pointed out that the dialogue began thanks to Aleksander Drabinko⁸²⁸, and Archmandrite Krill Hovorun who actively participated in the process⁸²⁹. However, Filaret continued to think that the UOC-MP was a non-canonical church structure, because it obtained the recognition of the other Orthodox Churches only because it was declared autonomous although under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate⁸³⁰. Indeed he manifested his support for the Ukraine's accession to the European Union and to NATO, so that the country could benefit from new European technologies, and at the same time, Europe might learn how to protect its spiritual and moral values from the secularization process. He pointed out that joining the NATO would allow Ukraine to have a security system to guarantee its territorial integrity from Russia⁸³¹.

⁸²⁵ PoliBaiki, *Филарет издал декларацию о причинах раскола УПЦ [Filaret issued a declaration on the reasons for the split of the UOC]*, 01-06-2007.

⁸²⁶ Portal-Credo, *Митрополит Владимир (Сабодан) принял делегацию Киевского патриархата, пообещав рассмотреть обращение Патриарха Филарета и епископата УПЦ КП на Соборе УПЦ МП [Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan) received a delegation of the Kiev Patriarchate, promising to consider the appeal of Patriarch Filaret and the Episcopate of the UOC-KP at the Council of the UOC-MP]*, portal-credo.ru, 20-12-2007, <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=news&id=59242>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁸²⁷ From the interview to Alexander Drabinko, on 4 March 2020, Spaso-Preobrazhensky Sobor. min. 00.00-00.38 (4th file).

⁸²⁸ During the conversation with Drabinko about these processes he did not mention his active role in the process.

⁸²⁹ Interview with Vladimir Burega, done on March 2, 2021, at the Restaurant Shato, in Kiev, min. 40.34-41-58 (1st file).

⁸³⁰ Sedmina.ru, *Отлученный от Церкви и преданный анафеме самозванный «патриарх Киевский» рассуждает о каноничности [Excommunicated and anathematized self-styled "Patriarch of Kiev" talks about canonicity]*, 10.07.2008], 10-07-2008.

⁸³¹ Rosbalt, *Украинский патриархат благословил союз Украины и НАТО [The Ukrainian Patriarchate blessed the Union of Ukraine and NATO]*, 06-10-2008.

Historical memory, historical properties

Another problem in the relation of the Church under the jurisdiction of the Kiev Patriarchate and Moscow was represented by the procession dedicated to the 2000th anniversary of Christianity, which was held at the source of the Volga River near the village of Volgoverkhovnye in the Tver Region. On the eve of the procession (19 June 1999), Patriarch Filaret Denisenko, on behalf of the UOC-KP, protested against its organization across the territory of Ukraine. In his opinion, this action was of political nature and would not promote the unification of Orthodoxy. In his opinion, it was not a coincidence that the religious procession was held during the elections and the celebrations of the Independence Day. Also in the opinion of the head of the presidential administration Mykola Bilobolotsky, the action carried out on the initiative of the Russian Orthodox Church, had a political subtext. He pointed out that the procession carried the danger of exacerbating the already difficult inter-confessional situation of the country. Despite the fact that the initiative received the approval of the head of the Verkhovna Rada, Oleksandr Tkachenko, the wave of protests against it increased, and this was the result of the exacerbation of problems among Orthodox Churches⁸³². A further example is the accusation leveled at President Leonid Kuchma by the World Coordination Council, according to which the fact that the President did not issue a decree against the Moscow Patriarchate priests' seizure of the Pechersk-Lavra is proof that President Kuchma did not know the history of the Ukrainian Church. Participants in the Ukrainian World Council protested against Moscow's interference in Ukrainian Churches' internal affairs, and defined the holding of a procession of Christians to Kiev as a call for a Slavic Union. The day after these statements, the mayor of Kiev, Alexander Omelchenko, and Patriarch Filaret signed a protocol of cooperation aimed at creating a favourable climate for the UOC-KP. After President Kuchma's appeal to the Patriarch of Moscow Aleksii II, the participants in the procession were forced to curtail their program and to limit their presence at places where Prince Vladimir was baptized⁸³³. There was the feeling that both the Secretary of the Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Vladimir Gorbulin, and Leonid Kuchma closed Ukraine for Russian Orthodoxy. The pro-Western turn of Ukrainian policy should be connected with Moscow's refusal to unconditionally support one of the candidates in the Ukrainian presidential elections. I would reflect upon V. Panov's comment on the situation: in his article he wrote that it was worth noting that the procession was a destabilizing factor of the public life of the state on the eve of the elections. But that at the same time nobody expressed worries for the growing sects from overseas, which did not have a clear religious orientation and were taking root more and more deeply in Ukraine. Moreover, no one cared for the increasing proselytizing activities of the Vatican, and for the appearance on Ukrainian territory of new non-Christian

⁸³² Vechernyaya Moskva, *Крестный ход или политическая акция? [Religious procession or political action]*, 05-07-1999.

⁸³³ The program included a prayer service in Chersonesos, a visit to the St. Klimentyevsky Monastery in Inkerman and other minor events. This certainly cannot be compared with the planned visit to the holy symbols of Kiev: the Pechersk Lavra and the Saint Sofia Cathedral. See: Russkaya Mysl, *Не Дали Ходу Православным На Украине Завершилась Крупномасштабная Провокация Против Русской Православной Церкви [The Orthodox Were Not Allowed To Move In Ukraine, A Large-Scale Provocation Against The Russian Orthodox Church Ended]*, 20-08-1999.

religious centers⁸³⁴. For the purposes of this work, this statement holds particular importance because it confirms the perspective adopted by Moscow in its external relations in this period: the protection of its canonical territory from the influence of non-Christian organizations.

At the same time, Filaret's primary challenge was not only internal recognition of his Church's legitimization but also global Orthodoxy's rejection of his legitimacy as a church leader, on account of the Moscow Patriarchate's campaign of delegitimization. From this perspective it is worth recalling the decision of the General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine, who responding to a request of 65 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada, members of the Communist Party of Ukraine, decided to hold the registration of the UOC-KP⁸³⁵. Archbishop Nikolai Balashavov declared that the Moscow Patriarchate considered the protest fair, actually expressed concerns regarding the position of the State Committee of Religions of Ukraine, according to which the registration of the UOC-KP was legal⁸³⁶ (considering also his attempts to gain a foothold in America)⁸³⁷. Filaret stated repeatedly that the process of receiving recognition for canonical autocephaly was slow but inevitable; in the meanwhile the Moscow Patriarchate continued to adhere to its policy on the Kiev Patriarchate: laity of the Kiev Patriarchate who desired to participate in the liturgical life of the Moscow Patriarchate were not permitted in the absence of baptism; any laity desiring to participate in the life of a local Moscow Patriarchate parish could do so only following rebaptism; any clergy who wished to return to the Moscow Patriarchate had to be re-ordained; considered Filaret's deposition, any ecclesial legitimacy in the life of the Kiev Patriarchate was denied (the policy was the same of the one adopted towards the UOAC in 1942). This was the case despite the fact that the Kiev Patriarchate attempted to clarify its authority by referring both to canons and history as seen above. The issue of properties and the fight for jurisdiction upon historical buildings concerned also the events related to the UOC-KP. On 3 December 1996, the UOC-KP consecrated the building of the former St. George Monastery in Moscow. The consecration meant the beginning of a new round of conflict between the Moscow Patriarchate and the church under the jurisdiction of the Kievan Patriarchate. Indeed, according to the decree of the Moscow government of 3 September 1996, the building was owned by the Orthodox Brotherhood of St. George Victorious, canonically subjected to the UOC-KP. As seen above, the Moscow Patriarchate, in turn, also claimed the building. On 29 October 1996,

⁸³⁴ Krasno, *Не Дали Ходу Православным На Украине Завершилась Крупномасштабная Провокация Против Русской Православной Церкви [Have Not Given The Orthodox Going In Ukraine A Large-Scale Procedure Against The Russian Orthodox Church Is Completed]*, 20-08-1999.

⁸³⁵ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Генеральная прокуратура Украины опротестовала регистрацию филаретовского "Киевского Патриархата"* [The General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine protested the registration of the Filaret "Kiev Patriarchate"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84304/>, (last accessed August 2021).

⁸³⁶ Strana.ru, *Московский Патриархат обеспокоен позицией Госкомрелигий Украины в отношении УПЦ КП* [The Moscow Patriarchate is concerned about the position of the State Religions of Ukraine in relation to the UOC-KP], 14-03-2002.

⁸³⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Бывший митрополит Филарет Денисенко теряет сторонников на Украине, но пытается обрести их за океаном* [Former Metropolitan Filaret Denisenko loses supporters in Ukraine, but tries to gain them overseas], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84182/>, (last accessed August 2021).

Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia, sent a letter to the Mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov in which pointed out that the Moscow Patriarchate had repeatedly come out to the Moskomimushchestvo with the request of returning to him the building of the former St. George Monastery. This request was accompanied with reference to the decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 23 April 1993 *On the transfer of religious buildings and other property to religious organizations*⁸³⁸. In the letter, Patriarch Aleksii also highlighted the assurances received in the past years about the fact that the issue, which affected the Moscow Patriarchate's interest, could never be resolved without its knowledge. It is especially for this reason that the transfer of the structure to the Brotherhood was an unpleasant surprise. Responding to the patriarchal request, the Moscow government prepared a draft document on the cancellation of the earlier decision that assigned the disputed building to the current owner. We should add that, Gleb Yakunin declared that if the authorities were to reverse the case, he would protest decisively and publicly, by picketing the city hall building. From his side, the Moscow administration decided to refrain from reacting to Yakunin's statement and, from making a final decision at that moment.⁸³⁹

In an interview released on 1 January 1997, Patriarch Filaret made harsh declarations against the hierarchs of the UOC-MP, and claimed that they did not unite with his Church because of intimidation tactics carried out by the Moscow Patriarchate, which threatened to ban them from priesthood, deprive of their dignity, or to put them under anathema. He added: "it is also known that the Ukrainian hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate were openly blackmailed and threatened to make the archives of the KGB public in case they left Moscow. After all, it is well known that under the Soviet regime, a dossier was opened on every bishop-precisely in order to keep a person in fear"⁸⁴⁰. Regarding the status of relations among the UOC-KP and the UOC-MP, Patriarch Filaret affirmed that in that moment the Kievan Patriarchate had 24 dioceses, about 3000 parishes and more than 2.5 thousand priests. The number of parishes on the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, which the latter declared to be 7030, was according Filaret significantly exaggerated, above all considering the case in which a parish was not registered when switching from one denomination to another one; he added that there were also "paper" parishes. Therefore, in his perspective, the actual number of parishes was not more than 5000. Moreover, he pointed out that in 1996 more than 20 parishes of the UOC-MP joined the Church of the Kiev Patriarchate, and that the Church was growing also in comparison to the UOAC⁸⁴¹. On 22 May 1997, the Kiev City Council of People's Deputies adopted a decision *On the transfer of certain objects of the national Kiev-*

⁸³⁸ «О передаче религиозным организациям культовых зданий и иного имущества».

⁸³⁹ Blagosvest, *Разрастается Очередной Церковно-Имущественный Конфликт [Another Church-Property Conflict Is Growing]*, 04-12-1996.

⁸⁴⁰ «Известно и то, что украинских иерархов Московский патриархат откровенно шантажирует – угрожает обнародовать секретные архивы КГБ в случае отхода от Москвы. Ведь общеизвестно, что при советской власти досье было заведено на каждого архиерея - именно для того, чтобы держать человека в страхе». See: Blagosvest, *Патриарх Филарет: Московский Патриархат Угрожает Украинским Иерархам Обнародовать Архивы Кгб [Patriarch Filaret: Moscow Patriarchate Threatens Ukrainian Hierarchs To Publish Kgb Archives]*, 05-01-1999.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid.

Pecherska Historical and Cultural Reserve to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate. According to the document, five Lavra Churches and five buildings of the reserve were transferred to the UOC-KP for free use. In making this decision, the deputies proceeded from the “principle of equality of all Orthodox confessions and the need to ensure them equal access to the building”⁸⁴². Indeed, the document noted that until that moment “such access was guaranteed only to the UOC-MP to which from 1988 to 1997 were transferred and seized 80 buildings and structures with a total area of thousands square meters, and which at the Bishops’ Council held on 15.12.1996 refused to seek full canonical autocephaly, speaking out for further subordination to the Moscow Patriarchate”⁸⁴³. In connection with this, the deputies of the city Council proposed that the Kiev City State Administration applied to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine with a request to consider the issue of recognition of the UOC-MP as a foreign Church on the territory of Ukraine, which played a negative role in the formation of Ukrainian statehood and society. Finally, it was proposed to consider the issue of transferring to the UOC-KP all the temples of the Blizhnikh peshcher and the upper territory of the Lavra, including the Trapeznuyu tserkov', which was at that moment the Cathedral of the UOC-MP, and of the Krestovozdvizhenskuyu tserkov' in which the brethren of the monastery served. Therefore, only the territory of the Dal'nikh peshcher with two small temples would remain at the disposal of the UOC-MP⁸⁴⁴.

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church – Russian Orthodox Church

With the emergence of the UAOC in 1989, religious identity markers defining the movement for autocephaly of the UAOC in 1921 and 1942 returned back into the hands of the Ukrainian state. The use of vernacular Ukrainian in the liturgy, and the attempts to designate itself as the successor of the previous autocephalous Churches marked out this process. The UAOC completed the transfer of the center of Ukrainian autocephaly from Bound Brook, New Jersey back to Kiev when they elected the ninety year old American prelate, Mstyslav, as patriarch. With the decision of electing a patriarch in Kiev, the UAOC designated to strengthen its canonical legitimacy: indeed historically Kiev had always been a metropolia, not a patriarchate, and neither of the two preceding autocephalous movements had developed in processes for the creation of a Patriarchate in Kiev. In emphasizing the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the UAOC (privileged the identity of the UOAC (1942) and restored Constantinople as the patron of the Church, unlike the UAOC (1921), which consistently insisted on its own independence without special reference to Constantinople⁸⁴⁵. As a response to the emergence of the UOAC, the Moscow Patriarchate deposed Bishop Ioan (Bodnarchuk) from holy orders and declared all

⁸⁴² Ibid.

⁸⁴³ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁴ Blagovest.info, *Киевский Городской Совет Принял Решение О Передаче Отдельных Объектов Киево-Печерской Лавры Упц-Кп [The Kiev City Council Decided To Transfer Certain Objects Of The Kiev Pechersk Lavra To The Uoc-Kp]*, 29-05-1997.

⁸⁴⁵ Merlo Simona. *All'ombra delle cupole d'oro.*

his episcopal activities invalid. Indeed, according the Patriarchate, the UAOC continued the ecclesial illegitimacy of the UAOC (1942) which had been condemned by the Patriarchate as unrecognized, and un-canonical by the 1989 Russian Synod. It is worth noting that according the Russian Orthodox Church, Bishop Ioan went into schism and created the UAOC for personal reasons – mainly because of his conflict with the then canonical Metropolitan of Kiev Filaret⁸⁴⁶. Filaret thought that the UAOC established in 1989 was uncanonical, and did not have a relationship of any kind with the Kievan Metropolia or any other Orthodox Churches. Corroborated his idea by using the refusal of the Ukrainian Church in Canada to concelebrate with the Church as proof of its illegitimacy. Thus, the Metropolia response to the emergence of the UAOC was consistent with the policy applied to all the history of Orthodoxy in Ukraine: the only canonically legitimate church was the patriarchal church, who was the rightful heir of the historical Kievan Metropolia. The election of Mstyslav as patriarch was symbolic: he lacked connection with people of his church to effectively lead it. Furthermore, another problem was his advanced age and the decision of the leadership of the Church in America he had carefully cultivated since 1950 which decided to keep him away from Kiev. The convergence of these factors created a vacuum in the leadership, and opportunities to find a new leader to replace him⁸⁴⁷. After the death of Mstislav, on 28 June 1993 some of the bishops, clergy and laity belonging to the UOC-KP adopted an *Appeal to the Episcopate, clergy and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, canonically subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate*. The *Appeal* was signed by the Patriarchate *Locum Tenens* Vladimir (Romanyuk) and sent to Metropolitan Vladimir, copies were sent also to priests of the UOC. At first glance, the most relevant fact of this *Appeal* was that it was a clear step towards reconciliation. However, from the point of view of the UOC it was a provocative action of the UOC-KP, designed to further the ambition and ideology of the schismatics, therefore, the Holy Synod of the UOC considered it necessary to assess the content of the document. The main problem was the sense that its authors had tried to transfer the church-canonical problem on a political plane. A threat, a sort of blackmail was seen in the words: “Only hostility to the Orthodox Church of Christ and to the Ukrainian statehood can be an obstacle to the unification of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church”⁸⁴⁸. Indeed the statement was aimed to depict the organizers of the split and their followers as patriots, on the one hand, and those who did not support them as enemies of statehood and independence, on the other. The proposed plan of unification, which provided for its implementation at the unifying Pan-Orthodox Council with the election of a single Head of the Local Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and the participation of the UOC and the UOC-KP with an equal status. This condition was considered unacceptable by the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate because, according to the canonical rules of the

⁸⁴⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Раскол ценой обмана: в завершение дискуссии о неканонических «чекалинских хиротониях» так называемой «Православной церкви Украины»* [Schism at the cost of deception: at the end of the discussion about the non-canonical "Chekalin ordinations" of the so-called "Orthodox Church of Ukraine"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/46041/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸⁴⁷ Denysenko Nicholas, *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine.*, pp. 166-167.

⁸⁴⁸ «Только вражда к Православной Христовой Церкви и к украинской государственности может быть препятствием к объединению Украинской Православной Церкви». My translation. See: Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине*, pp. 151.

Church, when a schism is committed, one of the two newly formed Churches is not canonical, thus not a Church in the generally accepted sense. Therefore, the Holy Synod of the UOC replied to the Appeal by declaring that reaching the unification was of course also their aim, but that they were moving towards that path in a canonical way, full aware that anti-canonical actions would continue to generate splits, which represented also a violation of civil peace in the State. They argued: "we look at the members of the UOC-KP not as enemies, but as lost brothers, deprived of high religious feelings, who need to be helped to return to the bosom of the Holy Universal Orthodox Church"⁸⁴⁹. In order to have an objective idea of the attitude towards the dialogue on unification and autocephaly among the clergy of the UOC, Metropolitan Vladimir and the Holy Synod of the UOC decided to organize meetings in all the dioceses of the UOC, in order to discuss the possibility of "canonical healing" of the schism. In these meetings the possibility of joining the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of other branches present in Ukraine, the UOAC and the UOC-KP, was discussed. Reports and protocols of the meeting testified to the willingness to conduct a dialogue with the other Orthodox Churches present in the country and to find a way in order to reach unification on canonical basis. Nevertheless, the documents also reported ambiguous attitudes, motivated in particular by the lawless actions of seizing church properties, and by questions on the obtaining canonical autocephaly. On 29 March 1995, a group of representatives of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church seized one of the Orthodox Churches located in the Ternopil Region. They beat and drove out parishioners, after which, they cut off the locks on the doors and did not allow believers to enter the Church. As declared by the head of the Communication office of the DECR, Alexander Bulekov, the church that had been taken from the faithful of the diocese belonged to the Ternopil eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and was the only Orthodox Church in the village, while the Autocephalous Church owned two churches. Bulekov declared *post factum* that the case indicated the beginning of a new wave of persecutions of Orthodox Christians in Ukraine⁸⁵⁰.

Unification

On 28 February 1996, a meeting was held by two special commissions of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kievian Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in order to discuss the ways and the conditions of unification. Indeed, the UOC-KP placed great hopes for unification in the All Ukrainian Orthodox Local Council, but the leadership of other churches considered that if the UOC-KP sought to unite all the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine into a single one, then first, this unification should be carried out, after a single Patriarch should be elected. This proposal did not find support

⁸⁴⁹ «Мы смотрим на членов УПЦ-КП не как на врагов, а как на заблудших братьев, лишенных высоких религиозных переживаний, которым необходимо помочь вернуться в лоно Святой Вселенской Православной Церкви...». Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине"*, pp. 152.

⁸⁵⁰ *Postfactum, Представители Украинской Автокефальной Церкви Захватили Один Из Православных Храмов В Тернопольской Области [Representatives Of The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church Seized One Of The Orthodox Churches In The Ternopil Region]*, 30-03-1995.

in the entourage close to Filaret. However, Itar-Tass reported that before the meeting, in the office of the UOAC the Patriarch of Kiev and all Ukraine Demetrius proposed to hold an unification Council in June, in order to break off relations with the Moscow Patriarchate and to elect the head of the United Church with its center in Kiev⁸⁵¹. On 15 August 1995, the Bishops' Council of the UOAC resolved to change the name of the Church in UOAC-Kiev Patriarchate, thus giving a signal of compromise in negotiations with the Church headed by Filaret⁸⁵².

Indeed, on 23 September 1996, the address of Patriarch Demetrios for the 75th anniversary of the UOAC clearly stated that the position of the UOC-MP was inspired only by the will to strengthen the position of the Moscow Patriarchate, "a foreign Church that is trying to take the place of our local Church in Ukraine, to close the path of development and approval for it"⁸⁵³. The appeal clearly suggested that negotiations among the UOC-UOAC's hierarchs reached an impasse, that the decentralist tendencies within the UOAC were increasing and Patriarch Demetrios was starting a policy of rapprochement with the UOC-KP in order to preserve the Church⁸⁵⁴.

At the beginning of November 1996, a meeting of the clergy and laity of the Lviv diocese was held. The meeting was headed by Patriarch Demetrius, the Bishop of Kharkiv and Poltava Igor Isichenko, and Bishop of Khmelnytsky and Kamianets-Podilsky Methodius Kudryakov, and was attended by 31 priests and 15 laymen of the UAOC. The main topic of discussion was the situation within the Lviv diocese; indeed Archbishop Peter Petrus, along with a number of autocephalous bishops, announced the deposition of Patriarch Demetrius, and the prohibition of Bishop Igor in the ministry; the widowed Archpriest Nikolai Maletich was elected to the Lviv eparchy. Immediately after his election, he was tonsured monk with the name of Macarius, in honor of the Metropolitan of Kiev, and on 3 November the Episcopal consecration took place. On the same day, the participants in the meeting addressed a message to the Orthodox Christians of Ukraine; they blamed the group of bishops of the UAOC and of UOC-KP, responsible for desiring to create an autonomous Galician metropolis, for the new split that had occurred within the UAOC. It was added that, even earlier, the group entered in contact with the Primate of the UOC-MP with the intention of joining the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. The participants in the meeting of Lviv, explained that the organizers of the split had no right to speak on behalf of the UOAC, above all because three of them, Metropolitan Andrey Abramchuk, Metropolitan Vasily Bodnarchuk and Archbishop Roman Balashchuk did not formally return to the UOAC from the UOC-KP, and Archbishop Peter Petrus, who was admitted to the clergy of the UOAC by Patriarch Mstislav himself in December 1992, on 13 September 1996 was removed from the staff of the UOAC for

⁸⁵¹ ItarTass, *Украинская православная и украинская автокефальная православная церковь объявили о намерении объединиться* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church have announced their intention to unite], 28-02-1996.

⁸⁵² Denysenko Nicholas, *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine*.

⁸⁵³ Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Вышел В Свет Сотый Номер Газеты Украинской Автокефальной Православной Церкви "Наша Вера"* [The Hundredth Issue Of The Newspaper Of The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church "Our Faith" Has Been Published], Moscow, 23-09-1996.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

“systematic destructive activities in the Church and non-compliance with Church discipline”⁸⁵⁵. According to the authors of the epistle, the only canonical bishop who joined the schism was Archbishop Mikhail Dutkevich, whose behavior deserved some leniency due to the lack of appropriate education. Indeed, Patriarch Demetrios and Bishops Igor, Macarius and Methodius appealed to UOAC believers asking them to not succumb to the call of schismatics who sought to prevent dialogue with the UOC-KP and with the UCGG, sowing hostility between the Eastern Ukrainian and Western Ukrainian, with the aim of subordinating the Ukrainian Church to a foreign jurisdiction⁸⁵⁶.

The organization of the procession for celebrating the 2000th anniversary of Christianity raised worries also in the UOAC; Archpriest Igor (Isichenko), as argued also by representatives of the UOC-KP, highlighted the political purpose of the manifestation, and expressed hope that the leadership of the UOC-MP will decide not to go forward in carrying it out⁸⁵⁷. Commenting on the relation between the religious situation in Ukraine and the struggle among Moscow, the Vatican and Constantinople for gaining influence in the country, Archbishop Igor Isichenko argued that Russia was interested in maintaining religious instability in the country, as well as interested in exercising its influence on Turkey, where the Ecumenical Patriarch resides, tried to limit the Constantinople’s influence on the Orthodox World. He added that an important factor to take into consideration was that the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople had only 8 thousand faithful, and 3.5 million worldwide. As he recalled, the struggle between Moscow and Constantinople had been going on since 1589, the time in which the Ecumenical Patriarchate was forced to recognize the legitimacy of Moscow, and after the Second World War an attempt was even made to move forcibly the center of Orthodoxy from Constantinople to Moscow. Therefore, he added, if “we are talking about the Moscow Patriarchate, we mean the Kremlin. Since its creation the Russian Orthodox Church has been considered the spiritual department of the government”⁸⁵⁸. Indeed, “by the time of Peter the Great, it was not called a Church, but only a department of the Orthodox confession”⁸⁵⁹. Regarding relations of the UOAC with political parties, Archbishop Isichenko pointed out that when the UOAC was banned, and its priest were persecuted, they were supported by the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Christian Democratic Party, and that for various reasons the People’s Rukh decided to distance from them. He added that many politicians see the clergy as an obedient cog in the bureaucratic workings of secular authorities, ignoring the idea that the Church should

⁸⁵⁵ Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Жизнь Уапц: Патриарх Димитрий Не Сдается [Life Of The Uaoc: Patriarch Dimitri Does Not Give Up]*, 18-11-1996.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁷ Nezavisimaya Gazeta, *Религии, Крестный Ход Или Политическая Акция? [Religion, Procession, or Political Action?]*, 14-07-1999.

⁸⁵⁸ «если мы говорим о Московском Патриархате, то подразумеваем Кремль. С момента своего создания Русская православная церковь считалась духовным департаментом власти. Кстати сказать, во времена Петра Первого она называлась не церковью, а лишь ведомством православного исповедания». See: Koval'skiy Valentin, *Архиепископ Игорь Исиченко: "В Церковных Конфликтах Прослеживается Почерк Спецслужб" [Archbishop Igor Isichenko: "There Is A Handwriting In Church Conflicts Special Services"]*, Segodnja, 29-01-1999.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

always and only be considered as an “instrument of spiritual purification of the nation”⁸⁶⁰. In his opinion, this distorted conception originated during the Stalinist times, when the regime worked in order to demoralize Orthodoxy. But, he pointed out the importance of distancing the Church from secular power in order to avoid involvement in all secular power’s sins and miscalculations.

On 25 February 2000, the head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Patriarch Dymytriy (Yarema), passed away⁸⁶¹. He wished for his supporters to submit to the head of the Ukrainian Church in the diaspora (USA), Metropolitan Constantine, who officially belonged to the Constantinople Patriarchate⁸⁶². The Local Council of the UOAC gathered on 14-15 September in Kiev, was attended also by 680 delegates from Ukrainian Orthodox dioceses in the U.S. and Canada. As observers participated Archpriest Vasyl Zayev (UOC-MP), and Bishop Dymytriev (Rudyuk) (UOC-KP). The main result of the Council was the election of the new head of the UOAC, Metropolitan Mefodiy (Kudryakov), a former priest of the Ternopil diocese of the UOC-MP, who was deprived of his ministry by the Moscow Patriarchate, because of the schism. The Council decided not to elect a new Patriarch, thus Metropolitan Mefodiy was confirmed in the position of Patriarchal *Locum Tenens* of the UOAC. Commenting on the result of the UOAC, the DECR pointed out that “the Russian Church [...] does not consider Mefodiy a Metropolitan, regardless of what the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, thinks about this”⁸⁶³. The Moscow Patriarchate noted that “the so-called head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Metropolitan Mefodiy, was deprived of his ministry long ago, and therefore any of his

⁸⁶⁰

Ibid.

⁸⁶¹

On April 2000 talks were held between the delegations of the Constantinople Patriarchate, represented by Metropolitan John of Pergamon and Metropolitan Meliton of Philadelphia, Secretary General of the Holy Synod, and the Russian Orthodox Church, represented by Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill and Archimandrite Elisha, Secretary for Intergovernmental Relations, Department of External Church Relations. In connection with the death of the head of the UOAC, the parties expressed their concerns about the increasingly difficult ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine and agreed on the need to coordinate a joint action in order to achieve peace and canonical unity. See: Ria Novosti, *Швейцария-Россия-Религия-Переговоры [Switzerland-Russia-Religion-Negotiations]*, Moscow, 07-04-2000.

⁸⁶²

«Отношения между Московским и Константинопольским патриархатами вновь осложняются» [“Relations between the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates Complicate Again”], Vera, 07.05.2000. Also in March 2007, the “Brotherhood of St. Andrews the First” (under the jurisdiction of the UOAC) appealed to Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Church in the United States (Patriarchate of Constantinople) Konstantin (Bagan) with a request to convene another Local Council in order to restore the unity of the UOAC in Ukraine. The letter referred to Metropolitan Konstantin (Bagan) as the “primate of the UOAC in the diaspora”, the spiritual guardian of the UOAC in Ukraine”, indeed according to the authors of the letter, all Ukrainian Orthodox Church should unite together with the Ukrainian Church of the Diaspora under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, their Mother Church. At the same time, the document defined illegitimate any negotiations with the Moscow Patriarchate⁸⁶³. The press service of the UOC-MP noted the destructive effect of this policy and of the one carried out by the UOAC for 15 years, in particular because, in their opinion, the Ecumenical Patriarchate would never take the risk of such a step as it was recognizing autocephaly of this Church.

See: Patriarchia.ru, *В пресс-службе Украинской Православной Церкви отмечают деструктивный характер действий представителей УАПЦ [The press service of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church notes the destructive nature of the actions of representatives of the UOAC]*, 12-03-2007.

⁸⁶³

Russkaja mysl', *Украинские Автокефалисты Провели Свой Собор [Ukrainian Autocephalists Hold Their Own Council]*, Parizh, Frantsija 21-09-2000.

titles look ridiculous”⁸⁶⁴. Indeed, Moscow had feeling that Constantinople was planning to create its own exarchate in Ukraine, as it did in Estonia in 1995⁸⁶⁵.

Ecumenical Patriarchate

During the second meeting of the mixed commission for studying ways of achieving unity of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine held in Istanbul at the residence of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I on 12-14 June 2001, in Phanar, a new –second- agreement⁸⁶⁶, the *Symphonitikon*, was signed. Apart from bishops from Ukraine, in the meeting Metropolitan Constantine of the UOC in the USA participated for the first time. According to the document, in order to realize a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church, both the UOC-KP and the UOAC declared that “there was no difference among them in terms of Orthodox doctrine, and agreed to hold a meeting of the heads of the UOC-KP and the UAOC in Kiev and to discuss the details and perspectives for a full unification of these churches as a first step towards the unification of all Orthodox Ukrainians”⁸⁶⁷. In addition, the parties “agreed to establish a joint commission of the hierarchs to discuss the details of the process of unification”⁸⁶⁸. From the perspective of the Moscow Patriarchate, by making unilateral agreements with the UOC-KP and the UOAC, the Ecumenical Patriarchate violated the agreements reached during the meeting held in Zurich in April⁸⁶⁹, on the subject of which a joint commission, formed by representatives of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates and by representatives of the UOC-KP and UOAC in late May, had already met several times, and subsequently scheduled a meeting in July. The actions undertaken by the Ecumenical Patriarchate seemed to suggest a will to remove Moscow from the unification process. Notably, the first meeting of the joint commission among the UOC-KP and the UOAC was planned for 24 June when the meeting of the Pope with representative of the Ukrainian Council of Churches was already scheduled, and in particular with the heads of the UOC-KP and of the UOAC, in order to discuss the unification path. It follows that from Moscow’s point of view, the two Churches decided to use the appointment in order to present themselves before the Pope and the international community, as the United Ukrainian Local Church⁸⁷⁰. Another important meeting toward the unification was held on 20 June 2001 in Ternopoil, where an agreement was signed concerning the creation of a local Ukrainian Church recognized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople and others local Orthodox Churches. Responding to the answers of Ria Novosti, Nikolai Balashov declared that the Patriarchate of Constantinople did not inform either the Moscow Patriarchate or the Ukrainian Orthodox

⁸⁶⁴ NTV Novosti, *В Києве избран глава Украинской Автокефальной Православной Церкви [The head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church has been elected in Kiev]*, 18-09-2000.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁶ (the first was held on November 2000, see the previous paragraph).

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁹ Strana.ru, *Синод принял решение по украинскому вопросу [The Synod made a decision on the Ukrainian issue]*, 17-07-2001.

⁸⁷⁰ Strana.ru, *УПЦ КП и УАПЦ решили предстать перед Папой вместе [The UOC-KP and the UAOC decided to appear before the Pope together]*, 19-06-2001.

Church under its jurisdiction of these decisions. He added that the idea of a possible union of non-Orthodox Churches regarded only internal affairs of the two Churches and that, since both the UOC-KP and the UOAC, decided to break the canonical union with the Russian Orthodox Church, they were in Church communion with neither the Moscow Patriarchate, nor with other Orthodox Churches. He added that the participation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in this process raised concerns, because if the Patriarchate of Constantinople decided to recognize an autocephalous Ukrainian Church without the agreement of other Local Churches, this would create a deep conflict not only in Ukraine but all over the world⁸⁷¹. From his side, the Moscow Patriarchate raised an issue which drew attention from the UOC-MP on the recognition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church by the Patriarchate of Constantinople⁸⁷². The document, entitled *The Nativity Epistle of the First Hierarch of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, Servant of the Lord His Beatitude Metropolitan Constantine to his beloved brothers in the bishopric, devout and Christ-loving priesthood, deaconism, brothers and sisters in monasticism and all spiritual children of the Holy Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Ukraine*, was dated 25 December 2001, and was signed by Metropolitan Constantin of Irinupol, head of the Ukrainian parishes of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the United States. The UOC-MP noted that in the document Metropolitan Constantin addressed believers of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, a non-canonical entity, outside the communion with the Ecumenical Orthodoxy, whose non-canonical character was recognized by all the Local Orthodox Churches including the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Moreover, the mention in the epistle of the memory of Metropolitan Vasily stirred reactions of surprise, as the Russian Orthodox Church considered Vasily, a false Metropolitan ordained by clerics and laypeople of both sexes. The background of this document was the so-called "Local Council of the UOAC" which took place in Kiev in September 2000, where two resolutions were adopted, both designed to contribute to the legitimization of this Church. The first, addressed to Patriarchate of Constantinople, was a request to lead the process of consolidating the Ukrainian Orthodox community of the world into a single Local Church, with the perspective of granting it autocephaly. The second resolution was addressed to Metropolitan Konstantin himself, whom the Council asked to "be the spiritual guardian of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church for the period until the All-Ukrainian

⁸⁷¹ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, "Поцелуи откладываются". К демонстрации на РТР документального фильма "Территория раскола" ["Kisses Postponed." For the RTR screening of the documentary "Split Territory"], 2001/6, pp. 42.

⁸⁷² Already on 6 December 2001, during the meeting with the Patriarch of Moscow Aleksii II, the leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine, P. N. Simonenko, informed the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church that deputies of the Verkhovna Rada sent a letter to Patriarch Bartholomew with a request to not maintain unilateral contacts with the non-canonical Churches present in Ukraine outside the program of joint actions with the Moscow Patriarchate. Simonenko declared unconditional support to the UOC and pointed out that unlike other groups, the Communist party stayed against the arbitrariness perpetrated against the UOC. See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий встретился с руководителем Коммунистической партии Украины П.Н.Симоненко* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia met with the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine, P.N. Symonenko], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84474/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Orthodox Local Council”⁸⁷³. The first resolution remained unanswered. Metropolitan Constantine instead accepted the proposal of the UAOC Council and with the two decrees published after the address of the Council, Metropolitan Methodius was elected head of the UOAC and was asked not to make any important decision without the consent of Metropolitan Constantine; with the second, Archbishop Igor was asked to constantly deliver reports to Metropolitan Constantine. The Moscow Patriarchate expressed his regret for the reaction of the Church of Constantinople to these anti-canonical action of its hierarchs, and for not having received a reply to the message sent about this situation⁸⁷⁴. However, the initiative of unification conducted with the purpose of obtaining the final recognition of independence by the Ecumenical Patriarchate generated misunderstandings. On 24 November 2002, Moisey Kulik, head of the UOAC, held a press conference in Kiev; following the press conference, a number of news agencies, and in particular the official parliamentary paper “Golos Ukrainy”, disseminated information according to which Patriarch Bartholomew appointed Metropolitan Moisey “Metropolitan of Kiev and All Rus-Ukraine”. Immediately, the DECR decided to send a message to the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate asking to comment on this information but, as reported by Itar-Tass, the Secretary for Inter-Orthodox relations of the Moscow Patriarchate had no doubts that this information was a lie⁸⁷⁵. In fact, the letter of response received on 3 December, reported a deny of the information that were circulating through the media⁸⁷⁶.

The dialogue among the UAOC and the UOC-KP run into difficulties in 2005, when the UOAC representatives claimed that the conditions for unification presented by the Kiev Patriarchate did not refer to an unity among two equal partner, but constituted an absorption of the UOAC into the UOC-KP. In particular they requested that the Unification

⁸⁷³ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Удивительные инициативы митрополита Константина* [Metropolitan Constantine's amazing initiatives], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84318/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁵ Itar Tass, Religija i obshchestvo, *Московский Патриархат осуждает попытки "митрополита Киевского и всея Руси-Украины" Моисея объединить православных Украины* [Moscow Patriarchate Condemns Attempts by "Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia-Ukraine" Moses to Unite Orthodox Ukrainians], 02-12-2002.

⁸⁷⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Константинопольский Патриархат опроверг заявление самозванного "митрополита Киевского и всея Руси-Украины" Моисея* [The Constantinople Patriarchate denied the statement of the self-proclaimed "Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Russia-Ukraine" Moses], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83780/>, (last accessed October 2021). It is worth noting that Patriarch Bartholomew also considered the other two Churches present in Ukraine as schismatic Churches. The French newspaper *La Croix* reported that while responding to a question about the relations among the Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchate, Bartholomew replied that the two Patriarchates were working together in order to solve the Ukrainian problem, because “there are three opposing Orthodox jurisdictions in Ukraine: the canonical Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and two schismatic Churches. The Church of Constantinople is the mother of all Orthodox Churches, and this should help restore the unity of the Church in Ukraine. This is what we are working on at our meetings with the Moscow Patriarchate in Zurich and Kiev”⁸⁷⁷. This meant also that the Ecumenical Patriarchate referred to one of the Churches under its jurisdiction as schismatic.

See: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Константинопольский Патриарх подтвердил свою позицию в отношении Украинской Православной Церкви* [The Patriarch of Constantinople confirmed his position on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 2003/3, pp. 51.

Council took place “in conditions of equality of all Orthodox groups, and without accounting for the number of parishes and bishops of the churches”⁸⁷⁷. And that the “election of the new patriarch should be carried out with the method of drawing from a lot”⁸⁷⁸. Furthermore, the UOAC sought to make the unification process complete by appealing to the UOC-MP, and referred to the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as guarantor of the process. These requests were considered by Filaret as a way to destruct the leadership of the Kiev Patriarchate, and not as a way to put forward the unification of the Churches⁸⁷⁹.

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church – Russian Orthodox Church

The religious and political situation in Western Ukraine began to heat up sharply in the summer of 1988; indeed the Greek-Catholics who came out of the underground where they had been since 1946, organized a massive anti-Orthodox propaganda campaign, carrying out in Moscow and in Ukraine several protests, demonstrations and strikes, demanding the restoration of the union in Western Ukrainian regions. Performances of the Uniates were closely intertwined with activities of nationalist Ukrainian organizations, united in the Rukh movement (Народний Рух України, People’s Movement of Ukraine), a centre-right political party founded in 1989. By the fall of 1989, Greek-Catholics initiated actions against the ROC with the seizure of the Transfiguration Cathedral, the second largest Orthodox Cathedral of Lviv (29 October 1989). Indeed, by the late 1980s this underground Church could no longer be ignored as a Church that did not exist and whose parishes were united with the Russian Orthodox Church. According to declarations of the Uniate-nationalistic leaders, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church should become the basis of the national movement in the struggle for an independent Ukraine, and its secession from the USSR. Their aims was to build a Church on national basis and to subordinate it to the Vatican, and to the reactionary emigrant hierarchy headed by Cardinal Lubachivsky.

The issue of rights of Ukrainian Catholics were raised by the Holy See in numerous direct and indirect contacts with Soviet leaders. The demand to legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church was again conveyed to the Soviet government in June 1989 when a delegation formed by Cardinal Casaroli and Willebrands attended Russian Orthodox celebrations for the Millennium of the Baptism of Kievan Rus’. Bociurkiv reported that the trilateral exchanges between the Holy See, the Kremlin and the Moscow Patriarchate conducted in order to solve the issue were in fact initiated only in August 1989. The proposal of Moscow that was conveyed in Patriarch Pimen’s letter of 16 August 1989 to the Pope⁸⁸⁰ consisted in a *de facto* dissolution of the Uniate Church. A compromise seemed to be reached during the visit on 18-21 October to Moscow, which included Archbishop Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary for interstate relations who met with Gorbachev, the Foreign

⁸⁷⁷ Denysenko Nicholas, *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine.*; See also: Patriarchia.ru, *Українські автокефалісти просять захистити їх від «об’єднання» з «київським патріархатом» [Ukrainian Autocephalists ask for protection from "unification" with the "Kyiv Patriarchate"]*, 01-11-2005.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁰ Bociurkiw Bohan, *The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev*, Probs Communism 39:1, 1990, pp. 1-19.

Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, and Yuriy Khristoradnov, chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs. During the meeting it was ensured that the adoption of the new *Law On Freedom Of Conscience*⁸⁸¹ would have recognized the Ukrainian Church, but that the practical aspects of recognition should have been agreed through ecumenical meetings among the Holy See and the Soviet government and the Moscow Patriarchate. In the meanwhile, on 14 July 1989, the Communist Party of Ukraine, defined a list of actions required in order to support the Orthodox Church and to contrast Uniates's attacks. The first measure provided for supporting the exarchate in publishing in Ukrainian language (prayers, but also anti-uniatism reports and interviews to Metropolitan Filaret). According to the second one, it was important to accommodate Filaret's request of opening a theological seminary in Kiev, it would have represented an anti-union measure, because it would have allowed the formation of priests, of which there was a shortage in the areas controlled by the Uniates. Another measure to implement was to facilitate Metropolitan Filaret's visit to Rome in order to allow him to meet with Pope John Paul II, and understand if there was been a change in the position of the Pope toward Uniatism. Moreover, it was considered of great importance the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the annulment of the Union of Uzhhhorod (August 1989), and of the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Ukrainian lands within the Ukrainian SSR. Moreover, the formation of a Roman Catholic ecclesiastical diocese in the republic of Ukraine, was suggested as a further measure to use as instrument in negotiations with Vatican about the Uniate issue.

On 1 December 1989 Gorbachev paid a visit to Pope John Paul II in the Vatican: the encounter was the first and the last between a Soviet leader and a Pope, and symbolized the rapprochement between the Kremlin and the Vatican. The Soviet-Vatican meeting, as predicted in September in an issue of the Italian journal "Epoch", "marked the end of the Soviet regime's hostility towards the Catholic World – the adoption of a new legislation on religion in exchange for the blessing, John Paul II will give to perestroika".⁸⁸² After the meeting the registration of the first UGCC parishes was permitted⁸⁸³. The immediate response of Ukrainian Catholic believers was to take over their former Churches from the Russian Orthodox Church, actions that evoked the protests of the Moscow Patriarchate, of the Exarch Filaret of Kiev, and of Orthodox Bishops in Western Ukraine⁸⁸⁴. The situation got worst after the elections of local authorities in the territory of three regions - Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil - held in March 1990, was won by the Rukh movement, and the seizure of the Cathedral of St. Jura in Lviv. The result was the almost complete defeat of the three Orthodox dioceses by the winter 1990-1991: in the Lviv diocese in 1989 there were 1200 parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church, the number had decreased to 60 by 1991. The same happened in the diocese of Ivano-Frankivsk, where in 1989 there were 600 churches, and in 1991 they had decreased to 25-30. The

⁸⁸¹ Cdago, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2659. Цк Компартии Украины, О дополнительных мерах по преодолению униатства [The Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, On Additional Measures to Overcome Uniatism], 14-07-1989 N°260, pp. 17-19.

⁸⁸² Cdago, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2659, Об активизации выступлений на Западе за легализацию украинской католической церкви в УССР [On the intensification of protests in the West for the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR], Цк Компартии Украины [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine], 04-11-1989, pp. 32.

⁸⁸³ Cdago, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2887, Про релігійну ситуацію в західних областях України [About the Religious Situation in the Outlying Regions of Ukraine], Цк Компартии Украины [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine], 02-02-90, pp. 8-11.

⁸⁸⁴ Bociurkiw Bohan, *The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev*.

number of Churches transferred under the jurisdiction of the UOC-MP in Western Ukraine was considered by the Moscow Patriarchate “simply negligible”⁸⁸⁵. Commenting on the situation, Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeev, DECR’ secretary for inter-Christians relations, declared that the “recovery of Greek Catholic communities on the territory of Ukraine had been and remained an historical justice”⁸⁸⁶. Recalling what happened during the regime of Stalin, he pointed out that “these communities certainly have the right to a normal existence, but one injustice cannot be corrected with the help of another one, and that violence cannot be corrected by violence”⁸⁸⁷. In addition, he compared the Stalinist policy to the brutal activities carried out by the Uniates since 1988, and stated that among these actions there was no difference in the degree of criminality. On 1 March 1990 in Ukraine the head of the UGCC, Cardinal Lubachivsky announced the cancelation of all the decisions of the Lviv Council and the restoration of the Greek-Catholic Church to the status it had in 1946. The Uniate⁸⁸⁸ problem was also discussed during the meeting among delegations of the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches held in Moscow from 13 to 17 January 1990⁸⁸⁹. The result of the meeting was the document entitled *Recommendations for the normalization of relations between Orthodox and Catholics of Eastern rite in Western Ukraine*, approved by the Pope John Paul II and the ROC’s Bishops Council. Moreover, a quadripartite commission was created, in which representatives of the Holy See, of the Moscow Patriarchate, of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, and of the Greek Catholic Church all participated. However, the Uniate unilaterally withdrew from the commission, disrupting the normalization process that had begun⁸⁹⁰.

Status of the UOC-MP in Western Ukraine, and the issue of proselytism

The Bishops’ Council of 1994 expressed deep concern about the status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Western Ukraine, where the consequences of state authorities’ actions that supported schismatic formations and infringed on the rights of believers of the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate had not yet been

⁸⁸⁵ In the Lviv region only 27, in Ivano-Frankivsk, 16.

⁸⁸⁶ «восстановление греко-католических общин на территории Украины было и остается восстановлением исторической справедливости».

See: Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Пути Выхода Из Кризиса Русская Православная и Римско-Католическая Церкви: проблемы и перспективы взаимоотношений* [Ways Out Of The Crisis The Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: problems and prospects of relations], 23-01-1998.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁹ Bociurkiw Bohan, *The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev*.

⁸⁹⁰ Пути Выхода Из Кризиса Русская Православная и Римско-Католическая Церкви: проблемы и перспективы взаимоотношений [Ways Out Of The Crisis The Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: problems and prospects of relations], Nezavisimaja Gazeta, 23-01-1998.

Commenting on the work of the quadrilateral commission, and on the reasons why conducting a profitable dialogue failed, Roman Nebozhuk, member of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, pointed out that it is more correct to speak of a bilateral commission, because the most influential subjects from the perspective of political, inter-church, economic relations were Rome and Moscow. Indeed the position of the apostolic See in relation to the State was determined not primarily by Church structures, but by the Vatican embassy. Nevertheless, considering the issue from the three level stage state-church-society, in that case it is possible to speak of a quadrilateral commission, because Greek Catholic Church was a very influential institution in Ukraine, “as representative of this society, not of the political system, not as an independent Church, but exactly as a very influential subject of this society”. From the interview done on 13 March 2020 in Kiev (McDonalds), min. 21.04-24.14.

overcome. Indeed in many cases there were gross violations of human rights and religious freedoms. As result of this, Ukrainian citizens suffered only because they belonged to the “only canonical Orthodox Church in Ukraine – the Ukrainian Orthodox Church”⁸⁹¹. Another problem raised by the Council was the one sided coverage of church-life, offered by the Ukrainian media, that subjected the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to harsh attacks, slander and provoking hostility towards it due to its canonical connection with the Moscow Patriarchate. In addition, the Council noted with regret that, despite repeated assurances from the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church regarding the improvement in relations between Orthodox and Catholics, Orthodox Christians in Western Ukraine continued to suffer from gross violations of their rights as result of local authorities’ actions inspired by Greek-Catholics⁸⁹². Violation of UOC-MP’s rights in Western Ukraine was one of the most important problem in Russian Orthodox Church-Greek Catholic Church – Roman Catholic Church relations In this period. It was also the topic of discussion during the regular bilateral meeting between the delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church and of the Roman Catholic Church held on 7-8 May 1997 in Bari (Italy). The two delegations were headed respectively by Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, and by Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and of the Greek-Catholic Church from Western Ukraine and Transcarphatia. The meeting addressed a wide range of issues related to Greek-Catholic – Orthodox Christian relationship in Ukraine. In particular, the difficult situation in Lviv was discussed⁸⁹³, where most of the churches belonged to the Greek-Catholics, and the Orthodox Christians had only one small church that incapable of hosting all its faithful⁸⁹⁴. In particular, permission to construct the Lviv Cathedral was denied the Ukrainian Orthodox Church for ideological reasons; in Lviv in the Sikh district, the Orthodox community was denied the opportunity to hold services in a Church built by its members but seized by supporters of the UOC-KP. The congregation was obliged to pray in a small wooden building; in the city of Stryi, the Orthodox community was denied the allocation of land for the construction of a church. The motivation was that, because

⁸⁹¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение «О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время»* [Definition “On the Relationship of the Church with the State and Secular Society in the Canonical Territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the Present Time”], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18-01-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/530460.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁸⁹² Ibid.

⁸⁹³ The population located in Lviv region was mainly Ukrainian-Galicians, but there were also many Russians, Poles, and Jews. Other nationalities were less represented. Most Christian believers considered themselves faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, According to data of 1 January 1996, in the Lviv region were active the following religious organizations (only the most important were listed here): Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church: 1355 communities; Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church: 422 communities; Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate: 261 communities; Roman Catholic Church: 108 congregations; Evangelical Christian Baptists: 44 communities; Christian of the Evangelical Faith: 54 communities; Ukrainian Orthodox Church: actually 40 congregations, although 58 were officially registered; Jehovah’s Witnesses: 30 communities. Therefore, in total there were about 30 denominations and 2370 communities.

See: *Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Новые Катакомбы Галиции, Некоторые данные о религиозной ситуации во Львовской области* [New Catacombs Of Galicia, Some data on the religious situation in the Lviv region], 06-06-1996.

⁸⁹⁴ Moscow Church Bulletin, *Межцерковные Отношения На Украине На Переговорах Между Русской Православной И Римско-Католической Церквами* [Inter-Church Relations In Ukraine At The Talks Between The Russian Orthodox And Roman Catholic Churches], 12-06-1997.

there were enough Churches in the Stryi district, the UOC was not needed. In the village of Urizh, Drohobych district, Greek-Catholics took away a Church from the Orthodox communities, although they had already ones on their own. An Orthodox priest was expelled from his home with the use of physical violence. Moreover, the authorities illegally removed the Orthodox community from the registration, and the Church was handed over to the Uniates. A criminal case was opened on facts connected with the use of violence, but as of the summer of 1995 there had been no changes, and believers gathered for praying in private apartments. In the village of Semenivka, Pustomystovsky district, the authorities refused to allocate a plot of land to the Orthodox community, and since about 4 years the community gathered for praying in the open air. The same happened in the village of Stenyatin in the Sokal district. In the village of Kolodruby, Nikolaevsky district, the community was illegally deprived of registration of their church which was handed over to the UOC-KP. In the village of Zvertiv, Zhovkovsky district, the decision of the Supreme Court on the transfer of a church to the Orthodox community was not fulfilled (the issue of the transfer was debated for 5 years)⁸⁹⁵. In addition Ivano-Frankivsk, there was a real threat of liquidation of the Orthodox diocese and the ejection of the bishop from the building of diocesan administration. The tensions in the relations between the confessions was also increasing due to publications of radical nationalistic movements' statements, offensive towards Orthodox believers. The official communiqué adopted at the meeting read:

"1. The parties stated the need to step up efforts to reconcile, eliminate all violence, whatever it may be – physical, verbal, religious, moral. The first thing to do is to put an end to everything that can lead to discord, cause contempt and hatred between the Churches" (par. 21 of the Pan Orthodox-Catholic agreement adopted in Balamand – Lebanon in 1993).

2. In connection with the numerous questions raised by the faithful of both Churches about the meaning and the sense of the *Balamand Agreement*, the parties pointed out the expediency of a thorough theological analysis of the main ecclesiological and pastoral aspects of this document. The Balamand agreement should not become a factor of new divisions between the believers of our Churches.

3. The parties pointed out the inadmissibility of the appearance in the mass media, especially in the Church press, of statements inspired by nationalism and religious intolerance, and called on the faithful of both Churches to refrain from offensive statements. "Evangelic ethics requires refraining from offensive statements that could aggravate a conflict situation" (par. 28 of the *Balamand Agreement*).

4. The parties agreed that it is necessary to find solutions to the existing problems in accordance with Church norms and in a Christian way, avoiding the interference of external forces that often violate religious rights and freedoms and which may have their own material or political interests. The Holy Apostle Paul, in the First Epistle to the

⁸⁹⁵ Новые Катакомбы Галиции, Некоторые данные о религиозной ситуации во Львовской области [New Catacombs Of Galicia, Some data on the religious situation in the Lviv region], *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, 06-06-1996.

Corinthians, calls on all Christians to strive to resolve their problems among themselves in the spirit of Christian Brotherhood (1. Cor. 6: 1-10).

5. The parties investigated some disturbing situations and in particular the ones happened in Ivano-Frankivsk and in Lviv, and expressed their invitation to urgently seek solutions to problems existing there.

6. The parties recommended that in difficult situations related to the division of liturgical buildings and church properties, in particular when one church and two different Orthodox and Greek-Catholic communities are located in one locality, the majority principle should be followed, as agreed in 1990 by the delegations of the Moscow Patriarchate and of the Holy See in Moscow.

7. The parties recommended that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine should establish a joint working group, co-chaired by two bishops, one from each of the parties, to overcome obstacles to peaceful coexistence and find mutually acceptable solutions as soon as possible. The early settlement of inter-confessional tensions in Ukraine is of particular importance for the normalization of relations between our Churches, in a moment when both the Churches are preparing to celebrate the great jubilee of the coming into the world of Christ the Savior [...]"⁸⁹⁶.

Moreover on 17-18 December 1996 in Moscow, at the DECR, within the framework of an earlier agreement on holding regular consultations, a meeting was held between the delegations of the Moscow Patriarchate and of the Holy See, respectively headed by Metropolitan Kirill and Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. During the meeting the manifestations of religious intolerance and nationalism in the region were carefully examined, which were acquiring a form of direct violence that was incompatible with common Christian moral norms, causing further escalation of sectarian enmity. Moreover, the importance of following the principles stated in the *Document of Balamand* was highlighted, which paved the way for a resolution to the situation. Indeed, day to day practice did not always corresponded to the calls of the document according to which it was paramount "to avoid violence, whatever it may be - physical, verbal or moral, as well as anything that may contribute to a contemptuous attitude towards Christians" (§ 27). Delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed concerns over the attempts to expand the Greek Catholic Church into the primordially Orthodox territory of Eastern Ukraine⁸⁹⁷.

The Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held in Moscow on 18-23 February 1997, in its definition "On certain issues of the internal life and external activities of the

⁸⁹⁶ Межцерковные Отношения На Украине На Переговорах Между Русской Православной И Римско-Католической Церквами [Inter-Church Relations In Ukraine At The Talks Between The Russian Orthodox And Roman Catholic Churches], Moscow Church Bulletin, 12-06-1997.

⁸⁹⁷ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Внешние Церковные Связи В 1997 Году* [Foreign Church Relations In 1997], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 24-12-1997, https://old.mospat.ru/archive/1997/12/ecr_ru97/, (last accessed October 2021).

Church” took in consideration the document *Uniatism as a method of unification in the past and the search for complete unity in the present*. The Council decided to sent the document to the Synodal Theological Commission developed by the VII Plenary Session of the Mixed International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches in 1993 in Balamand (Lebanon) in order to allow an analysis of it. The Synodal Theological Commission worked on the analysis of the document at meetings of 18 April, and 16 July 1997. Moreover, in connection with the task of reviewing the text, the existing translation in Russian of the document was clarified, the final version of which was published on the *Information Bulletin of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate* n° 9-1997. In order to allow a correct understanding of the provisions of the text, the Commission considered it necessary to accompany the publication with a special commentary which offered a reflection on the history of Orthodox-Roman Catholic Churches’ dialogue, as well as on the goals faced by the members of the Mixed Commission. After reviewing the text, the members of the Commission came to the conclusion that the *Balamand Document* “is not any mystical union but on the contrary is intended to ease the tension caused by the activities of the Greek-Catholics”⁸⁹⁸. Indeed, the document was developed during the period of an acute crisis in Western Ukraine, when the Orthodox Churches needed to use all possible efforts so that public international organizations, and Christian Churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, would understand that defeating Orthodoxy in Western Ukraine was not only a gross violation of human rights and religious freedoms, but also that Uniatism was a dangerous and unacceptable means for achieving unity. Foremost, according to the Commission, the *Balamand document*, did not introduce anything fundamentally new, but only referenced the traditional Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism. The Synodal commission, however, pointed out that it was important to be mindful of a number of provisions used in the document , such as the use of the term “Sister Churches”, which held emotional rather than dogmatic connotations. Indeed, the Commission suggested holding a special pan-Orthodox discussion on the document⁸⁹⁹.

Nevertheless, in the meeting of the Russian Orthodox Church’s Holy Synod held on 10 June 1997 in Moscow under the chairmanship of Patriarch Aleksii, it was decided that the required conditions for organizing a meeting among the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches were not met⁹⁰⁰. The Communication office of the DECR underlined that in the last period intense negotiations were held in order to prepare the meeting among the two Churches, but it turned out to be impossible to reach a final agreement on some important issues. At the same time, the Synod members expressed their “readiness

⁸⁹⁸ «не является никакой мифической «унией», а наоборот призван ослабить напряженность, вызванную деятельностью греко-католиков». See: Заседание Священного Синода 17 июля 1997 г.[Holy Synod meeting July 17, 1997], mospat.ru, Заседание Священного Синода 17 июля 1997 г.: новость ОБЦС (mospat.ru), (last accessed October 2021).

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁰ On 6 June the Austrian press agency *Katpress* published about a meeting between the two Primates planned on 21 June in Vienna, at the Heiligenkreuz monastery. See: Blagovest-info agency, *Священный Синод Русской Православной Церкви Обсудил Взаимоотношения С Римско-Католической Церковью На Современном Этапе* [The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Discussed Relations with the Roman Catholic Church at the Present Stage], Moscow, 11-06-1997.

to continue bilateral dialogue” and approved the efforts made by the Russian Orthodox Church’s hierarchy in order to heal the existing disorders in the relations between the two Churches through dialogue, the only acceptable way for Christians to resolve problems. The issue of Greek-Catholics who began to restore their parishes by the use of force and proselytizing activities carried out by the RCC on the territory of the Russian Federation were the main obstacles in the normalization of bilateral relations. As seen above, in the first case, the most painful situation for Orthodoxy was in Western Ukraine (Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk region, Transcarpathia), where Orthodox communities believers’ right were usually not respected, and a campaign was launched in the local press to discredit the Moscow Patriarchate. The Communication office of the DECR pointed out that, despite the need to use all possible ways to change the situation, a direct conversation with the Uniates turned out to be impossible since the Greek Catholics withdrew from the so-called quadrilateral commission created on 1 January 1990 by representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Roman Catholic Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Catholics of Eastern Rite of Western Ukraine. The Uniates left the Commission under strong pressure from radical representatives of the Ukrainian political movement “Rukh”, who said that if they came to power, all the Churches would be taken away from Orthodoxy and transferred to the Catholics of Eastern rite; therefore, there was no need to conduct a dialogue with the Orthodox Church. They added that any attempt to contact the local authorities and urge them to respect basic human rights and the principles of religious freedom was unsuccessful. As consequences of violent seizure of temples, the UOC-MP lost most of its parishes in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions where the situation were extremely difficult⁹⁰¹.

The Holy Synod held on 26 February 1998, analyzed the reports of the Department for External Church Relations’ Chairman regarding Church’s external activities, and approved the position held by the Russian Orthodox Church’s delegation at the regular meeting of its representatives with the Roman Catholic Church on 14-15 January. The Holy Synod noted with regret the absence of any visible changes in the confessional situation in Western Ukraine, and pointed out that further forms of contacts and relations among the parts would depend on the positive results of the peace process in the conflict regions of Western Ukraine and Transcarpathia⁹⁰². This position was confirmed in Metropolitan Kirill’s Christmas address which highlighted that the theological dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church did not give any practical results in solving problems in Western Ukraine and in a number of other places. Metropolitan Kirill stated that the Russian Church was not available to conduct a dialogue for the sake of dialogue, and that if such a dialogue did not contribute to normalizing relations it meant that it simply did not exist⁹⁰³.

⁹⁰¹ Agentstvo Itar-Tass - Moscow, *Россия-Религия-Встреча-Патриарх-Папа [Russia-Religion-Meeting-Patriarch-Pope]*, 12-06-1997; Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Священного Синода 10 июня 1997 года [Meeting of the Holy Synod on June 10, 1997]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86244/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁰² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Очередное заседание Священного Синода [Regular meeting of the Holy Synod]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86180/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁰³ «Мы не можем вести диалог ради диалога. Либо этот диалог работает реально на урегулирование отношений, либо его просто не должно быть». See: Department for External Church

From 30 June to 4 July 1998 in Vienna (Austria), delegations⁹⁰⁴ of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP and the Greek Catholic Church, met on the initiative of the Catholic Foundation Pro Oriente and under the leadership of the President of the Foundation, Alfred Stirnemann. At the end of the meeting a Communiqué was adopted which stated that both sides requested the leadership of their respective Churches to “1. Take measures to stop the seizures of churches as a method for solving the problem of church property throughout Ukraine. 2. In the near future, resolve all conflict situations through peaceful negotiations within the framework of the Working Group formed in Bari in 1997, guided by the previously developed norms, in particular, those set out in the 1997 Bari Communiqué. 3. Both Churches must respect the canonical decisions of one another. 4. To instruct the relevant Synodal commissions to study more deeply issues related to relations between Orthodox and Greek Catholics. 5. The Joint Working Group should develop a plan for the further regulation of relations between the Churches and submit it to the leadership of their Churches”⁹⁰⁵. Indeed both sides condemned any act of physical or moral violence used in the seizure of Church properties and pointed out that the normalization of relations was possible only thanks to the adoption of concrete measures aimed at relieving tensions in the relations among the Churches⁹⁰⁶.

Indeed at the end of the bilateral meeting between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches held on 15 January 1998 it was decided to undertake a joint trip to Western Ukraine in order to resolve the difficult religious situation⁹⁰⁷. The parties stated that the inter-confessional relations in Western Ukraine have not changed since the last meeting held in Bari the year before. From the side of the Russian Orthodox Church, the main problems continued to be the tendency of Greek-Catholic communities to use violence as instrument for seizing Orthodox Churches thus to restore their parishes. In relation to this, it was stressed that a meeting between Patriarch Aleksii and the Pope could not take place until such difficult issues were settled⁹⁰⁸. The meeting did not take place. The possibility of arranging it was not ruled out also by Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran, Vatican Secretary for relation with the State. Indeed, one of the main conditions that the Russian

Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Рождественское поздравление сотрудников ОБЦС [Christmas greetings to the staff of the DECR]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85995/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁰⁴ from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took part in the meeting: Bishop of Lvov and Drohobych Augustin - head of the delegation; 2. Bishop Sergiy of Ternopil and Kremenets; 3. Archpriest Vasily Zaev; 4. Mr. Andrey Savitsky. From the Greek-Catholic side instead participated Bishop-Assistant to the Head of the UGCC Lubomyr Guzar - head of the delegation; 2. Bishop of Zborosky Mikhail Koltun; 3. Protopresbyter Dr. Ivan Datsko; 4. Mr. Miroslav Marinovich.

⁹⁰⁵ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Встреча между делегациями Украинской Православной Церкви и Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви [Meeting between the delegations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86074/>, (last accessed October 2021); Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Встреча между делегациями Украинской Православной Церкви и Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви [Meeting between the delegations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church]*, 1998/7, pp. 12.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁷ ItarTass, *Россия-Религия-Ватикан-Встреча [Meetings: Russia, Religion, Vatican]*, 15-01-1998.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Orthodox Church had set out for the Vatican referred primarily to the situation in Western Ukraine, where tensions still persisted in connections with the seizure of Orthodox Churches by Greek Catholics, as result of which the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate lost most of its parishes. The successful attempt to resolve this situation and protect the rights of the Orthodoxes present in this region was the reason for the postponement of meeting among the Pope and the Patriarch which was supposed to be held in Austria the year before. The representative of the Moscow Patriarchate affirmed that "in order for it to take place, real instruments must be found to improve the situation in Ukraine"⁹⁰⁹. At the same time, Metropolitan Hilarion noted that the ongoing difficult negotiation process "ha[d] not yet yielded the desired results"⁹¹⁰. The problems among the two Churches gained political significance in the light of the planned meeting among the Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the Pope John Paul II in early February⁹¹¹.

On 7 June 1998 the newspaper *New Dawn* the official publication of the Chicago Diocese of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the United States, published a letter of Bishop Vasily (of Stamford) addressed to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II. He expressed the hope that "significant misunderstandings and tensions between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Catholic Church will be positively resolved"⁹¹² so "that both faiths will be able to forget about the past and work together for a better future and complete reconciliation"⁹¹³. Bearing in mind this goal, he implored Patriarch Aleksii to start a consistent dialogue between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Catholic Church holding regular meetings with the aim of reaching the common good for both Churches. Bishop Vasily devoted a significant part of his message to exposing the "propaganda myth" about the aggressiveness of the Uniates. He pointed out that the accusations against the Uniates remained unfounded and without evidence. Thus, in the opinion of Bishop Basil, the true intentions of the Russian Orthodox Church's hierarchy were making every effort to oppose the restoration of the legal church of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, including demanding that "Pope John Paul II command the believers who belonged to the Ukrainian Catholic Church to join the Russian Church"⁹¹⁴. Answering to the letter, Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that it was wrong to look for the causes of interfaith conflict in Western Ukraine in the Soviet Past. He reported a number of cases in which Greek Catholics violated Ukrainian legislation. For example, the church of the village of Ulryzh, region of Lviv, in 1991, was recognized by the court as property of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, but the Greek Catholics still refused to comply with it. Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that the main reason for conflicts did not lie in the imperfection of the legislation, but in the unwillingness of the UCGG to respect the

⁹⁰⁹ Moscow Church Bulletin, *Встреча с Представителем Ватикана [Meeting with representative in the Vatican]*, 09-07-1998.

⁹¹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹¹ *Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Президент России Готовится К Визиту В Рим [Russian President Prepares for Visit to Rome]*, 16-01-1998.

⁹¹² *Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Религии, Львовский Собор 1946 Года Рпц Всегда Считала Каноническим [Religions, the ROC has always considered canonical the 1946 Council of Lviv]*, 16-09-1998.

⁹¹³ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian State. He also rejected the claim that the acts of violence carried out by the Uniates in Galicia were random. Referring to the problems of normalizing relations between the Uniate Church and the ROC, Metropolitan Kirill stated that in this process “much depended on the position of the Greek Catholic side and its adherence to its obligations, which, unfortunately, are not being fulfilled”⁹¹⁵. He added that “by the decision of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of 12 March 1998, a group was formed to resolve conflicts with the UGCC. The leadership of the group was entrusted to Bishop Augustine of Lvov and Drohobych”⁹¹⁶. He pointed out that the Orthodox Church remained open for dialogue, which should lead all Christians of Ukraine to the idea of the need to resolve all disputes with each other in peace and harmony, renouncing political pressure, violence and terror⁹¹⁷. Further complications in the bilateral relations between the two Churches were linked to the expiration on 07.01.98 of the lease on the building of the Diocesan Administration of the UOC located on Knyagin street. The building was rent out to 15 religious communities of the UGCC, on the basis of the decision n° 308 of 12.09.94, which handed over the Ivano Frankivsk City Executive Committee. After the expiration of the lease, the Uniates publicly promised to throw out the ruling bishop of the diocesan administration of the UOC onto the street. Indeed, the Ivano Frankivsk Regional Administration canceled in secret the order of the Executive Committee (N° 62-r dated 09.03.92) which provided for the transfer of a former Jesuit Church located at 3 Grunwald Street, to the diocese of the UOC. According to the order n° 456 of 25.06.97 the Ivano Frankivsk Regional State Administration had already transferred the Church to the schismatic diocese of the UOC–KP. In the summer of 1997, the bishop of Ivano-Frankivsk and Kolomyisky, Nikolay (Grokh)⁹¹⁸ consecrated the chapel of St. Basil the Great on the outskirts of the regional center. But local authorities, under far-fetched pretexts, delayed the registration of the chapel. This was a further example of local authorities’ attempts to oust canonical Orthodoxy from the regional center, using every possible method to terrorize the UOC’s clergy who opposed the “spiritual expansion of Catholicism and of nationalistic Patriarchates”⁹¹⁹. Considering the situation, the Council of the Russian Community of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast’s appealed to Patriarch Aleksii II with a request to provide urgent assistance to persecuted Orthodox believers of Ukraine; and urgently prompted them to inform the State Duma and the Government of the Russian Federation of the interfaith and interethnic conflict that was going on in the West part of Ukraine, also in perspective of the upcoming ratification of a large scale treaty between Russia and Ukraine⁹²⁰. Although controversies on several

⁹¹⁵ Ibid.

⁹¹⁶ Ibid.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid.

⁹¹⁸ Russkaya Mysl, “Я был первым из архиереев УАПЦ, вернувшихся в УПЦ...”. Интервью с епископом Ивано-Франковским Николаем [Paris, France, “I was the first of the UAOC bishops to return to the UOC...”. Interview with Bishop Nikolai of Ivano-Frankivsk], Paris, 09-07-1998.

⁹¹⁹ Komsomol'skaja Pravda, *Ватикан собирается Захватить Россию? [Is The Vatican Going To Involve Russia?]*, ualberta.ca, 70, 18-04-2002, https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/KP_98_2003/1123526.htm, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹²⁰ Indeed, the particular attention to events occurring in Galicia was also due to the upcoming visit of President Leonid Kuchma to Russia and to the ratification of the treaty of friendship and cooperation among Russia and Ukraine. In fact in the State Duma and in a certain part of Russian society there was

clauses of the treaty, which many Russian politicians saw as unilateral and unmotivated concessions to the Ukrainian side, the ratification of the “big agreement” among the two countries contributed to translating the political dialogue between Russia and Ukraine to a qualitatively new level, granting a completely different status to the relations among the two countries. Commenting on the impact of the *Treaty on Church life*, Archpriest Viktor (Petlyuchenko), in charge of contacts with Ukraine at the DECR, stated that the “Russian Orthodox Church is a Church that by its nature is the spiritual center of many ethnic groups and peoples. And, in this case, Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus form a Slavic community that is under the care of the Russian Orthodox Church”⁹²¹. He added that “the fact that at the end of the 20th century we are forced to talk about a *Treaty* that defines the social and political status of our States is, for me personally, itself a regrettable fact. On the other hand, I think that this agreement is needed because the entire course of history has brought all of us to this position. This *Treaty* is, as I understand, nothing more than an attempt to cool the flame of heated relationships. And the agreement will help the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which is part of the Ecumenical Orthodoxy and part of the Russian Orthodox Church”⁹²². The status of the UOC in the diocese of Ivano-Frankovsk degenerated to the point that a group of parishioners of the Transfiguration Church asked the editor of the journal *Pravoslavnaya Rus* to publish an appeal addressed to the Holy Synod of the UOC-MP, and to the Orthodox Community of Holy Russia to give them help in defending Orthodoxy in Ukraine. The main reason of the appeal was to seek protection from the behaviour of Vladjka Nicholas (Grokh), transferred to the UOC-MP from the UOAC who, once arrived in the Diocese of Ivano-Frankovsk, started an active persecution of Orthodox believers, conducting it in agreement with the Uniates and the schismatics “Filaretites”⁹²³. Indeed, the ratification of the *Treaty* was also considered a useful instrument in some degree to weaken the positions of nationalistic political parties of Ukraine, who had a negative attitude towards everything Russian. Actively preaching the isolation of Ukraine from Russia, these groups considered all the possible ways to use Churches for political needs. This attitude first of all determined their relationship to the

strong opposition to the ratification of the treaty. Its ideologues believed that it would weaken Russian foreign policy, and leave Russians abroad without protection. It is worth pointing out also that one of the leitmotiv of the participants in the protest was that Ukrainians were independent, but still a part of triune Russian, although in no way willing to admit it. See: Vek, “Память” протестует на украинском. Жаль, что бедами православных общин интересуются только крайне правые [*Pamjat' protests in Ukrainian. It is a shame that only the extreme right is interested in the problems of Orthodox communities*], Moscow, 6, 06-02-1998.

⁹²¹ «Русская Православная Церковь - это Церковь, которая по природе своей является духовным центром многих этносов и народов. И в данном случае Украина, Россия, Белоруссия - это как раз славянская общность, которая находится под окормлением Русской Православной Церкви. Тот факт, что в конце XX века мы вынуждены говорить о договоре, который определяет социальный и политический статус наших государств, сам по себе факт, для меня лично прискорбный. С другой стороны, я считаю, что такой договор нужен, потому что весь ход истории подвел нас всех к такому положению. Этот договор, как я понимаю, не что иное, как попытка остудить пламень накала взаимоотношений. И договор поможет Украинской Православной Церкви, которая является частью Вселенского Православия и частью Русской Православной Церкви[...].» See: Shmyrev Maksim, Большой Договор И Церкви Украины [*The Great Treaty And The Churches Of Ukraine*], *Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Religia*, 6, 24-03-1999.

⁹²² *ibid.*

⁹²³ *Russkaja Mysl', Беззаконие В Действии [Lawlessness in Action]*, 15-04-1998.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate as one of the conductors of Russian influence in Ukraine, and as the antithesis of a single, independent Church in Ukraine. With these considerations, Archbishop Victor declared that when a normal believer takes the path of schism, new values and new arguments do not appear to him. Therefore, any situation was doomed to criticism of schismatics, and they will try to derive the maximum benefit from criticism raised. Another serious problem occurred were this group to lose the basis of their existence, and this might occur when they are not used anymore by political parties and nationalistic movements for their own purposes. And, since everyone wants to attract such a powerful force as the Church to their side, this incentivizes such groups to give the Church special privileges. For example, he would count the transfer of the Golden – Domed Monastery to the schismatics of the UOC-KP. Another example was the issue of returning the property of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra to the UOC-MP. He pointed out that this group wanted to use the Church for their political scopes and ignored that the Church was only for the “training of devoted patriots”⁹²⁴. From this perspective, the conclusion of the agreement among Ukraine and Russia for the State and the bulk of believers was an opportunity to realize their political rights, and to allow believers deprived of any political colour to realize the fate of Church unity⁹²⁵.

At the Council of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church held from 23 to 30 August 1998 in Lviv, the status of the UGCC and the relations with the other Orthodox Churches was discussed, the UCGG faced quite a strong rejection from other Orthodox Churches as well as discontent in relations with both Rome and Moscow. Indeed, Patriarch Aleksii accused Rome of contributing to Greek Catholics’ seizure of territories that, in his opinion, historically belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church. According to some sources, already in 1995 Pope John Paul II ordered Greek-Catholics not to intensify the practice of opening churches outside the area that traditionally belonged to the UGCC, therefore the regions of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil. Another important issue was the one connected with the recognition of the Patriarchate. Indeed the problem became relevant after the legalization of the UCGG, but the conservatism of Rome, and the well-known opposition of the Russian Orthodox Church, helped stop the process. Inside the UCGG there had also been a call for the self-declaration of the Patriarchate, but the leadership of the Church had also been afraid of undertaking such a step; however, the possible arrival of the Pope to Ukraine would also mean the consent of Rome to the Patriarchate. Regarding relation with policy, the UGCC believed that unlike Kravchuk, Kuchma had not bothered to show any interest in the Church for four years, but he had caused them a mortal offence when he refused a visit to Ukraine of the Pope John Paul II⁹²⁶.

Church conflict in Western Ukraine was also discussed during the meeting between Metropolitan Kirill and the delegation of the Holy See held on 13 June 2000 and during

⁹²⁴ Rossijskaya Pechat' O Stranakh Sng (Vps) Ukraina Ng-Religii, *Большой Договор И Церкви Украины [The Big Treaty And the Churches of Ukraine]*, 27-03-1999.

⁹²⁵ Ibid.

⁹²⁶ Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Religia, *Реален Ли Статус Украинского Патриархата [Is the Status of the Ukrainian Patriarchate Real?]*, 16-09-1998.

the plenary session of the International Mixed Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, planned for 12-19 July 2000 in Baltimore (USA). Bishop Walter Kasper, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Priest Joseph May, an employee of the Council, Abbot Hilarion (Alfeyev), DECR Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, and IE Vyzhnov, an employee of the DECR Secretariat for Inter-Christian Relations all took part in the meeting⁹²⁷. Commenting on the result of the meeting in an interview delivered on 29 July to the correspondent of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*⁹²⁸, Metropolitan Hilarion pointed out that joint documents were signed in the previous meeting held in Freising⁹²⁹ (1990) and Balamand (1993). At this meeting, uniatism was declared unacceptable. After Balamand the plenary session could not be convened for long time, and only the coordinating committee met in Rome (1997) and Arricia (1998). The Catholic delegation arrived in Baltimore with the firm intention to prevent the official recognition of the Greek Catholic Churches as “abnormal” (as both sides agreed in Arricia). At the beginning of the meeting, the Catholic side pointed out that the Uniates were in full communion with Rome, and if the union could be considered abnormal, its consequences were therefore absolutely normal. The Orthodox side categorically rejected this approach and after days of negotiations, unable to find an agreement, none of the intended joint documents were written. Conversely, relations with the Catholic side terminated without fruit (as noted also by Patriarch Aleksii in the talk delivered at the Jubilee Bishops’ Council held in August)⁹³⁰. Metropolitan Hilarion added that, as head of the Russian Orthodox Church’s delegation, his talk concerned the events that had occurred in the last period in Ukraine, including the violence resulting in the seizure of over a thousand Orthodox Churches, and

⁹²⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл принял кардинала Эдварда Кассиди* [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad received Cardinal Edward Cassidy], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85476/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85476/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹²⁸ Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Разрыв Отношений Или Продолжение Диалога? На вопросы корреспондента "Независимой Газеты" отвечает Секретарь по межхристианским связям игумен Иларион (Алфеев)* ("Независимая Газета" от 29.07.2000) [Breaking Off Relations Or Continuing Dialogue? The Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, Hegumen Hilarion (Alfeev), answers the questions of the correspondent of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* ("Nezavisimaya Gazeta" 29.07.2000)], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85398/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85398/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹²⁹ The Freising Agreement was not officially ratified by the Catholic side, while the Balamand document was. However, the latter met resistance both among the Greek Catholics who disagreed with the harsh condemnation of the union, and some Orthodox Christians, dissatisfied with the fact that the document used the term “Sister Church” referring to Orthodox and Catholic Churches. In particular, the Balamand document was officially rejected by the Greek Catholic Church of Romania and the Greek Orthodox Church. See: *Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Разрыв Отношений Или Продолжение Диалога? На вопросы корреспондента "Независимой Газеты" отвечает Секретарь по межхристианским связям игумен Иларион (Алфеев)* [Breaking Off Relations Or Continuing Dialogue? The Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, Hegumen Hilarion (Alfeev), answers the questions of the correspondent of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*], 29-07-2000, and, [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85398/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85398/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *13.08.2000. Доклад/ Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви. (13–16 августа 2000 года)* [13.08.2000. Report/Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. (August 13-16, 2000)], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85357/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85357/), (last accessed October 2021).

the near destruction of three dioceses. He insisted that the ROC did not call for the destruction of the Greek-Catholic Church' structures, but only for a peaceful, non-violent solution to the conflict situation.

The issue of uniatism was foremost discussed by the Mixed Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches in the meeting held on 9-19 July 2000 in Emmitsburg (USA). The discussion confirmed the serious differences in positions between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches; indeed after a lengthy discussion it was decided that further study of the canonical and ecclesiastical consequences of Uniatism, the real obstacle to the continuation of the dialogue, was needed⁹³¹. The same position was taken over by Metropolitan Kirill, and Patriarch Aleksii in the reports they presented at the Jubilee Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow, 13-16 August 2000)⁹³². The issue was also raised during the meeting of Patriarch Aleksii with President of Italy Carlo Ciampi (28 November, Holy Danilov Monastery), and Cardinal Roger Echegerai, Chairman of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (8 December, Chisty Pereulok). During the meeting with Ciampi, Patriarch Aleksii stated that "Orthodox parishes in the western regions of Ukraine are deprived of their churches. We do not agree with the statements of prominent Vatican officials who consider Russia a field of missionary activity for the Roman Catholic Church"⁹³³. Indeed the meeting represented a worthy occasion to discuss Russia's entry in the European Community that, according the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, would be possible only with the preservation of its cultural and historical identity⁹³⁴. The meeting held on 8 December confirmed that the situation in Western Ukraine, as well as the proselytizing activities of the Moscow Patriarchate, represented an obstacle to the normal bilateral relations of the Russian

⁹³¹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Смешанной комиссии по диалогу между Католической и Православной Церквями [Meeting of the Mixed Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85425/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³² Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, 16.08.2000. *Доклад/митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных сношений Московского Патриархата, на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [16.08.2000. REPORT/ by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 16-08-2000, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2000/08/s2000r15/>, (last accessed October 2021); 13-08-2000. *ДОКЛАД/ Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви. (13–16 августа 2000 года) [13.08.2000. REPORT/Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. (August 13-16, 2000)]*, 18-08-2000, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2000/08/s2000r03/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³³ "Православные приходы в западных областях Украины лишены своих храмов. Мы не согласны с высказываниями видных деятелей Ватикана, считающих Россию полем миссионерской деятельности Римско-Католической Церкви".

See: Nedumov Oleh, РПЦ и Папские визиты [The ROC and the visit of the Pope], *Nezavisimaja Gazeta – Religia*, 14.12.2000, https://www.ng.ru/ng_religii/2000-12-14/3_vizit.html?id_user=Y, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches, although Cardinal Echegerai did not exclude the possibility of a meeting among the Patriarch and the Pope⁹³⁵.

Regarding the meeting with the Pope, Patriarch Aleksii II, did not reject the possibility of arranging it, but pointed out that in order to let it become possible, it was necessary to resolve problems in relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches. Besides proselytism, Patriarch Aleksii argued that ROC's grave concern was the continuing tension in relations between the Orthodox and Greek Catholics in Ukraine, and in particular the hostile actions on the part of Greek Catholics to which Orthodox believers were exposed in the regions of Lvov, Ternopoil, Ivano-Frankivsk. Another problem was represented by the UGCC's attempts to extend its influence to the Orthodox east and south of Ukraine, and to transfer its main department from Lviv to Kiev, and its insistence on obtaining from Rome the status of Patriarchy. Considering the situation, he argued that in Russian Orthodox Church's perspective, all the statement related to the importance of Christian unity should be supported by concrete deeds leading to the establishment of real trusting relations between Christians⁹³⁶.

Igor Yevgenyevich Vyzhanov, employee of the DECR, responsible for the relations with the Catholic Church, commenting the issue of the complex relations between Orthodoxes and Uniates in Western Ukraine, argued that this had been one of the central topics for years in the bilateral dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches. He pointed out that in the last months the dialogue among the two gained new shades, first of all following the changes occurred in the leadership of the UGCC due to the death of Cardinal Miroslav-Ivan Lyubachivsky, and the premature plans of Pope John Paul to visit Ukraine⁹³⁷. On 24 January 2001 the Synod of the UGCC elected the Cardinal Lubomir Guzar, as the head of the Church, the "right hand" of Cardinal Lyubachivsky. In the circle of the Russian Orthodox Church connected with external church activities, there were mixed opinions regarding this election. Some members associated his name with the persecutions conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s by members of the UGCC against Orthodox believers of the regions of Lviv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk, and they moreover considered Guzar one of the most active apologists of the Greek Catholic proselytism. Others, considered Guzar a flexible church politician. Vyzhanov recognized the difficulties of the role of the new elected Primate. These difficulties stemmed from the visit of the Pope, organized totally ignoring the request of Metropolitan Vladimir and of all the Synod of the UOC-MP: above all because this happened in a moment when it

⁹³⁵ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх принял кардинала Роже Эчегерая* [His Holiness the Patriarch received Cardinal Roger Etchegaray], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85221/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³⁶ Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, «Быть единомышленными» ["To be unanimous and of one mind."], *Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009*, 30-11-1999, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/1999/11/8398/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹³⁷ See: Vyzhanov Igor, Перспективы межцерковных отношений [Perspectives of Interchurch relations], *Nezavisimaja Gazeta – Religia*, 3:74, 14-02-2001, https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/NG_00_01/1152206.htm, (last accessed October 2021).

was important to recover the dialogue with Moscow⁹³⁸. In fact, the Holy Synod of the UOC-MP held on 22 January 2001 recommended that Metropolitan Vladimir write a letter to the Primate of the Catholic Church, approved by the participants of the Bishops Council of the UOC-MP, and presented to Archbishop Nikola Eterovich, Apostolic Nuncio in Ukraine. The letter highlighted that worries regarding the visit of the Pope were due to the unsettled relationship between the Greek-Catholics and Orthodox Christians in Western Ukraine, since none of the agreements on this issue concluded between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican were executed⁹³⁹. The position of Metropolitan Vladimir was also supported by the Chairman of the DECR who, in a conversation with V.V. Zhirinovskiy and the media, characterized the trip as "not being devoted to solving the problem of the Orthodox dioceses of Western Ukraine defeated by the Uniates, [and thus could] not be regarded as a peacekeeping trip"⁹⁴⁰. According to Zhirinovskiy, union and schism were used as a tool for dividing the Ukrainian people, and pitting Russians and Ukrainian against each other⁹⁴¹. Already on 22 November 1996, commenting on the possibility of a visit of the Pope John Paul II to Ukraine, Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan) declared that from an exchange of opinions with the other heads of some Local Orthodox Churches, none of the 15 countries under the omophorion of Orthodoxy was keen to

⁹³⁸ The beginning of a new stage in relations between the Vatican and the Moscow Patriarchate was predicted from the statement made on 25 November 2002 by Guzar, who expressed the will to meet with Patriarch Aleksii and discuss with him of the relations among the two Churches, *ibid*.

See also: *Nezavisimaja Gazeta*, *Religia*, *Ukrainskiy Most*, *Между Москвой И Ватиканом [Between Moscow and the Vatican]*, 04-12-2002.

⁹³⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Киевский и всея Украины Владимир направил письмо Папе Римскому Иоанну Павлу II [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir sent a letter to Pope John Paul II]*, *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85121/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁴⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заместитель председателя Государственной Думы В.В.Жириновский посетил Отдел внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата [Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Vladimir Zhirinovskij visited the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84996/>, (last accessed October 2021). See also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Телеинтервью Митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла программе "Подробности" (РТР 12 марта 2001 года) [TV Interview with Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad on Podrobnosti" (RTR March 12, 2001)]*, *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85023/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Церковь Старается Напоминать Властям, Что Любые Преобразования Должны Идти На Пользу Людям". Полный Текст Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Московского И Всея Руси Алексия II Итальянскому Информационному Агентству "Анса" [The Church Is Trying To Remind The Authorities That Any Transformations Must Benefit The People. Full Text Of The Interview Of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II Of Moscow And All Russia To The Italian News Agency Ansa]*, *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84791/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Папа Уехал, Проблемы Остались. Возвращение К Прошедшему: Митрополит Кирилл Комментирует Итоги Поездки Иоанна Павла II На Украину". Интервью Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла Газете "Солидарность". "Солидарность" №39 (334), Октябрь 2001 [The Pope Is Gone, The Problems Remain. Returning To The Past: Metropolitan Kyrill Comments On The Results Of John Paul II's Trip To Ukraine. Interview With Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad For The Newspaper Solidarnost. "Solidarnost" N°39 (334), October 2001]*, *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84575/>, (last accessed October 2021); Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Визит Папы в Украину чреват обострением православно-католических отношений [The Pope's visit to Ukraine is fraught with an aggravation of Orthodox-Catholic relations]*, 2001/6, pp. 38.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid*.

receive him on its territory. His position was confirmed both by Filaret who considered planning the visit impossible because of the situation of the UGCC, and by the Metropolitan of Galicia and Ivano-Frankivsk of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Andrew, who stated that from the point of view of the role of the Pope as the head of the Vatican, his arrival in a democratic country was absolutely normal, but that this visit would nonetheless further alienate the believers of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from the Orthodox World. This was especially the case given that in the western regions of Ukraine over the past five years people who professed different faith had become enemies. Indeed, for the sake of peace, in his opinion, it was not necessary to invite the Pope on an official visit⁹⁴². Predictably, after the visit of the Pope to Ukraine, the relationship of the ROC with the RCC reached an impasse⁹⁴³. Although the Moscow Patriarchate aimed to resume the dialogue, recognizing its importance to face the problems of the modern civilization. The DECR's recalled that, albeit symbolically, on Christmas Day, in the Vatican an Orthodox children's choir performed before the Pope. Moreover, in January 2002, the ROC sent a delegation to a peacekeeping meeting of religious leaders held in Assisi and, at the end of February, a meeting was planned with Cardinal Kasper, in order to discuss forms of cooperation between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Catholic Church in face of challenges of the new century. Yet, he also added that after what happened, "negotiations lost their meaning"⁹⁴⁴.

Visit of the Pope (23-27 June 2001)

On 21 June, during a press conference held at the Mir Novostey agency, Archbishop of Ippono-Zaritsky, Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, Apostolic Administrator for Catholics of the Latin Rite of the European Part of Russia, made a statement regarding the planned visit of the Pope to Ukraine. The head of the DECR communication service, Viktor Malukhin, appealed by the news agency Interfax, defined the statement of Archbishop Kondrusiewicz, incorrect and inconsistent. He declared: "Archbishop Kondrusevich, according to his statement, does not understand the term canonical territory of the Russian Church"⁹⁴⁵, and added that "the position is quite understandable, because

⁹⁴² Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Предстоятели Украинских Православных Церквей Против Визита Папы Римского На Украину* [Representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches Against the Visit of the Pope of Rome to Ukraine], 22-11-1996.

⁹⁴³ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Действовать в осознании ответственности перед Богом, историей и человечеством. (Полный текст статьи, сокращенный вариант которой опубликован в "Российской газете" 5 июля 2002 года)* [To act in the awareness of responsibility before God, history and humanity. (The full text of the article, an abridged version of which was published in the "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" on July 5, 2002)], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84109/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁴⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Интервью митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла программе "Вести"* [Interview of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad to the Vesti program], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84337/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁴⁵ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Визит Папы Римского на Украину чреват обострением православно-католических отношений* [Pope's visit to Ukraine fraught with aggravation of Orthodox-Catholic relations], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84837/>, (last accessed October 2021).

ignoring the principle of canonical territory is undoubtedly convenient when it comes to the active policy of Catholic proselytism and spiritual expansion”⁹⁴⁶. Malukhin stressed that the Uniate and the Catholic community in the territory of the former USSR were sometimes used by external forces as an instrument of pressure on the canonical structures of the Russian Orthodox Church, and this had tragic consequences above all in Western Ukraine. And he clarified that the Russian Orthodox Church “in its own relations with other churches itself scrupulously adheres to the principle of renouncing the practice of proselytism”⁹⁴⁷, therefore Kondrusiewicz’s justification of the Pope’s visit to Ukraine undertaken against the will of the canonical Church, by the fact that His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II allegedly visited Austria, Slovakia, Lithuania, where mainly Catholics live, without asking the consent of the Vatican. In fact, he pointed out that meetings with local Catholic hierarchs were previously agreed with them. This showed that “foreign visits of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii are always acts of genuine peacemaking and do not threaten interfaith harmony in the countries he visits”⁹⁴⁸. Finally, he added that if when visiting Orthodox countries as Romania, Georgia and Greece, the Pope nevertheless considered it necessary to secure a formal invitation from the relevant Orthodox Churches, and only in the case of Ukraine was an exception made, it follows that the Vatican had a special attitude towards the Ukrainian people. Worries about the visit of the Pope were also expressed in the meeting of Patriarch Aleksii with the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Russia V.S. Chernomyrdin (29 May 2001)⁹⁴⁹. By contrast, the Roman Catholic Church’s position on the issue belied a completely different perspective; at the time of his visit to Ukraine, talking with the journalists about the possible visit to Ukraine of Patriarch Aleksii, who was invited by the head of the Ukrainian parliament, Vladimir Lytvyn, stated that he did not intend to interfere in the internal problems of the Orthodox Church, and that in his opinion Patriarch Aleksii was completely free to visit the countries he wanted to visit, as well as was the case of Patriarch Aleksii, although the Moscow Patriarchate opposed the visit of the head of the Roman Catholic Church to Ukraine, and that to the Roman Catholic Church was recently denied a visit to Russia. He stated that a meeting was planned in the Russian Federation in February, but it was denied, even after the letter was sent to Patriarch Aleksii (Cardinal Kasper also intended to meet with the head of the UOC-MP. When the letter he sent in order to ask the meeting remained unanswered, he knew that Metropolitan Vladimir was not in Kiev at that time)⁹⁵⁰. Regarding the visit of the Pope in Russia, in an interview delivered on the eve of his trip to Italy, Vladimir Putin said that the consent of the Russian Orthodox Church was required for a full-fledged visit of Pope John Paul II to Russia. In turn, in New York Metropolitan Kirill expressed the Moscow Patriarchate’s principled readiness for a dialogue on holding a meeting of the heads of the two Churches. But he warned that facilitating such a

⁹⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁹⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁹⁴⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий встретился с В.С.Черномырдиным* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii meets with V.S. Chernomyrdin], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84743/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁰ NTV Novosti, *Кардинал Каспер не искал в Киеве встреч с представителями УПЦ КП* [Cardinal Kasper did not seek meetings with representatives of the UOC-KP in Kiev], 23-10-2002.

meeting would require the elimination of the two main obstacles standing in the way: catholic proselytism and Uniatism⁹⁵¹. The same situation and doubts arose after the DECR received a memorandum on the establishment of the Uniate Patriarchate in Ukraine sent to Metropolitan Kirill by Cardinal Walter Kasper. Patriarch Aleksii appealed to the Primates of Orthodox Churches in Moscow and in Russia, asking them to give feedback on the document. In the letter Patriarch Bartholomew sent to Patriarch Aleksii, the content of Cardinal Kasper's memorandum was described as "violent and anti-historical attacks on the Patriarchal systems of Orthodox Churches"⁹⁵². He added that the creation of a Uniate Patriarchate would be considered a decision contrary to perception of the Second Vatican Council, which stated that "Uniate "uniatism", can no longer be accepted either as a method to be followed nor as a model of the unity our Churches are seeking"⁹⁵³, and therefore is just a form of proselytism, which the Ecumenical Patriarchate strongly opposed. Indeed, in his opinion encouraging the Uniate presence in Ukraine by granting its head a patriarchal title would mean causing a serious reaction among Orthodox Christians, especially after the condemnation of Ariccia in 1991 as a means for achieving Church unity, and would endanger the theological dialogue between the Churches, which would be finally disrupted, as became clear from the unsuccessful meeting in Baltimore. This is because all Orthodox would consider Rome untrustworthy if during meetings with representatives it condemns the union, as for example happened in Ariccia, and on the other hand, by action, it supports the union. Concerns were also expressed by all the other Orthodox Churches (Romania, Polish, Alexandria, Bulgarian, Greek, Georgian, Church of Antioch, and of Jerusalem)⁹⁵⁴. Patriarch Aleksii iterated that the Greek-Catholic Church was a local phenomenon, present only in few areas of the country, and that as stated by the Russian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod of 17 July 2002, "the inhabitants of the South and East of Ukraine have always firmly stood for the Orthodox faith. Attempts to Latinize them or impose a union have invariably failed"⁹⁵⁵. Indeed, another problem was the creation on

⁹⁵¹ Nezavisimaja Gazeta Religia, *Русская Церковь И Ватикан: До Перемирия Еще Далеко [The Russian Church And The Vatican: A Truce Is Still A Long Way Off]*, 19-11-2003.

⁹⁵² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине [All Orthodox Churches Negatively Assess Prospects of Creating Greek Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine]*, mospat.ru, Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине.: новость ОБЦС (mospat.ru), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵³ Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Uniatism, Method Of Union Of The Past, And The Present Search For Full Communion**, Balamand (Lebanon), June 23rd, 1993, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-lingua-inglese.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁴ *ibid*; Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине [All Orthodox Churches Negatively Assess Prospects of Creating Greek Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82406/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁵ «жители Юга и Востока Украины всегда твердо стояли за православную веру. Попытки латинизировать их или насадить унию неизменно терпели крах». See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Киев Является Важным Духовным Центром Вселенского Православия" Святейший Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Алексий II Дал Интервью Газете "Кієвський Телеграфъ" ("Кієвський Телеграфъ" № 9 (151), Приложение "Православний Міръ", 17 Марта*

28 July 2003 of the Odessa-Crimean Exarchate of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, covering the south of Ukraine, where the majority of people belonged to the Orthodox faith⁹⁵⁶. On 19 February 2004, during a meeting with Metropolitan Kirill, Cardinal Kasper argued that the unanimous opinion of the Orthodox Churches was taken seriously by the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, and ensured that the desire of the Holy See was to preserve and develop good relations with the Orthodox Churches. Both sides also agreed that in order to resolve certain problems in the bilateral relations of the two Churches, it was necessary to create a working group of representatives of both Churches, which would consider solution for their settlement⁹⁵⁷.

Properties and new buildings

Another serious issue in the bilateral relations was the Lviv City Council's refusal to build a Church of the Moscow Patriarchate⁹⁵⁸. A year before, other conflicts arose because on the eve of the visit of the Pope, authorities decided to demolish the wooden building of the Orthodox Church, since it had been the place where the Pope was to meet with the youths. Because of this, an interreligious conflict arose in Lviv⁹⁵⁹. Moreover, on 4 May 2002, the decision of the Pope created a new diocese of the Roman Catholic Church – Odessa Simferopol, with its center in Odessa, in which a new bishop was introduced on 13 July. On the same day the decision of the head of the Roman Catholic Church was announced to establish a new diocese in Ukraine- Kharkov-Zaporozhye, with a center in Kharkov. The Russian Orthodox Church pointed out that respecting the need of Ukrainian Catholic for pastoral care did not oppose the creation of dioceses by Rome in the regions of their historical residence. The problem was that the Catholic Church had begun to build churches where churches had never before existed, or where the number of Catholics

2003 Года) ["Kiev Is An Important Spiritual Center Of Universal Orthodoxy". His Holiness Aleksii II Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Gave An Interview To The Newspaper "Kiev Telegraph" ("Kiev Telegraph" № 9 (151), "Orthodox World" Supplement, 17 March 2003)], <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83490/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Церковь Отвечает На Вызовы Нового Времени, Утверждая В Обществе Христианские Ценности"* ["The Church Responses To The Challenges Of The New Time, Affirming Christian Values In Society"], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82377/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82377/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Коммюнике о встрече митрополита Кирилла с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером* [Communiqué on Metropolitan Kirill's meeting with Cardinal Walter Kasper], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82400/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82400/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁸ Archbishop of Lvov and Galician Augustin also wrote a letter to President Kuchma about this, expressing the hope that finally the voice of the Orthodox community of Lviv would be heard, and that it would not be obliged to take more decisive actions trying to overcome the current situation. See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Архиепископ Львовский и Галицкий Августин обратился с письмом к Президенту Украины в связи с притеснениями православных во Львовской области* [Archbishop of Lviv and Galicia Augustin sent a letter to the President of Ukraine in connection with the oppression of Orthodox Christians in the Lviv region], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82359/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82359/), (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁵⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Украина. Горсовет Львова отказал приходу Московского Патриархата в строительстве храма* [Ukraine. Lviv City Council refused to build a church for the Moscow Patriarchate parish], [mospat.ru, https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84093/](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84093/), (last accessed October 2021).

were very small. In addition, the attempt to spread influence in the East of Ukraine was significant. In fact in mid January 2002, Pope John Paul II approved the decision of the Greek-Catholics to establish the Donetsk -Kharkov Exarchate by separating it from the Kiev-Vyshgorod Exarchate. The leadership of the UGCC expressed the desire to move to Kiev and establishing a “patriarchal see” there, thus conducting the same policy undertaken in February 2002 by the Russian Federation. Indeed, the Holy Synod confirmed the position stated in the documents sent to the Vatican on 28 June 2002, which stated that the ROC considered Catholic missionary activity among Christians who had no historical or cultural ties with the Catholic Church proselytism. The reaction of the Catholic side continued to point out its desire to “preach the Gospel” to all people. This response confirmed the existence of a fundamental discrepancy in the positions of the two churches⁹⁶⁰. In an interview with Interfax news agency and the *Moskovskiye novosti*, Metropolitan Kirill stated that “for Russia and Belarus, as well as for Ukraine, it is important to realize that the Pope is not so much the head of state of the Vatican as the Primate of the Church”⁹⁶¹. Indeed, from his perspective, the fact that the Pope is also the head of a state is nothing more than a “vestige of the Middle Ages”⁹⁶², while the real authority of the Pope lies in the fact that he represented the Roman Catholic Church. In addition, according to Metropolitan Kirill, the visit of the Pope to Ukraine created the illusion that Ukraine was a largely Catholic country, when in fact Catholics were an absolute minority there. Therefore, the solution proposed by the ROC was “to abandon the theoretical condemnation of proselytism and recognize the inadmissibility of missionary efforts in the territory of the pastoral responsibility of another Church”⁹⁶³.

⁹⁶⁰ I think it is worth to note that in his address to Archbishop Augustine And All The Faithful Of The Lviv Diocese, Patriarch Aleksii defined the diocese of Lviv the “torch of Orthodoxy in Galician land”. (Львовская епархия, пройдя сквозь горнило суровых испытаний, осталась светочем Православия на Галицкой земле). See: Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Послание Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия архиепископу Августину и всем верным чадам Львовской епархии* [Message from His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia to Archbishop Augustine and all the faithful of the Diocese of Lviv], 2002/9, pp. 10.

⁹⁶¹ Information Bulletin of the Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Официальные Документы Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви в связи с учреждением новых католических епархий на Украине* [Official Documents Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Establishment of New Catholic Dioceses in Ukraine], 2002/7, pp. 3-4; Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, “В XXI Веке Недопустимо Заниматься Возведением Новой Берлинской Стены”. Интервью митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла агентству “Интерфакс” и газете “Московские Новости” [“In The XXI Century, It Is Not Permissible To Construct A New Berlin Wall”. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83950/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁶² Ibid.

⁹⁶³ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви в связи с учреждением новых католических епархий на Украине* [Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in connection with the establishment of new Catholic dioceses in Ukraine], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84027/>, (last accessed October 2021). See also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Одесский и Измаильский Агафангел выступил с протестом против учреждения католической епископской кафедры в Одессе* [Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail protested against the establishment of a Catholic bishop's pulpit in Odessa], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84039/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, “Ватикану Необходимо Изменить Взгляд На Цели И Задачи Своего Присутствия В России”. Святейший Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Алексий II Ответил

On 22 February 2004, at his working residence located in Chisty Lane, Patriarch Aleksii, received a delegation of the Roman Catholic Church led by Cardinal Walter Kasper⁹⁶⁴. In his talk, Patriarch Aleksii stressed that the ecclesiological principle laid out in the Second Vatican Council in relation to Sister Churches⁹⁶⁵ should be implemented and recently it seemed that the Roman Catholic Church had abandoned it. In particular, the issue of proselytism and of violation of Russian Orthodox Church's canonical territory arose in the case of Western Ukraine, not only in relation with the defeat of the three dioceses of Lviv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankivsk, but also with Guzars' project to move the chair of the Uniate Church's head from Lviv to Kiev, and establishing a Patriarchate. He pointed out that the establishment of a Patriarchate would mean to put an end to Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox bilateral relations for decades. Patriarch Aleksii pointed out that in his address he was not moved by anti-Catholic sentiments, but conversely he stressed that for 26 years, as President of the Conference of European Churches, the Russian Church developed relations with the Council of Episcopal Conferences in Europe. He highlighted the need to follow what was written in the document *Pro Russia*, and that meant the coordination of the Roman Catholic presence in the territory of Russian Federation with local Orthodox bishops⁹⁶⁶. A further complication connected to the missionary policy and proselytizing activities in Ukraine was represented by the statement of the Lviv Province of the Redemptorist Order of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, held in Kiev on 23-25 February 2005 and according to which missionary work in the traditionally Orthodox regions of southern Ukraine Zaporozhye and Odessa was declared to be the main priority of Order's activities. Metropolitan Kirill, in a letter sent to Cardinal Kasper, expressed his deep concern over the UGCC's missionary plans, in particular because the statement mentioned among the priorities of this missionary activity the work with disabled and youth. The level of concern was further illustrated by the decision of Metropolitan Kirill to forward a copy of the letter to Cardinal Ignatius Musa Daud,

На Вопросы Итальянского Католического Журнала "Фамилия Кристиана" (22 Сентября 2002 Года) ["Vatican Needs To Change The View On The Goals And Objectives Of Its Presence In Russia." His Holiness Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Aleksii II Answered The Questions Of The Italian Catholic Magazine "Surname Of Christian" (September 22, 2002)], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.Ru/Ru/News/83853/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁶⁴ The delegation also included the representative of the Holy See in the Russian Federation, Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Bishop Brian Farrell, the employee of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Priest Jozef May and the Secretary of the Representation of the Holy See in the Russian Federation, Priest Ante Jozich. On the part of the Russian Orthodox Church, the meeting was also attended by Deputy Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, Priest Igor Vyshanov, acting secretary of the DECR for Inter-Christian Relations, Priest John Lapidus, an employee of the DECR MP Secretariat for Inter-Christian Relations.

⁹⁶⁵ Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith, *Note On The Expression «Sister Churches». A. Letter To The Presidents Of The Conferences Of Bishops*, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000630_chiese-sorelle_en.html, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁶⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий обсудил проблемы взаимоотношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквями с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii discussed problems of relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches with Cardinal Walter Kasper], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82393/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Prefect of the Congregation of Eastern Churches⁹⁶⁷. The religious situation in Ukraine was also discussed during the meeting held on 22 June 2005 at the DECR among Metropolitan Kirill, Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, priest Igor Vyzhanov, Archbishop Antonio Mennini, priest Joseph May. The Orthodox side pointed out that from a canonical, ecclesiological and pastoral point of view, the idea of mentioning Kiev in the title of the head of the UGCC and to transferring his see to the capital was unacceptable, and might represent a serious obstacle to the development of Orthodox-Catholic relations⁹⁶⁸. This position was confirmed in the DECR's response to the press release published by the press secretariat of the UGCC which presented arguments in support of the transferring the residence of the head of the Church to Kiev. The main objections raised by the DECR were: 1) the fact that although the UOC-MP and the UGCC were located on the same geographical territory, there was no canonical union between them, therefore the "existence of their hierarchies side by side had no ecclesiological or canonical obstacles"⁹⁶⁹. However, the statement of the head of the UGCC that the stay of Greek Catholic metropolitan in Kiev was compatible with the stay in Kiev of the UOC-MP's metropolitan in the same way as the existences of their two different hierarchies was contrary to the resolutions of the Second Vatican Council. In particular, the DECR' statement reported the provision of *Unitatis redintegratio* (ch. 3, I, 15) according to which Eastern Churches "although separated from us, possess the true Sacraments, especially, by virtue of the Apostolic Succession, the Priesthood and the Eucharist, through which they are still most closely associated with us"⁹⁷⁰. The use of the term "Sister Churches" that had been restored after the Second Vatican Council represented an important moment towards the reach of unity, as it represented the move from the principle of inter-confessional rivalry to principles of fraternal cooperation among the Churches. Foremost, this also meant 1) the recognition of reciprocal spheres of pastoral responsibility, that is the recognition and respect of canonical territory's borders. Indeed, recognizing the "same origin" of the Orthodox and of the Greek Catholic Church, but nevertheless rejecting the need to observe the principle of canonical territory due to the absence of canonical communion, the leadership of the UOC-MP rejected the idea that Orthodox-Catholic relations might establish parallel hierarchical structures. 2) the awareness that Greek Catholics did not believe that "the privilege of the Church of Kiev as the cradle of Byzantine Christianity has

⁹⁶⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл направил кардиналу Вальтеру Касперу письмо с осуждением прозелитической деятельности греко-католиков на юге Украины* [Metropolitan Kirill sent a letter to Cardinal Walter Kasper condemning the proselytizing activities of Greek Catholics in southern Ukraine], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79310/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁶⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Кирилла с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером* [Metropolitan Kirill met with Cardinal Walter Kasper], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78364/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁶⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Комментарий Службы коммуникации Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата по вопросу о перенесении резиденции главы Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви в Киев* [Commentary of the Communication Service of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate on the issue of transferring the residence of the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to Kiev], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77912/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid.

passed to Moscow”⁹⁷¹. The DECR pointed out that was an undoubted historical fact that Kiev metropolitans from the middle of the eighth century began to visit regularly the north-eastern regions until finally setting in Moscow. The statement highlighted that “Kiev was not the cradle of Byzantine Christianity. It, as we know, received baptism from Byzantium and thus became the cradle of Russian - in the broadest sense of the word – Christianity”⁹⁷². 3) the fact that in 1596 the Metropolitan of Kiev decided to confirm his unity with the Pope and conclude the Union of Brest. The DECR considered this act a schism, but the communion with Orthodoxy was broken off without the support of believers, indeed “*de facto* it passed to the Union without its Church”⁹⁷³. The status of believers in Western Ukraine was also discussed in the meeting held on 7 December 2005 between Patriarch Aleksii and a delegation of the Ukrainian parliament headed by the chairman of the Verkhovna Rada V.M. Lytvyn. The meeting was held to discuss religious division in the country and the value of the spiritual connection among Russia and Ukraine. Litvin announced the creation of a parliamentary commission which should

⁹⁷¹ Ibid.

⁹⁷² «Киев не был колыбелью византийского христианства. Он, как известно, получил крещение от Византии и стал таким образом колыбелью русского - в самом широком смысле этого слова – христианства». Ibid.

⁹⁷³ Ibid.

On the transfer of the UGCC’s head to Kiev see also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Открытое письмо Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира Папе Римскому Бенедикту XVI в связи с перенесением кафедры главы Униатской церкви из Львова в Киев* [Open Letter of His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kyiv and All Ukraine to Pope Benedict XVI in Connection with the Transfer of the Chair of the Uniate Church from Lviv to Kyiv], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77733/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Мы надеемся на взвешенный и разумный подход со стороны Римско-Католической Церкви"* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "We hope for a balanced and reasonable approach on the part of the Roman Catholic Church"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77763/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Представители Московского Патриархата приняли участие в межправославной встрече, посвященной богословскому диалогу с Ватиканом* [Representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate participated in an inter-Orthodox meeting on theological dialogue with the Vatican], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77549/>, (last accessed October 2021); Святейший Патриарх Алексий: «Точки соприкосновения с Ватиканом есть» Предстоятель Русской Православной Церкви дал эксклюзивное интервью главному редактору московского бюро Русской службы Би-би-си Константину Эггерту [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "There are points of contact with the Vatican" The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church gave an exclusive interview to Konstantin Eggert, Editor-in-Chief of the Moscow Bureau of the BBC Russian Service], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76282/>, (last accessed October 2021); Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы корреспондента газеты "La Stampa" [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from a correspondent of La Stampa], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79013/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Искренне надеюсь, что следующий Предстоятель Римско-Католической Церкви будет способствовать развитию отношений с Русской Православной Церковью в положительном направлении"* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "I sincerely hope that the next Primate of the Roman Catholic Church will contribute to the development of relations with the Russian Orthodox Church in a positive direction"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79126/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Убежден, что современный мир нуждается в совместном свидетельстве о Христе"* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "I am convinced that the modern world needs a joint testimony of Christ."], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78981/>, (last accessed October 2021).

study carefully violations of believers' rights in order to avoid the mistakes of the past when the state intervention in religious issues and the attempts to create a state-church caused schism in Ukrainian Orthodoxy. A first result of this decision, was the adoption on 22 December of the *Resolution on the report of the Temporary Investigative Commission on the Facts of Violation of Citizens' Right to Freedom of Conscience*, which recognized cases of violation of UOC-MP believers' freedom of conscience in Rivne and Ternopil regions⁹⁷⁴.

After the visit of Cardinal Kasper, the decision was made to create a Joint Working Group on the problems in the relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches; the first meeting was held on 5-6 May 2004 at the Pilgrimage Center of the Moscow Patriarchate. At the end of the meeting, before the press conference, Vsevolod Chaplin, one of the co-chairs of the Group together with Igor Kovalevsky, Secretary General of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Russia, gave specific examples of the activities of Catholic parishes and monastic orders that caused concern to the Orthodox Church. He referred to the importance of respecting the spheres of missionary responsibility, something which had nothing to do with secular laws allowing for free exchange of ideas among any groups in the population, and to the importance of treating each other based on the ethics of inter-church relations, which concerned itself with the principles of relations between bishops and various church structures formulated in the first centuries of Christianity⁹⁷⁵.

On 30 March 2007, the Ukrainian ambassador to the Holy See Tatiana Izhevskaya announced that Viktor Yushchenko officially invited Benedict XVI to visit Ukraine. Igor Vyzhanov, secretary of the DECR for inter-Christian relations, commenting on the invitation to visit Ukraine conveyed to Benedict XVI by President Yushchenko, recalled what happened in 2001 and, since the interfaith situation had not improved, he thought it was worth avoiding the same mistake. Indeed, the Pope was not only the head of the Vatican, but also the head of the Roman Catholic Church, a church that stood in uneasy relationship with the majority of believers in Ukraine who belonged to the UOC-MP⁹⁷⁶. Concerns about the expansion of Greek-Catholics' sphere of activities were also expressed in the meeting of Patriarch Aleksii with Cardinal Kasper held on 29 May 2008, and this meeting underscored the importance of joint work in order to solve this long

⁹⁷⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Председателем Верховной Рады Украины В.М.Литвиным [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Vladimir Litvin]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76612/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Верховная Рада Украины рекомендовала Президенту наказать чиновников, виновных в дискриминации общин Украинской Православной Церкви [The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine recommended that the President punish officials guilty of discrimination against communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76268/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁷⁵ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Межцерковные Отношения Не Должны Основываться На Принципах Рыночной Конкуренции" ["Interchurch Relations Should Not Be Based On Market Competition Principles"]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/81853/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁷⁶ Regions.Ru / Russia, *Визит Папы Римского На Украину Ухудшит Православно-Католические Отношения [Pope's Visit To Ukraine Will Worsen Orthodox-Catholic Relations]*, 03-04-2007.

standing problem. This aim was of fundamental importance in particular in relation to what happened on October 2007 in Ravenna, when during the plenary meeting of the Joint International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate refused to participate in the meeting due to the presence of representatives of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church⁹⁷⁷.

The Role of the State(s)

Commenting on the participation of Ukrainian Presidents in the unification process and Church relations, Metropolitan Drabinko declared that under Kuchma there was not yet any basis for carrying out this process, also because he tried to obtain some concessions from Moscow, that clearly was a promise not kept. Drabinko mentioned letters addressed by Kuchma and Constantinople to Moscow, and talked of the obstacles to further development amidst the bilateral commission among Moscow and Constantinople, which tried to solve an issue that should have been solved in the 1990s, granting the Ukrainian Church autocephaly and definitively removing Filaret. Indeed the turning point of events was the celebration of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus', when Metropolitan Mefodij Kudriakov agreed to resign his powers, Metropolitan Vladimir accepted to participate under the condition that Patriarch Filaret would not be present, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate clarified that he should not claim to be Patriarch of this Church⁹⁷⁸.

⁹⁷⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий принял председателя Папского совета по содействию христианскому единству кардинала Вальтера Каспера [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii received Cardinal Walter Kasper, Chairman of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64789/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁷⁸ «я и ответил что при Кучме не было еще той базы и он не понимал окончательно что хочет. Москва конечно ему обещала и обманула ничего не дала даже автономии не дала. я помню эти процессы объединить на соборе 2000 года юбилейном у меня сохранились письма которые писал Кучма в Москву и вселенским он писал и в Константинополь писал но ни Константинополь ни Москва в то время были комиссию. их было пять или шесть комиссий Москвы и Константинополя по урегулированию этого вопроса. резюме коммюнике стенограммы. они происходили и в Крыму и в Киеве и в Швейцарии достаточно интересные материалы. их когда нибудь издать отдельным томом в то время как бы не было понимания ни у Константинополя ни у Москвы каким образом этот вопрос решить потому что он к сожалению был затянута автокефалию нужно было давать в 92 м году когда собор обратился. из под которого отозвали свои подписи три человека. тогда нужно было дать автокефалию этим людям сказать извините вы если не хотите переходить в московский патриархат. А если не нравился в то время тот патриарх Филарет митрополит Филарет как глава нужно было сместить митрополита Филарета назначить нового митрополита. и новому митрополиту митрополиту Владимиру отдать автокефалию который говорил в 93 м. здесь у меня есть интервью что мы идем к автокефалии но каноническим путем иногда мне закидывать то что я возвращаю слова и мысли митрополита Владимира есть живое доказательство на страничке в музее висит его интервью [...] то есть мы прошлись по Кучме почему это не получилось. да не были готовы. велись переговоры. надеялись что это будет взаимно и Москва. Москва. Москва знала что она никогда на это не пойдет она затягивает эти переговоры. Константинополь водили за нос. тот в конце концов начал это понимать. в 2008 м году когда Ющенко проводил празднование 1020 лет крещения Руси как раз в этот период и шел вопрос о дарования автокефалии. митрополит Мефодий в то время согласен был сложить с себя полномочия участия митрополита Владимира. авария велась но категорически сказал

The events that developed after the election of President Kuchma confirmed the involvement of the State in Church affairs (although as said above after the election of Kuchma his policy seemed to be more neutral than the one conducted by his predecessor). Nevertheless, the degree of participation of parties and presidential administrators in meetings, trips, and declarations aimed at discussing possibilities for unification of the Churches in Ukraine, confirmed not only the principle of autocephaly as a political matter, but moreover shed new light on the Eastern Orthodox concept of the secular state. Another confirmation which came from these exchanges was connected to Church-State interplay in Russia. Several times Putin confirmed the cultural and spiritual value of Ukraine for the Orthodox world and expressed his support to the Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. The brightest example was of course the celebrations for the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism (25-28 July 2008), an occasion which prompted President Yushchenko to invite Patriarch Aleksii to visit Ukraine (the last time the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia had visited the country was in 1997). In an interview the Patriarch recalled that the celebration of the baptism was a common holiday to celebrate together “with a prayer full of gratitude to God for the fact that our land was enlightened by Orthodoxy - first Kievan Rus, and then the entire Russian land”⁹⁷⁹.

The presidency of Yushchenko

In his address during the celebration for the Baptism of Rus', President Yushchenko pointed out that the holiday of the Baptism testified of the returning of Orthodoxy to the Ukrainian State, and of the strong ties between the fate of the Kiev Metropolis and of the Ukrainian people. He expressed the desire that Ukraine could finally have its own Church, thus the first step should be the separation of the UOC-MP from the Russian Orthodox Church⁹⁸⁰. In a press conference held on 23 July 2008, President Yushchenko pointed out that Ukrainian authorities would not interfere in the affairs of the Church, and that the task of the State was to create appropriate conditions for the free and unhindered development of religions and confessions. He added that in his opinion the unity of Orthodoxy should become the basis for the unity of the Ukrainian nation, and should allow harmonious relations for all religious communities of the country. According to him “all the civilizational successes and achievements of the national and European identity of Ukrainians are due to the fateful choice, which in 988 was made as a result of the baptism

нет. патриарх Филарет киевского патриархата. а условием Константинополя как и тогда как и сейчас вернее так и тогда было то что он самоустранился. он не будет претендовать на участие на роль патриарха этой церкви. и определенное противодействие Москвы понятное дело оказывалось в то время фактически на этом и закончилось». From the interview to Alexander Drabinko, on 4 March 2020, Spaso-Preobrazhensky Sobor, min. 0.21- 3.54 (3rd file).

⁹⁷⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66060/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁸⁰ NEWSru.com, *Президент Украины попросил Патриарха Варфоломея помочь в создании единой поместной православной Церкви [Ukrainian President asks Patriarch Bartholomew to help create a united local Orthodox Church]*, 16-07-2008.

of Kievan Rus by Prince Vladimir⁹⁸¹. From the perspective of the President of Ukraine, the holiday of baptism was a common holiday of all Christian denominations of Ukraine, regardless of religious views⁹⁸².

The President also held celebrations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate; in his address to the audience Patriarch Bartholomew welcomed "the initiative of the Ukrainian authorities to celebrate the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Kievan Rus"⁹⁸³, and pointed out that he accepted the invitation of the President to celebrate, as Mother Church, the new European prospect of the Ukrainian nation, to support any initiatives that might help eliminate dangerous divisions in the Church⁹⁸⁴.

Indeed, according to the decree n° 668/2008 signed by V. Yushchenko, the Day of the Baptism of Kiev Rus – Ukraine, will be celebrated annually on 28 July, the day of the holy Apostle Vladimir. This decision was taken for the importance of Orthodox tradition in the history and development of Ukrainian society, with the support of Ukrainian National Council for Culture and Spirituality, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate, and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. It should be noted that also in Patriarch Aleksii's report to the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church was highlighted the importance of days 15/28 July, date of the celebration of Vladimir's Baptism⁹⁸⁵. The day before the celebration of the joint liturgy with Patriarch Aleksii, Bartholomew I made an appeal in which he stated that for seven centuries the Ukrainian Church belonged to the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (from 988, year of the baptism of Rus', to 1687, year of the annexation to the Russian State). He added that after the annexation of Ukraine by Russia and under the pressure of Peter I, Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius considered it necessary to subordinate the Ukrainian Church to the Moscow Patriarchate, so that the Ukrainian people were under the Orthodox political wire, although the Ukrainian hierarchy strongly and unanimously opposed this decision. He stressed that the Ecumenical Patriarchate as the guarantor of the unity of the Orthodox Churches, always fulfilled its obligations and tuned its spiritual antennas to the needs of the Orthodox people, always according to the Orthodox tradition. According to him "the political, ecclesiastical and, in general, intellectual leaders of the Ukrainian people are obliged to use the gift of baptism given by God as widely as possible not only for the immediate correction of various confusions and traumas of the historical past, but also for the restoration of the unifying role played by the Orthodox Church in the

⁹⁸¹ «всеми цивилизационными успехами и достижениями национальной и европейской идентичностью украинцы обязаны "судьбоносному выбору", который в 988 году был сделан в результате крещения Киевской Руси князем Владимиром».

See: Sedmina.ru, *Украинские власти не будут вмешиваться в дела Церкви, обещает Ющенко* [Ukrainian authorities will not interfere in the affairs of the Church, promises Yushchenko], 23.07.2008.

⁹⁸² Ibid.

⁹⁸³ Sedmina.ru, *Виктор Ющенко и Патриарх Варфоломей провели торжества на Софийской площади в Киеве по случаю 1020-летия крещения Руси* [Victor Yushchenko and Patriarch Bartholomew held celebrations on St. Sophia Square in Kiev to mark the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus], 26-07-2008.

⁹⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁵ Novosti Novokuznetska. *Gorod novostej, Ющенко объявил, что крестили не Русь, а Украину* [Yushchenko announced that it was not Russia that was baptized, but Ukraine], 25-07-2008.

consciousness of the Christ-loving Ukrainian nation"⁹⁸⁶. According to the Moscow Patriarchate this interpretation of the events was incomplete and did not mention that Dionysius IV acted on the instructions of the Turkish government in this matter, which put pressure on the Patriarch who did not want to bind the Kiev metropolis to Moscow. Moreover, Bartolomew I called the transition of Kiev under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate an "annexation of the Russian State under Peter I"⁹⁸⁷. Similarly, the Patriarchate of Constantinople declared the entry of Ukraine into the Russian state after the historical Pereyaslav Rada of 1654 declared the "annexation of Ukraine by Russia"⁹⁸⁸. His statement according to which the "Ukrainian authorities strongly opposed this decision"⁹⁸⁹, because the transition to the Moscow jurisdiction meant "causing serious damages to the canonical rights of the Mother Church"⁹⁹⁰, was considered by the Church Research Center Orthodox Encyclopedia, since 2000 under the editorship of the Patriarch of Moscow, not coherent with historical facts, because at that time the supremacy of the Patriarch of Moscow was already recognized by the dioceses located on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁹⁹¹. Indeed, even the Orthodox dioceses of the Kiev Metropolia, located on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, then recognized the primacy of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia⁹⁹².

In the speech delivered at the meeting of the Bishops' Council, Metropolitan Kirill commented on the problems provoked by the new interpretation of the canonical rules put forward by the Patriarchate of Constantinople concerning the jurisdiction of Orthodox Churches outside their territorial borders. According to the chairman of the DECR, the main aspects that deserved attention were the following: 1) only the Local Church in communion with Patriarchate of Constantinople was considered Orthodox; 2) any bishop or cleric who was located outside the geographical borders of his Local Church was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople even if he himself did not comprehend it. Then, without the knowledge of the bishops who ordained him, against the will of the clergy, the formal admission to the jurisdiction of Constantinople may take place of such clergyman; 3) the Ecumenical Patriarchate established the boundaries of the Churches; 4) the Patriarchate of Constantinople alone determined who

⁹⁸⁶ IA Regnum, *В Киеве Алексей II и Варфоломей I проводят литургию по случаю 1020-летия крещения Руси [Aleksii II and Bartholomew I hold a liturgy in Kiev on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus]*, 27-08-2008.

⁹⁸⁷ Sedmina.ru, *Варфоломей I изложил свое видение вопроса о переходе Киевской митрополии из юрисдикции Константинопольской Церкви в состав Московского Патриархата в 1687 г. [Bartholomew I laid out his vision for the transition of the metropolitanate of Kiev from the jurisdiction of the Church of Constantinople to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1687]*, 26-07-2008.

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁹¹ Actually, some worries and doubts were raised. See for example: Chynczewska-Hennelm Tereza, *The Political, Social, and National Thought of the Ukrainian Higher Clergy, 1569-1700*, Ukrainian Church History, 26:1/4, 2002-2003, pp. 97-152.

⁹⁹² Ibid; Sedmina.ru, *Историки указывают на ряд ошибок и натяжек в обращении Патриарха Варфоломея I к украинской нации на торжествах в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси [Historians point to a number of errors and misstatements in Patriarch Bartholomew I's address to the Ukrainian nation at the celebrations marking the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia]*, 31-07-2008.

can and cannot participate in inter-Orthodox events. However, he stressed that even in that moment, in each of the countries where the Orthodox diaspora lived, it was the hierarchy of the Church of Constantinople who should represent the interests of all Orthodoxy in relations with governments, confessions, and state organizations. He recalled the importance of the issue for the dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church with other confessions as well as participation in international organizations⁹⁹³. Indeed, already during the visit to Ukraine of a delegation⁹⁹⁴ of the Patriarchate of Constantinople held from 19 to 22 May 2008 at the invitation of the President of Ukraine V. A. Yushchenko, it was confirmed that, from the Patriarchate of Constantinople's perspective, Ukraine had the "only fully fledged Orthodox Church"⁹⁹⁵ the Primate of which was Metropolitan Vladimir, and that their mission was "studying inter-church relations that have developed in Ukraine"⁹⁹⁶. The determination to work for the improvement of bilateral relations with the Russian Orthodox Church was confirmed during the meeting of the two Patriarchs in Kiev, after the end of the joint Divine Liturgy. Moreover, the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople told the reporters that they discussed possible ways to allow Patriarch Aleksii to participate in the meeting of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches in the following 10-11 October at the Phanar⁹⁹⁷ and in other events dedicated to the Year of the Apostle Paul. In the opinion of Metropolitan Kirill the main result of the conversation that took place was that the complete unity, not only of the two Patriarchs, but also of all Local Orthodox Churches had been attested in the issue of preserving the canonical order in world Orthodoxy, and in the inadmissibility of using non-canonical means to create new church structures. He added that the topic of the separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate was not "on

⁹⁹³ Patriarchia.ru, *Митрополит Кирилл рассказал участникам Собора о проблемах, которые провоцирует выдвинутое Константинопольским Патриархатом новое толкование канонических правил, касающихся юрисдикции Православных Церквей вне своих территориальных пределов* [Metropolitan Kyrill told the Council about the problems provoked by the Constantinople Patriarchate's new interpretation of canonical rules concerning the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Churches outside their territorial boundaries], 24-06-2008.

⁹⁹⁴ Formed by Metropolitan Emmanuel of Gaul, General Secretary of the Holy Synod Archimandrite Elpidifor (Lambriniadis) and Archpriest Vasily Papafanasiou.

⁹⁹⁵ During the visit the delegation met not only with President Yushchenko, but also with Patriarch Filaret and Archbishop of Lviv and Galician Augustin. See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Делегация Константинопольского Патриархата посетила Украину по приглашению Президента страны* [A delegation from the Patriarchate of Constantinople visited Ukraine at the invitation of the president], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64889/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁹⁷ See also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий примет участие во встрече Предстоятелей и представителей Поместных Православных Церквей* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii will participate in the meeting of the Primates and representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/63241/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий II принял участие во встрече Предстоятелей и представителей Поместных Православных Церквей* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia took part in a meeting of Primates and representatives of Local Orthodox Churches], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/63217/>, (last accessed October 2021).

the agenda"⁹⁹⁸ and "existed only in someone's heads"⁹⁹⁹, and repeated Patriarch's Aleksii thought condemning politics in religion, and political actions which can cause irreparable damage to Orthodoxy. Commenting on the meeting of the two Patriarchates, Metropolitan Kirill highlighted the importance of protecting the unity of the Orthodox Church¹⁰⁰⁰.

Claims of Constantinople to the territory of Ukraine were raised also by Archbishop of Skopelos Vsevolod (Maidan) residing in Chicago, representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA (Ecumenical Patriarchate), during his meeting with President V. Yushchenko (24 March 2005). The statement declared that "The Mother Church, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, considers that her daughter, the Moscow Patriarchate, has the canonical territory that existed in this Church before 1686. The subordination of the Kiev metropolitanate to the Moscow Church was carried out by Patriarch Dionysius without the consent and approval of the Holy Synod of the Great Church of Christ"¹⁰⁰¹. Nikolaj Balashov, secretary of the DECR for inter-orthodox relations, commenting on the news during an interview with Tserkovny Vestnik, declared that his first impression was that Ukrainian journalists did not correctly convey the words of Archbishop Vsevolod. He added that such a declaration corresponded to a rejection of all the approaches developed during consultations among representatives of the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates on the settlement of Ukrainian issue. Indeed, he added that Archbishop Vsevolod participated several times in the negotiations on the Ukrainian issue and never questioned the legitimacy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, and recalled that during his last visit to Ukraine, Archbishop Vsevolod paid a visit to Metropolitan Vladimir, although he had learnt of his meeting with representatives of the two schismatic churches only from the American press. Commenting on the content of the declaration, Balashov pointed out that it was not new and original, and that already in the past, Ukrainian dissenters in their attempts to sow discord between the Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchates claimed that

⁹⁹⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Киево-Печерской лавре состоялись собеседования Предстоятелей Константинопольской и Русской Православных Церквей* [Interviews of the Primates of the Constantinople and Russian Orthodox Churches were held at the Kiev Pechersk Lavra], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64109/>, (last accessed October 2021).

⁹⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл на пресс-конференции в информационном агентстве «Интерфакс»: «Торжества по случаю 1020-летия Киевской Руси явили торжество Православия»* [Metropolitan Kirill at a press conference at the Interfax news agency: "Celebrations on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of Kievan Rus revealed the triumph of Orthodoxy"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64081/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁰¹ «"Церковь-Мать, Константинопольский Патриархат, - говорится в заявлении, - считает, что ее дочь - Московский Патриархат - имеет ту каноническую территорию, которая существовала в этой Церкви до 1686 года. Подчинение Киевской митрополии Московской Церкви было осуществлено Патриархом Дионисием без согласия и утверждения Святого и Священного Синода Великой Церкви Христовой». See: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Московском Патриархате выразили недоумение в связи каноническими притязаниями Константинополя на территорию Украины* [The Moscow Patriarchate expressed bewilderment over Constantinople's canonical claims to Ukrainian territory], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79228/>, (last accessed October 2021); Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *В Московском Патриархате выразили недоумение в связи каноническими притязаниями Константинополя на территорию Украины* [The Moscow Patriarchate expressed bewilderment over Constantinople's canonical claims to Ukrainian territory], 2005/3, pp. 86-89.

in Constantinople's perspective, Ukraine was part of its canonical territory. To put an end to this kind of misunderstanding, the Ecumenical Patriarchate already on 8 August 2000 declared that this information was incorrect, and expressed regret that they might undermine Church unity. Balashov also recalled that in 1993 during a visit to the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Bartholomew officially stated that "the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognizes only one canonical metropolitan of Kiev - Metropolitan Vladimir, Metropolitan of Kiev and all Ukraine"¹⁰⁰². He pointed out that the statement was astonishing additionally from an historical perspective, since "all members of the Holy Synod, including the metropolitans of Chalcedon, Nicomedia, Lycia, Thessalonica and others - about 20 hierarchs in total - have signed the letter of His Holiness Patriarch Dionysius of Constantinople on restoring the unity of the Kiev Metropolis with the Moscow Patriarchate [...]"¹⁰⁰³. Indeed, questioning these documents would mean rewriting historical data, and diminishing the traditional respect for Churches of Constantinople and Jerusalem. Precisely for these reasons the Moscow Patriarchate did not believe Archbishop Vsevolod's statement and sent to Constantinople a request for clarification.

Initiatives undertaken by President Yuchenko for reaching unification of Churches concerned also the Russian side¹⁰⁰⁴. On 21 February 2008 he met with Patriarch Aleksii at the Patriarchal and Synodal Residence in the Danilov Monastery (the first meeting was held on January 2005). The Patriarch stressed the importance of the meeting and of harmonious relations among Ukraine and neighbouring countries nurtured for centuries by the Russian people. During the conversation different issues were touched upon,

¹⁰⁰² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Московском Патриархате выразили недоумение в связи каноническими притязаниями Константинополя на территорию Украины* [The Moscow Patriarchate expressed bewilderment over Constantinople's canonical claims to Ukrainian territory], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79228/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁰³ Ibid.

See also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Архиепископ Львовский и Галицкий Августин: "Позиция Константинополя вселяет тревогу"* [Archbishop Avgustin of Lviv and Galicia: "The position of Constantinople is alarming"], mosapt.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79138/>, (last accessed October 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Поместная Церковь в Украине уже существует»* [His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr: "The local Church in Ukraine already exists"], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 05-07-2005, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2005/07/9669/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁰⁴ Nikolaj Balashov declared the decision of President Yushchenko to attend the prayer service in honor of the Ukrainian Hetman Ivan Mazepa an outrage to all the Orthodox World. Mazepa was anathematized by the Orthodox Church in 1708 for breaking the oath of allegiance to the Russian tsar given on the Gospel and for allowing Swedish soldiers to desecrate Orthodox churches when they entered Southern Russia. Despite the fact that the Ukrainian president had repeatedly appealed to the First Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia, to cancel the anathema, each time the response of the Moscow Patriarchate was resolute refusal.

See: Golos Rossii, *Священник Николай Балашов: «Мы Не Должны Подвергать Нашу Веру Испытаниям И Раздорам»* [Priest Nikolaj Balashov: "We Should Not Subject Our Faith To Trials And Discord"], 22-04-2008.

largely those connected with the situation in Ukraine and the celebration of the anniversary of the Baptism¹⁰⁰⁵.

On 1 April 2008 at the State Duma of the Russian Federation, under the representation of the vice representative of the State Duma L. K. Sliski the parliamentary hearings, entitled "The state of Russian-Ukrainian relations and the fulfillment of obligations under the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between the Russian Federation and Ukraine", were held. During the meeting concern was voiced for the pressure exerted on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the direction of creating a single local Orthodox Church not in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate. Indeed, there were calls to take more effective measures to protect spiritual and cultural ties between Ukraine and Russia. Concern was also expressed regarding the interference of state structures in the affairs of Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Secretary for Inter-Orthodox Relations of the Department for External Church Relations Nikolai Balashov also took part in the hearings¹⁰⁰⁶. On 14 April the Kremlin hosted a meeting among the President of the Russian Federation Putin and the Patriarch Aleksii; during the meeting the importance for the peoples of Russian and Ukraine to celebrate together the holiday of the baptism "in memory of the fact that the Christian enlightenment of our peoples began from the common Kiev font" was also discussed. Vladimir Putin pointed out that these celebrations were an occasion to remember "our common spiritual roots"¹⁰⁰⁷. The path toward strengthening spiritual unity of Ukrainian and Russian people and of their cooperation in cultural and political fields was discussed during the meeting between Metropolitan Kirill and the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to Russia Grishchenko, the one between the Prime Minister of Russia V. A. Zubkov and the Primate of the UOC-MP held at the Pechersk Lavra on 28 April 2008. A couple of weeks before (12-13 February) Yushchenko had paid a working visit to President Putin in order to participate in the meeting of the Ukrainian-Russian interstate commission. Indeed, the deputy head of the presidential secretariat Alexander Shlapak declared that the main issue for Ukraine was signing the Ukraine-Russia cooperation plan within the framework of the Yuchshenko-Putin commission. Among the several economic, humanitarian and political questions to discuss, there was also the one connected with the gas supplies to

¹⁰⁰⁵ Patriarchia.ru, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko]*, 21-02-2008.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Представитель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата принял участие в парламентских слушаниях, посвященных российско-украинским отношениям [A representative of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations took part in parliamentary hearings on Russian-Ukrainian relations]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65547/>, (last accessed October 2021); Patriarchia.ru, *Представитель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата принял участие в парламентских слушаниях, посвященных российско-украинским отношениям [A representative of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations took part in parliamentary hearings on Russian-Ukrainian relations]*, 02-04-2008.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Кремле состоялась встреча Предстоятеля Русской Православной Церкви и Президента России В.В.Путина [The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and President of Russia Vladimir Putin met in the Kremlin]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65383/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Ukraine¹⁰⁰⁸. Moreover, at the beginning of the month (9 February), Yushchenko had also met with Metropolitan Vladimir at his residence to discuss of various aspects of church-state bilateral relations¹⁰⁰⁹. The topic of interfaith relations was further discussed during the meeting of Metropolitan Kirill with the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Russian Federation, O. A. Demin. After all, the values of fraternal ties between Russian and Ukrainian people, united by Orthodox faith since “we all came out of the common Kiev font”¹⁰¹⁰, emphasized since the election of Yushchnko¹⁰¹¹, always found the support of President Putin, although in the following years the purpose of realizing unification of the Churches prevailed in his rhetoric¹⁰¹². Yushchenko’s initiatives for solving the religious division in Ukraine went beyond governmental meetings with Church’s representatives, thus contributing to raise Russian worries about boundaries of these intrusive initiatives. Indeed, on 12 January 2007, at a meeting with representatives of the Kiev Patriarchate, President of Ukraine declared his intention to ask the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and of the Kiev Patriarchate about creating a joint commission which would include three bishops and two priests from each side in order to discuss the Churches’ issues in Ukraine. Commenting on Yushchenko’ statement, the Moscow Patriarchate declared that such a statement called into question the secular nature of the Ukrainian state. In the opinion of Nikolaj Balashov, the fact that the head of the state not only formulated his program regarding the future of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, but also made specific proposals on the composition of joint commissions among the Orthodox

¹⁰⁰⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Ющенко едет в Москву ради подписания плана сотрудничества с Россией, но готов заодно провести переговоры по газу* [Yushchenko is going to Moscow to sign a cooperation plan with Russia, but is ready to hold gas talks at the same time], *IA Regnum*, 12-02-2008; Митрополит Кирилл принял Посла Украины в Российской Федерации [Metropolitan Kirill received the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Russian Federation], *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64166/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Премьер-министр России посетил Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира* [The Prime Minister of Russia visited His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine], *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65217/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁰⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко* [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir met with President of Ukraine V.A.Yushchenko], *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66238/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰¹⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий встретился с Премьер-министром Украины Ю.И.Ехануровым* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Yu.I.Yekhanurov], *mosapt.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77404/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰¹¹ Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Поместная Церковь в Украине уже существует». See also: Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл принял Посла Украины в России О.А.Демину* [Metropolitan Kirill received the Ambassador of Ukraine to Russia O.A. Demin], *mosapat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66416/>, (last accessed October 2021); Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий II встретился с премьер-министром Украины В.Ф.Януковичем* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 08-10-2004, <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/10/7846-1/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰¹² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира с Президентом России В.В.Путиним* [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir met with Russian President Vladimir Putin], *mospat.ru*, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79347/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Churches present in Ukraine, with the purpose of creating a single Church, ignored the fact that for the canonical Church, the representatives of the Kiev Patriarchate were not bishops and priests in the true sense of the word. He stressed that the gathering in Kiev of representatives of the majority of Orthodox Churches on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the episcopacy of Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine, demonstrated that the so-called Kiev Patriarchate had no recognition in the world. Indeed, he added that in the document signed by representatives of all the Churches, the Kiev Patriarchate was called a “pseudo Church-structure”¹⁰¹³. Moreover, according to Balashov, the position of the President was in contradiction with the “Universalnatsional'nogo yedinstv” signed on his own initiative the year before, in which it was highlighted that “with respect for the unifying aspirations of believers, the state and political forces should not interfere in this process”¹⁰¹⁴. The DECR’s representative raised the difficulties of combining this message with the fact that a group of specialists was already working in the presidential secretariat in order to present in 70 days a project on forming inter-church dialogue. It is worth pointing out that the Kiev Patriarchate as well declined Yushchenko’s offer to create a joint theological commission with the UOC-MP. This decision was motivated by the fact that Filaret Denisenko was excommunicated from the Russian Church and could return to it only through repentance, indeed, it was impossible to sit at the same negotiating table¹⁰¹⁵. Another initiative that raised major concern in the UOC-MP was the meeting held on 26 June 2007 between the Ukrainian President Yushchenko and Patriarch Bartholomew in Istanbul aimed at discussing the project of creating a single local Church in Ukraine¹⁰¹⁶. Nevertheless, already at the beginning of 2006, after the meeting of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine with the Patriarch of Constantinople, representatives of the UOC-MP noted that the delegation of state officials had repeatedly addressed to Ecumenical Patriarchate with a request to personally intervene in resolving or otherwise in influencing the religious situation in Ukraine. According to Archbishop Mitrofan, these meetings were organized behind the back of the canonical UOC-MP, and confirmed the impossibility of ruling out the repetition of the Baltic scenario in Ukraine¹⁰¹⁷.

The presidency of Kuchma

Involvement of policy in Church affairs was also significant during the years of the former presidency. On 30 November 1999, President of Ukraine Kuchma met with President

¹⁰¹³ Patriarchia.ru, В Отделе внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата прокомментировали инициативы Ющенко по созданию на Украине «единой поместной церкви» [The Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate commented on Yushchenko's initiatives to create a "single local church" in Ukraine], 15-01-2007.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁵ Patriarchia.ru, В «Киевском патриархате» отвергли предложение Архиерейского Собора о присоединении к Украинской Православной Церкви через покаяние [The "Kiev Patriarchate" rejected the proposal of the Bishops' Council to join the Ukrainian Orthodox Church through repentance], 30-01-2007.

¹⁰¹⁶ Russkaja linija (Sankt-Peterburg), Ющенко продолжает вмешиваться в церковные дела [Yushchenko continues to interfere in church affairs], 26-06-2007.

¹⁰¹⁷ Patriarchia.ru, Управляющий делами УПЦ архиепископ Митрофан выразил беспокойство по поводу позиции Константинопольского Патриархата [Archbishop Mitrofan, Managing Director of the UOC, expressed concern about the position of the Patriarchate of Constantinople], 07-03-2006.

Vladimir Putin; the meeting lasted no more than 10 minutes and regarded the upcoming visit of Leonid Kuchma to Moscow. The deputy head of the Russian presidential administration, pointed out that the visit, despite Boris Yeltsin's illness was planned for 9-10 December¹⁰¹⁸. The Russkaya Liniya news agency reported that Patriarch Aleksii II in a conversation with journalists at the Nikolo-Ugreshsky Monastery expressed his hope that the deterioration for a second term of Leonid Kuchma would not entail a deterioration of the position of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. He stated that without the participation of Orthodox people, it would be not possible to obtain that result at the Presidential elections, and expressed the hope that this would not lead to actions that could disappoint the trust expressed by believers. He pointed out that the "People of Ukraine is an Orthodox People, and although there was a split within the country, the majority of the population belonged to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate"¹⁰¹⁹. He made clear that Ukrainian authorities should not take any initiatives that might contribute to disrupt this relation: "this connection cannot be broken by any external conditions, that is outside influence"¹⁰²⁰. He argued "the unity of our Holy Church must be unshakable"¹⁰²¹, and it was exactly for this reason that certain steps had been undertaken in Ukraine; an example was the meeting between Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan), head of the UOC-MP, and Leonid Kuchma held during the election campaign. He mentioned that among the main events for which the canonical Church was preparing, there was the restoration of the Assumption Cathedral of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, whose consecration was planned for 2000, and that the Lavra and all the buildings present on its territory was to be considered under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan)¹⁰²². As said above, the property of the Lavra was one of the main reasons for dispute in this period: it not only concerned protests, and manifestation of believers, but the fights for its property was also fought in the "corridors" of political offices, turning on debates among political leaders. During the visit to Kiev and Sevastopol on 17 April 2000, in which the Russian President met with L. Kuchma to discuss bilateral economic relations, Vladimir Putin decided to do an unscheduled visit to Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, as an act of support to the UOC-MP and expressed a strong support to the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol. Immediately after his visit, Patriarch Filaret began collecting signatures in order to demand the transfer of the Lavra to the UOC-KP. It is worth pointing out that on 3 May at the meeting with Leonid Kuchma and Alexander Lukashenko, Putin stated that "mankind has worked out many forms of unification of peoples [...] today there are no and cannot be any obstacles to unite efforts of the three Slavic states in order to make human life in our countries happy and rich..."¹⁰²³. It seems quite obvious that he was referring to connections among

¹⁰¹⁸ Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Кучма Вступил В Должность [Kuchma Took Office]*, 01-12-1999.

¹⁰¹⁹ «Народ Украины — православный народ . И хотя в церковной жизни страны существует раскол, большинство населения принадлежит к канонической Украинской Православной Церквиé [...]». See: Den', *Московский патриарх доволен президентскими выборами в Украине [The Moscow Patriarch is pleased with the presidential elections in Ukraine]*, Kiev, 01-12-1999.

¹⁰²⁰ «Эта связь не может быть разорвана никакими внешними условиями, влиянием извне», *ibid.*

¹⁰²¹ «Единство нашей святой Церкви должно быть незыблемо», *ibid.*

¹⁰²² *Ibid.*

¹⁰²³ «человечество выработало много форм объединения народов...сегодня нет и не может быть препятствий для объединения усилий трех славянских государств для того, чтобы сделать жизнь

Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, and to the political strategy of this alliance. Regarding Russian-Ukrainian relations, according to President Kuchma there were any problems; indeed in the speech he delivered on 3 May he spoke with a certain optimism of the fate of the Slavic people, and referred to the Great Patriotic War as “our common memory, our common history and common destiny”¹⁰²⁴. However, some observers noted that these words were spoken before Patriarch Aleksii and were clearly in contradiction with the linguistic policy undertaken in the country¹⁰²⁵. A further contradiction was seen with the presence in leadership positions of figures directly involved in the persecution against the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine: Zhulinsky, Porovsky, Drach, Marchuk and others, and with the practice of giving the use of buildings as the Vladimirsky and Mikhailovsky Golden-Domed Cathedral to schismatics who supported Patriarch Filaret. Reasons of uncertainty arose in Russian-Ukrainian relations not only because of participation of Ukraine in Western economic and geopolitical projects, but also with regard to Moscow Patriarchate’s ability to defend the rights of Russian citizens who lived in Ukraine¹⁰²⁶. The UOC-MP expressed the hope that President Putin, as the “President of a great Orthodox power” in his talks with Kuchma would raise the issue of freedom of conscience and the situation of canonical Orthodoxy in Ukraine¹⁰²⁷.

An important moment in bilateral relations was the meeting of Metropolitan Kirill with President Kuchma held on 24 July 2001¹⁰²⁸, during which Kirill presented the text of the *Fundamentals of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* to Kuchma. Indeed, the President of Ukraine expressed deep interest in knowing the Russian Orthodox Church’s perspective on relation with state and society. Moreover were discussed the question of the state of Orthodoxy in Ukraine, and the progress of negotiations among the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates with the UOC-MP. It was agreed to hold a regular exchange of information on the process of unification. The issue of unification was also discussed with deputies of various factions of the Ukrainian parliament, members of the association “For Support of Traditional Confessions of Ukraine”¹⁰²⁹. Moscow Patriarchate’s will to overcome the schism quickly was further expressed in the letter that

человека в наших странах счастливой и богатой...». See: Bjuliten' Instituta stran SNG, *По итогам визита Владимира Путина на Украину и встречи с Кучмой в Прохоровке* [Following Vladimir Putin's visit to Ukraine and meeting with Kuchma in Prokhorovka], 06-05-2000.

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁷ NTV-Novosti, *Украинская Православная Церковь Московского Патриархата надеется на Владимира Путина* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate hopes for Vladimir Putin], 22-12-2000.

¹⁰²⁸ the Head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine V.M. Litvin, Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration A.F. Belov, Chairman of the State Committee for Religious Affairs V.D. Bondarenko and Acting Secretary of the DECR MP for Inter-Orthodox Relations and Foreign Institutions Archpriest Nikolai Balashov formed the delegation.

¹⁰²⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл встретился с Президентом Украины Л.Д.Кучмой* [Metropolitan Kirill met with President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84786/>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Председатель ОБЦС встретился с украинскими законодателями* [DECR Chairman meets with Ukrainian legislators], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84787/>, (last accessed October 2021).

on 9 October 2001 the Patriarch sent to President Kuchma in relation with the celebration of the 950th anniversary of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra held in Kiev. Aleksii II expressed support to President of Ukraine's call to not politicize church problems, and to not allow the use of them in the coming election campaign. It is worth noting that Metropolitan Kirill previously had called the policy pursued by Kuchma a balanced policy that strove to ensure religious unity, but at the same time proceeded from the principle that the settlement of existing church problems was not within state authorities' competencies but remained exclusively Church business. At the same time, he regretted that some politicians were actively trying to convince the Patriarchate of Constantinople to accept under its jurisdiction or make autocephalous the structure that might arise as a result of the unification of the schismatic groups of the UOC-KP and the UAOC. Such a scenario would have the most negative consequences, as it could cause a new, wider schism, abruptly increase public tensions in Ukraine and lead to a deep crisis of universal Orthodoxy¹⁰³⁰.

I would like to remind the reader that about a year earlier, on 24 November 2000 exactly, Kuchma was set to meet Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople in Istanbul. The meeting was qualified by the UOC-MP as a "*de facto* declaration of war to the most influential denomination of Ukraine"¹⁰³¹, which is canonical territory of the Russian Church. The archdiocese also repeated that the social doctrine of the ROC adopted by the Bishops' Council provided the Church with the possibility to refuse loyalty to the State in the case its actions embarrass the conscience of Orthodox Christians. Indeed, in an interview released on 7 November 2000 Kuchma argued that a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church, would become a "great unifying force" for divided Ukraine¹⁰³². Another governmental meeting with Constantinople was held on 19 December, this time led by a delegation of the Vershovna Rada headed by people's deputy Igor Yukhnovsky who met with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartolomew I in Constantinople (Istanbul). The delegation¹⁰³³ expressed gratitude for the Ecumenical Patriarchate's step in promoting the unification of Ukrainian Churches, and Yukhnovsky I. also conveyed an invitation from Ivan Plyusch, chairman of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada to visit Ukraine. The Ecumenical Patriarchate guaranteed that restoration of unity in Ukraine was a priority, and expressed the hope that Moscow would take part in a joint action – Moscow, Kiev, Constantinople -, in order to solve the issue. For their part, the members of delegations raised the urgency

¹⁰³⁰ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, "Митрополит Иностранных Дел" Председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы нашего корреспондента. (Газета "Росся" от 15 марта) [Metropolitan of Foreign Affairs. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, answered our correspondent's questions. (The newspaper "Rossia" from March 15)], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85037/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰³¹ NTV – Novosti, Украинский президент встретился с Варфоломеем I [The Ukrainian President met with Bartholomew I], 27-11-2000.

¹⁰³² NTV – Novosti, Леонид Кучма мечтает о единой Украинской Православной Церкви [Leonid Kuchma dreams of a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 08-11-2000.

¹⁰³³ the delegation included deputies Igor Ostash, Pavlo Movchan, Ivan Diyak, Kostyantyn Sitnyk, Vasyl Chervonny and Taras Chornovyl, as well as UOC-KP Archbishop Daniel; the meeting was attended also by the Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Motsyk.

of rehabilitating and recognizing the Ukrainian bishop who had been unjustly repressed by the Moscow Patriarchate for their activities in favour of the independence of the Ukrainian Church, and to send a delegation to Kiev in order to study the situation of Orthodoxy in Ukraine in two weeks. The delegation pointed out that it was important to implement these measures before the Pope's visit to Ukraine¹⁰³⁴. And as said above, Kuchma also carried out meetings with representatives of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church¹⁰³⁵, which in relation to the Russian Orthodox Church, in general took a more moderate position than the Kiev Patriarchate. If the latter denied the possibility of the existence of parishes subordinated to the ROC in Ukraine, instead Archbishop Igor, recently spoke out for the peaceful coexistence between the national Orthodox Church and the Church subordinated to Moscow in Ukraine¹⁰³⁶. Indeed in an interview given in mid-July to the newspaper *Den*, the deputy prime minister Mykola Zhulynsky, talked of the plans of Ukrainian authorities to consolidate the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. Referring to the split in the early 1990, he said that the Ukrainian government was in constant contact with the hierarchs in order to try halting the process. The Prime Minister expressed appreciation for Patriarch Aleksii's attempt to resolve the situation by granting autonomy to the Ukrainian Church, which he considered a first step towards independence. However, he stressed that if the Ukrainian Church were to receive autocephaly, the Moscow Patriarchate would lose about eight thousand of its parishes, corresponding to almost half the total number of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church. According to the Prime Minister "the Moscow Patriarchate seems to already see the inevitability of Ukrainian autocephaly. This is the same as it was with Ukrainian independence - independence that was not an accident but the result, the completion of a long historical movement in one direction"¹⁰³⁷.

However, in matters of meetings concerning Churches' issues Kuchma continued to keep a busy schedule. On 30 November 2001, he visited Moscow under the invitation of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. The meeting between them also included the presence of the Prime Minister of Ukraine A.K. Kinakh, Head of the Presidential Administration V.M. Litvin, Minister of Foreign Affairs A.M. Zlenko, Minister of Defense V.P. Shkidchenko, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Ukraine V.S. Chernomyrdin, who before the meeting accompanied the President to a visit of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. In an interview released after the meeting, Kuchma pointed out the importance of strengthening bilateral relations among the countries, and of the necessity to "not destroy that spiritual bond of fraternal Slavic Orthodox peoples that has held us together and united us throughout a thousand-year history. The Ukrainian Orthodox

¹⁰³⁴ Den', *К Каноническому Признанию Украинского Православия Сделан Еще Один Важный Шаг [Another Important Step Has Been Taken Towards The Canonical Recognition Of Ukrainian Orthodoxy]*, Kiev, 26-12-2000.

¹⁰³⁵ NTU – Novosti, *Президент Украины встретился с иерархами Украинской Автокефальной Церкви [The President of Ukraine met with the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church]*, 25-10-2000.

¹⁰³⁶ Strana.ru, *Президент Леонид Кучма встретился с главными украинскими раскольниками [President Leonid Kuchma met with the main Ukrainian dissenters]*, 06-04-2001.

¹⁰³⁷ Russkaja Mysl, *Правительство Украины Добивается Объединения Всех Православных Юрисдикций В Стране [The Government Of Ukraine Is Seeking The Unification Of All Orthodox Jurisdictions In The Country]*, Paris, 27-07-2000.

Church, headed by His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine, has the rights of broad self-government. The episcopate, the clergy and the people of God must determine for themselves whether the autonomy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is necessary"¹⁰³⁸. The day before, the President of Ukraine had a working lunch at the Kremlin with Patriarch Aleksii II and President Putin¹⁰³⁹.

Among other examples, it is useful to refer to the ceremony of installing a consecrated cross on the dome of the restored St. Vladimir Cathedral located in the reserve Chersonesos on the outskirts of Sevastopol, a ceremony in which President Putin took part together with Kuchma. On that occasion, Putin mentioned that it was exactly in the place where the Vladimir Cathedral that began the baptism of Rus' was located, and that the "fundamental principles of Christianity are incorruptible and enduring"¹⁰⁴⁰, and pointed out that peoples of the two countries had entered a "period of creation, restoration and construction"¹⁰⁴¹. From a symbolic point of view, it is worth bringing up two other meetings: the visits of Putin and Kuchma, in the course of their trip to Odessa, to the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, whose construction was under the responsibility of the UOC-MP. Indeed, citizens of Odessa set about restoring the shrine that had been destroyed by the Bolsheviks, and started constructing a bell tower, the lower tier, and the walls of the main temple. After scheduled construction the capacity of the whole cathedral was to be similar to Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow. On the basis of an agreement reached during negotiations between the leadership of the Odessa mayor's office and His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii the year before, after the completion of construction, the arrival of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia was planned for the solemn consecration of this shrine¹⁰⁴². On 24 January 2004 President of Russia V.V. Putin, who was in Ukraine for a visit, and President of Ukraine L. Kuchma, visited the Holy Dormition Kiev-Pechersk Lavra¹⁰⁴³. In the Assumption Cathedral they

¹⁰³⁸ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Во время пребывания в Москве Президент Украины Л.Д.Кучма посетил Храм Христа Спасителя и встретился со Святейшим Патриархом Московским и всея Руси Алексием* [During his stay in Moscow, President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma visited the Cathedral of Christ the Savior and met with His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84488/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰³⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Кремле состоялась встреча Святейшего патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II с Президентами России и Украины* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia met with the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine in the Kremlin], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84492/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Президент России В.В.Путин и Президент Украины Л.Д. Кучма приняли участие в церемонии установки креста на куполе Свято-Владимирского собора в историко- археологическом заповеднике Херсонес* [President of Russia Vladimir Putin and President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma took part in the ceremony of installing a cross on the dome of St. Vladimir's Cathedral in the historical and Archaeological Reserve of Chersonesos], 2001/7, pp. 29.

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴² Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В.В. Путин и Л.Д. Кучма установили крест на куполе Свято-Владимирского собора* [Vladimir Putin and Leonid Kuchma installed a cross on the dome of St. Vladimir's Cathedral], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84771/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁴³ The Presidents of the two countries were accompanied by Metropolitan Kirill, by the Head of the Presidential Administration of Russia D.A. Medvedev, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of

were welcomed by Metropolitan Vladimir, who remembered the cultural and historical value of the Lavra, and pointed out that “Lavra was and remains the cradle of Orthodoxy for the fraternal peoples of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine”¹⁰⁴⁴. Russian President Putin added that in Russia “We know what the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra is, we have not forgotten and will never forget that Prince Vladimir baptized Russia in the Dnieper font. It is no coincidence that for a long time it was called Kievan Rus, Holy Rus. Today, the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra is a symbol of the spiritual unity of Russia and Ukraine”¹⁰⁴⁵. Referring to the religious schism, President Putin added: “We are aware of the problems that you spoke about today. We do not interfere, of course, in church life. But we know how difficult it is for you to experience the split that you talked about. And without interfering with what is happening within the Church, I can say that we are with you in our hearts and souls”¹⁰⁴⁶. Vladimir Putin drew particular attention to the fact that although possessing independence and autonomy in government, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church retains a canonical and spiritual connection with the Moscow Patriarchate. He argued: “In my opinion, this is a very important component of the unity of our peoples. Maybe this is the little that has remained absolutely united, the little that we must take care of with special attention, which we must preserve for the future for our children and grandchildren,[...] We, as I said, remember well and realize that the Baptism of Rus began precisely from here, from the Dnieper font, and here is the beginning of our Orthodoxy. And these are the origins of our spiritual unity [...]”¹⁰⁴⁷. Metropolitan of Odessa and Izmail Agafangel expressed his conviction that it was important to work in order to preserve church unity, both in Russia and in Ukraine, and pointed out that this was the line of connection among their two countries. And President Putin highlighted that the place where the Patriarchal Chambers were located in the Kremlin, belonged to the most ancient building of the Kremlin in Moscow, and added that in his opinion “this is not an accidental coincidence, since Orthodoxy in Russia, the Russian Orthodox Church is the very roots of our spirituality”¹⁰⁴⁸, as to underline the strict ties of the State with the Church. During the press conference of the Eighth Russian People’s Council held on 4 February 2004, the chairman of the DECR highlighted the importance of Vladimir Putin’s statements regarding the unity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with the Moscow Patriarchate. Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that “Russia and Ukraine are now looking for the foundations for building a strategic partnership. Strong ties between states are developing not only under the influence of pragmatic motives. The unity of our Churches,

Russia to Kiev V.S. Chernomyrdin, who were part of the official Russian delegation, as well as the head of the Administration of President of Ukraine V.V. Medvedchuk, and other officials.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Президенты России и Украины В.В.Путин и Л.Д.Кучма посетили Киево-Печерскую лавру и встретились с иерархами Украинской Православной Церкви* [Presidents of Russia and Ukraine Vladimir Putin and Leonid Kuchma visited the Kiev Pechersk Lavra and met with hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82523/>, (last accessed October 2021); Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, Президент России Владимир Путин Наградил Орденом Дружбы Иерархов Украинской Православной Церкви [Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded the Order of Friendship of Hierarchs to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 2004/1, pp. 51.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

the spiritual unity of the peoples of Ukraine and Russia is a reliable basis on which strategic partnership, cooperation and interaction, to develop integration processes"¹⁰⁴⁹.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл: "Духовное единство народов - надежная основа для развития стратегического партнерства между государствами"* [Metropolitan Kirill: "The spiritual unity of peoples is a reliable basis for the development of strategic partnership between states"], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82448/>, (last accessed October 2021).

Conclusions

"[..] Your Holiness, could you tell us why Ukraine was the first country for your pastoral visit?"

"Where did Russia come from? It came from here, from the hills of Kiev. Here is the beginning of our faith, the beginning of our Church, here is the beginning of our statehood, from which later emerged the statehood of independent formations. Here is our historical past and [..], our future will be decided here too. By 'our' I mean all of us, the people who belonged to the single civilization of ancient Kievan Rus, which blossomed and developed into a powerful force in world civilization. Besides, there are purely religious reasons: Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra is the beginning of our monasticism, host of relics, saint fathers, healing relics, which ooze myrrh and emit great grace. Where else could one go but to Kiev? [..]"¹⁰⁵⁰.

(Interview to Patriarch Kirill, 28.07.2009).

Kirill's choice to make his first patriarchal visit to Ukraine was coherent with his vision of strengthening the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church on the branches under its jurisdiction, and in preserving and promoting Eastern and Slavic civilization. These were the fundamental aims of his twenty year chairmanship at the Department for External Church Relations. Belarus and Moldova, together with Ukraine, constituted the historical core space associated with Holy Rus. In a speech delivered to students of the Kiev Theological School, at the Refectory Church of the Kiev – Pechersk Lavra, Patriarch Kirill referred precisely to these countries, talking of the Orthodox people's resistance to the challenge of secularization in modern societies. Referring to the statistics, he showed that in Russia 72% of the population considered themselves Orthodox, and in Ukraine and Moldova this percentage was even higher, even though only a small percent went every Sunday to Church (in Russia from 3 to 12 percent of the population). Given the low numbers of church attendance, he stated that one of the Church's tasks was to transform such "formally Orthodox Christians" into "believing people". He expressed astonishment at learning that out of the percentage of truly Church-going (from 3 to 12% of population), the percentage of those motivated by Christian morality in their personal, social and familiar life was even lower. Patriarch Kirill mentioned a final statistic, which stated that 67% of Ukrainian society declared that they trust the Church¹⁰⁵¹.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Russian Orthodox Church, *Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в прямом эфире украинского телеканала «Интер»* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill speaks live on the Ukrainian TV channel "Inter"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 28-07-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/706055.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

¹⁰⁵¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл: «То, что народ, прошедший через три поколения безбожия, сегодня в большинстве своем заявляет о приверженности Православной Церкви, — это чудо Божие...»* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill: "The fact that people who have gone through three generations of godlessness today declare most of their commitment to the Orthodox Church is a

In the article “Russian Orthodox concordat? Church and state under Medvedev,” published on September 2011, Irina Papkova wrote that “[...]as chair of the OVTsS for nearly two decades, Kirill transformed this branch of the Moscow Patriarchate’s administration into the most powerful of the ROC’s departments, which came in time to effectively administer not only the church’s external relations but to control the course of its internal affairs to a significant degree [...]”¹⁰⁵². The analysis carried out in these pages shows that Papkova is absolutely right in describing the role the Department had under the chairmanship of Kirill, but that her use of the verb “transformed” is not correct. The same Metropolitan Ilarion Alfeev in his book on the life of Metropolitan Kirill until his election to the Patriarchate, published on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the election, wrote that “[...] by the end of 1980 the DECR retained the role of the main intellectual and organizational center of the Russian Orthodox Church which it acquired under Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) who headed the department in 1960-1972 [...]”¹⁰⁵³. Indeed, as perfectly presented by Adriano Rocucci in *Stalin e il Patriarca*, the “asymmetrical cooperation” between the Church and the State benefited from the international factor that in the years 1939-1943, on the basis of the geopolitical conception of the Soviet Union elaborated by Stalin, allowed for a change in the relation of the Soviet power toward the Church. In fact religious leaders’ impressions about the religious situation in the communist world, which were referred coming back from their visit to USSR, wielded significant importance for the international image of Soviet Union. Moreover, the regime was obliged to accept the impact of religious diplomacy on propaganda. The need the State had of the Church was fully perceived and used by the archimandrite Nikodim (Rotov), who viewed the external activities as an opportunity for the Church. Indeed, in this period the Russian Orthodox Church exhibited a real interest in extending its influence to all the aspects concerning external relations”¹⁰⁵⁴. Nevertheless, since the 1990s both for its structure, organized on a model of severe state restrictions, and for the compositions of the employees, including those selected by the authorities or those carrying out the functions of informers, the Department was not equipped to manage the new large scale of tasks posed by the new territorial units in which the Union was divided, and by Russia’s new role in international diplomacy: this was true in the sphere of church-diplomatic, in church-state, and in church-public relations. Among the main challenges of this period, Kirill recalled that this significant expansion of the scope of DECR’s activities was implemented in the context of the “traditional” church diplomacy (expanded thanks to the Church’s increased participation in resolving international political activities), and in the context of a strict economy of resources due to the reduced income of the Russian Orthodox Church (the crisis of 1992 created an oppressive

miracle of God...”], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29-07-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/707360.html>, (last accessed August 2021).

¹⁰⁵² Papkova Irina, *Russian Orthodox concordat? Church and state under Medvedev*, pp. 671-672.

¹⁰⁵³ «[...]К концу 80-х годов XX века ОВЦС сохранял роль главного интеллектуального и организационного центра Рус-ской Православной Церкви, которую он приобрел при митрополите Никодиме (Ротове), возглавлявшем отдел в 1960—1972 годах [...]», Mitropolit Ilarion (Alfeyev), *Патриарх Кирилл [Patriarch Kirill]*, pp. 97.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Riccardi Andrea, *Il Vaticano e Mosca*, 1992, pp. 284.

atmosphere both for the Church and for society on a large scale). In an interview published in the mid 1990s, Kirill recognized as “untimely” narrowing the DECR's activities to the functions of a *foreign department*¹⁰⁵⁵. Further, it was noted that he felt it urgent that the Department “should now focus on the external activities of the Church within our country”¹⁰⁵⁶. This meant that proceeding from “Church Tradition”¹⁰⁵⁷, the Department came to “determine the principles on which the relations of the Church with the outside world should be built”¹⁰⁵⁸.

The research conducted led to the following conclusions. The priority of the Russian Orthodox Church in these twenty years was: re-establishing its role in Russia by providing a new identity to the Russian Nation. From the perspective of Russian Orthodox Church's external relations, this priority translated into 1) the defence of the canonical territory, and 2) the promotion of the Russian-Slavic model of civilization, and 3) the construction of a new symphonia with the State.

In his paper the *Demise of an Empire-State: Identity, Legitimacy, and the Deconstruction of Soviet Politics*, Mark Beissinger quoted the response that an eighteen old college student, Irina Zhuravleva, told an American reporter after the break-up of the Union: “We don't even know who we are anymore. They tell me I'm a *Russian* now. What does that mean? Does it mean that my parents, who live in Uzbekistan, are foreigners?..... I think of myself as Soviet. I know nothing about Russia. In school our history lessons began with the revolution and 1917. I am all for the changes in this country but I am completely confused. What does it mean – *Russian*”¹⁰⁵⁹. An important consequence of the dissolution of the Soviet Union was indeed the double confusion over identities, a confusion which involved definition of both the States/territories, and people/citizens.

The historical and political reality inherited from Russia can be qualified as an empire whose distinctive features were Russian culture and language, the Christian Orthodox religion, and a harmonious union between the State and the Church. The dissolution of the Union, the last manifestation of the empire in these territories, created the need to re-define the identity both of the State and of its citizens, and to devise new forms of reciprocal understanding with the new political and religious Other(s). Due to this premise, it is worth asking what the new constitution of this empire might be, and what would be the values at the foundation of its resurrection. Indeed, after the fall of the Union, both the State and the Church were engaged in reconstructing their roles and their

¹⁰⁵⁵ Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev): *Митрополит Иларион: Деятельность ОВЦС можно сравнить со служением пограничников* [Metropolitan Ilarion: The activities of the DECR can be compared with the service of border guards], Tserkovno-diplomaticheskaya i obshchestvennaya deyatel'nost', 20.05.2021. <https://hilarion.ru/social/mitropolit-ilarion-deyatelnost-ovtss-mozhno-sravnit-so-sluzheniem-pogranichnikov.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁵⁶ «напротив «он нент должен сейчас делаться на внешней деятельности Церкви внутри нашей страны»», *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁷ «церковного Предания», *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁸ «определить принципы, на которых должны строиться отношения Церкви с внешним миром», *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁹ Beissinger Mark, *“Demise of an Empire-State: Identity, Legitimacy, and the Deconstruction of Soviet Politics*, The National Council for Soviet and East European Research, 1993, pp. 1-43.

respective legitimacy. The Church needed to re-establish its role after the period of imposed atheism. The State was the victim of Gorbachev's miscalculation regarding the impact of the "glasnost", and of the secessionist aspirations that can result in the wake of increased democratization¹⁰⁶⁰. Adriano Rocucci noted the link between a sacralised idea of Imperial space and the concept of canonical territory elaborated and defended by the Patriarchate of Moscow, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union"¹⁰⁶¹. This idea found the support of other scholars (Inna Naletova¹⁰⁶², Kormina&Naumescu¹⁰⁶³, Alexei Bukalov¹⁰⁶⁴, Markova¹⁰⁶⁵, Duncan¹⁰⁶⁶). This research sought to show that the use of the term canonical territory as a political concept, as a boundary for proselytizing activities of other Churches, and as a great common, historical locus is not necessarily directly intertwined with the ambitions of restoring the old territorial borders. In fact the dimension of the territorial borders is defined by what Agadjanian and Rouselett called the "transnational character of the ROC"¹⁰⁶⁷. What matters is not exactly space or territory, but the Russian/Slavic identity, which the Russian Orthodox Church claims to be under its jurisdiction wherever Russians are located. These two concepts are expressed by the World Russian People Council, founded in 1993. The web site of the Council writes that the Council was created in a "difficult period of national history, when the Russian people were in dire need of unification"¹⁰⁶⁸. After having lived for many centuries in one country "since 1991, the Russians have become a divided people"¹⁰⁶⁹. For this reason, the aim of the Council is "to unite all Russian people, regardless of the country of residence and political views, taken by the Russian Orthodox Church"¹⁰⁷⁰. Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova make up Holy Russia¹⁰⁷¹, the core of this "unique civilizational space". Reactions of people during the celebrations of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism evinced, according to the Russian Orthodox Church, people's desire to "remain in the

¹⁰⁶⁰ The debate is open on the interpretation of this miscalculation: it may be interpreted as overconfidence in the widespread acceptance of Soviet identity, or as a failure to grasp the kind of legitimacy assumed by a common Soviet identity.

¹⁰⁶¹ Merlo Simona. *All'ombra delle cupole d'oro*, pp. 21.

¹⁰⁶² Quoted in Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security*, note 13, pp. 4.

¹⁰⁶³ Kormina Jeanne, Naumescu Vlad, *A new 'Great Schism'? Theopolitics of communion and canonical territory in the Orthodox Church*, *Anthropology Today*, 36, 2020, pp. 7-11.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Bukalov Alexey, *The Distance Between the First and Third Rome*, 12.01.2021, <https://www2.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-distance-between-the-first-and-third-rome>, (last accessed August 2021).

¹⁰⁶⁵ Markova Maria, *The Political Use of Soviet Nostalgia to Develop a Russian National Identity*, 14.07.2021, <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/07/14/the-political-use-of-soviet-nostalgia-to-develop-a-russian-national-identity/>, (last accessed August 2020).

¹⁰⁶⁶ Duncan Peter J.S. *Russian Messianism. Third Rome, revolution, Communism and after*.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Agadjanian Alexander, Rouselett Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy", pp. 29-57.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Всемирный Русский Народный Собор (ВРНС) [World Russian People Council], <https://vrns.ru/o-vrns.php> (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷¹ Russian Orthodox Church, *Митрополит Кирилл: «Торжества по случаю 1020-летия Киевской Руси явили торжество Православия»* [Metropolitan Kirill: "Celebrations on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of Kievan Rus revealed the triumph of Orthodoxy"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 30-07-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443064.html>, (last accessed, October 2021).

bosom of the united Russian Orthodox Church”¹⁰⁷². At the same time, Metropolitan Kirill never denied to be a supporter of the unification or integration between Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, but also in this case such unification was conceived as a union of “fraternal Orthodoxy” and from an imperial perspective. This analysis posits this thesis not because it was clearly expressed by Metropolitan Kirill¹⁰⁷³, but because the aim of unifying people and countries with a shared historical and cultural heritage turned out to have greater importance than the reconstitution of the old territorial ensemble. A further confirmation can be found in relation of this conception with policy. During the celebration of the anniversary of the Baptism, President Putin highlighted the role of the Russian Orthodox Church as “guardian of Christian values”¹⁰⁷⁴ and the “strong tie that linked the destiny of the peoples of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the peoples of other countries”¹⁰⁷⁵.

This rhetoric fits perfectly with the criticism of Western liberalism and the associated Western conception of human rights, and with the need for Russia to propose an alternative to the legalism and individualism of Western society. Speaking of the assessment of the world after the end of the Soviet Union, Metropolitan Kirill declared that it left Russia two choices: to be isolated and close itself off in a sort of cultural-religious ghetto in order to preserve itself, or to accept unconditionally the western liberal model. Therefore Russia started to ask itself if it was possible to combine these two models, promoting both the values from tradition and values from liberalism. The response of the Russian Orthodox Church to this challenge lay in the promotion of a model based on the values of the Christian tradition in the field of education, instruction and personal relationships, and on the promotion of civil and personal freedoms. This was to allow the active participation of the Church in secularized life, promoting the application of Christian thought to the problems posed by the liberal, globalized society¹⁰⁷⁶. It was exactly this ideology that inspired the policy of the Russian Orthodox Church in European and International institutions. Among others, as an example it is worth referring to the issue of human rights, to the work on the White Paper of the European Commission, and to the speech of Patriarch Aleksii to the Council of Europe in

¹⁰⁷² Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: «Сегодня все мы призваны хранить церковное единство»* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "Today we are all called to preserve church unity"*], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24-10-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/478949.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁷³ Russian Orthodox Church, *Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла телеканалу «Вести»* [*Interview of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill to the Vesti TV channel*], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29-07-2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/707472.html>, (last accessed October 2021); Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Москве завершил работу Съезд славянских народов Беларуси, России, Украины* [*The Congress of Slavic Peoples of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine has completed its work in Moscow*], mospat.ru, Il Congresso dei Popoli Slavi di Bielorussia, Russia, Ucraina ha completato i suoi lavori a Mosca: LA NOTIZIA DEL DECS (mospat.ru), (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Торжественным актом в Государственном Кремлевском дворце начались торжества в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси* [*The celebrations in honor of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus began with a solemn act in the State Kremlin Palace*], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64394/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁷⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁶ Kirill Vladimir Radovic, Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, “La Chiesa Ortodossa Russa e la sfida della globalizzazione: la tensione tra i valori della tradizione e i valori liberali”, in *L’Ortodossia nella Nuova Europa. Dinamiche storiche e prospettive.*, Ed. Pacini, Andrea, Torino, Fondazione Gianni Agnelli, 2003, pp. 331-342.

2007.

In order to grasp these issues, it is essential to consider the analysis of Kristina Stoeckl and that of the research group that has been working on the issue of post-secularism, and on the concept of Russian Orthodox Church as entrepreneur of moral norms. In this perspective, Stoeckl considered the Russian Orthodox Church's discovery of article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an instrument to oppose the "gradual egalitarian evolution of the human rights system"¹⁰⁷⁷ as a fundamental development. In this way the ROC was able to "universalize the message of traditional values"¹⁰⁷⁸ and to have it accepted in the "discursive game of right advocacy"¹⁰⁷⁹ by allowing the Church to position itself no longer simply in opposition to the Western understanding of human rights but to "actively present itself as the vanguard of a more original understanding of human rights".¹⁰⁸⁰ Stoeckl noted that this new strategy is particularly visible in Kirill's April 2006 speech in front of the World Russian People Council, in which it was highlighted that "Orthodox believers cannot accept that legal standards contrary to the principles of Orthodox faith be imposed on them"¹⁰⁸¹. This strategy can be also traced in the contribution to the seminar "The Evolution of Moral Principles and Human Rights in Multicultural Society" delivered in Strasbourg on 30-31 October 2006, and in the speech to UNESCO on 13 March 2007, in which the ROC invited the world to return to the understanding of human rights and social life established in 1948. Indeed, in the speech delivered in Bari at the conference "Christianity and Europe: Social Thought of the Russian Orthodox Church", Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that the Church "supported and preserved Russian culture. She continues to be a defender of what is Christian in Russian culture [...]"¹⁰⁸². Bishop Hilarion, representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to European International Organization, pointed out that modern European discourse sees the opposition between "liberal humanism based on scientific knowledge"¹⁰⁸³ and "theological and metaphysical speculations of the past"¹⁰⁸⁴. He recalled the importance of the dialogue between the two sides in order to allow the modernization of the values system. In particular what was considered hard to put up with "is militant atheism and secularism that challenges their self—understanding. Absolutely unacceptable for most religions is, for example, the modern urge to expel them from the public sphere - from schools, universities, the media, political and social life - and reduce them to the sphere

¹⁰⁷⁷ Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur*.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸¹ Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church and human rights*, pp.63.

¹⁰⁸² The Church-Compound of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Bari, *Выступление Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла, Председателя Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата, На Конференции "Христианство И Европа: Социальная Мысль Русской Православной Церкви"* [Speech By Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad, Chairman Of The Department For External Church Relations Of The Moscow Patriarchate, At The Conference "Christianity And Europe: Social Thought Of The Russian Orthodox Church"], Bari, Italy, bargrad.ru, 20-12-2004, <http://www.bargrad.ru/biblioteka/vystuplenie-mitropolita-kirilla-na-konferencii/>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ibid.

of private piety of individuals [...]”¹⁰⁸⁵. His appeal was included in the legislative dialogue that would replace the *Constitutional Treaty*. The promotion of a cultural model which differentiates the Russkiy Mir from the Western World, and defend its historical traditional roots, is central in the ROC’s civilizational project.

As I said in the introduction, this analysis confirms that Church-State relations in these twenty years are composed of features from the three models by which Stoeckl summed up trends in relations between the political and religious spheres in the contemporary world. This analysis shows that in this period, the first and third model were of particular relevance. This overlap of interests between the Church and the State, and the role of the Church as privileged partner of the State, is the approval of the *Law on Religious Freedom* in 1997 (first model). An example of disestablishment relation (third model), which revealed a friction between the two institutions, is the *Bases of Social Concept*. Nikolai Petro has highlighted that the balanced support towards the government expressed by the *Bases of Social Concept* can be traced back in the Russian history: Russians have always linked the support for the tsars to the fulfillment of the people’s expectations, to the extent that this support conformed to Christian ethics¹⁰⁸⁶. Giovanni Codevilla’s analysis of the law of 1997, and of the tsarist classification of religions reported in the *Svod Zakonov*, highlighted that by granting a special status to Orthodoxy, the *Svod Zakonov* realized a union among spiritual and temporal powers which could not be grasped by referring to the principles of Church-State separatism. In the words of Codevilla, this was not a coincidence; it was rather the expression of a “tradition consisting of a mix of confessionalism and jurisdictionalism which dominated in Russia over the centuries”¹⁰⁸⁷.

Indeed the law on Religious Association promulgated in 1997 represented the expression of the union of intents of the State with the Russian Orthodox Church. This can be deduced not only from the Preamble, which recognized the special status of Orthodoxy in Russia, and provided a stratification of the so called “traditional religions”, in fact although the word “traditional” was not used in the Preamble, it was largely present in the public discussions.

In this sense, particular importance should be accorded firstly to those faiths and religions excluded by this list, and the disposition towards those groups of believers considered religious sects. What does the new law adopted in 1997 say in terms of the Russian Orthodox Church’s attitude about the external? It put an end to the more liberal attitude of the 1990s and formalized the tie between identity and religion, thus basing the renaissance of Russia after the Soviet Union on the contribution of Orthodoxy to the development of spirituality and culture. At the same time, it presents itself as the first reference point of the *National Security Concept* statement on the need for “protecting

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Petro Nikoli, in Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church*, pp. 27.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Codevilla, Giovanni, *Lo zar e il patriarca. I rapporti tra trono e altare in Russia dalle origini ai giorni nostri*, Milano: La Casa Di Matriona, 2008, pp. 421.

the cultural and spiritual moral legacy and the historical traditions [...]”¹⁰⁸⁸ of the country. This protection can be considered equivalent to refusing any form of influences not recognized as part of Russian/Slavic history and as a threat to its civilizational model. Indeed Islam, Buddhism and Judaism are defined as traditional religions, while Protestantism and Catholicism are considered “other Christian faiths”. The attitude toward them is regulated in the *Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions*, and is conditioned by the threat of proselytism. New religious movements are excluded from this process, since those groups are not part of Russia’s history. The narrative which depicted these new movements as totalitarian sects or anti-cult manifestations was disseminated through two channels: the anti-cult movement (ACM), and the media. This alliance contributed to the Russian society’s perception of any religion or ethnic group which was not traditionally present in Russia as foreign. Compared to the law of 1990, the revised version introduced contradictions and raised questions. Indeed the Russian Orthodox Church strove to combine its declared pluralism, openness religious equality, and secular identity (1993 Constitution) with an active engagement devoted to limit this pluralism. An important reason for the failure in solving this contradiction was that federal authorities shared these concerns and, although at the beginning unofficially, supported regional initiatives against these groups. The 1997 law therefore legalized governmental interference in religious matters, interference which was confirmed in 2002 with the law *On Frightening Extremist Activity*¹⁰⁸⁹, in 2003 with “the expulsion of a Roman Catholic bishop and four priests”¹⁰⁹⁰, with the “restriction and/or the expulsion of several scores of religious workers”¹⁰⁹¹, in 2006 with the law *On Introducing Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation*, in opposition to proselytizing activities (Moscow city Duma removed “religious proselytizing in public” from its list of administrative offences in the new Moscow City Code only in 2007), and with state financial support for religion. Another aspects of the alliance, can be considered Russian Orthodox Church’s involvement in political struggle¹⁰⁹²: with regard to Ukraine, there is clear evidence of the involvement of the Church in the new election campaign of Yuchenko and Yanuchkovic after the Orange Revolution, as well as of active participation of members of the Church in electoral competitions. Moreover, the analysis confirms that also in the cases of

¹⁰⁸⁸ National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 10-01-2000, https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk86BZ29/content/id/589768, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁸⁹ Miroshnikova Elena, *National Report on the Political Aspects of Religion: Russia*, iclrs.org, pp. 573-590, <https://classic.iclrs.org/content/blurp/files/Russia.1.pdf>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁹⁰ Marsh Christopher, *Burden or Blessing? Russian Orthodoxy and the Construction of Civil Society and Democracy*, Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs, 2004, pp. 93.

¹⁰⁹¹ Miroshnikova Elena, *National Report on the Political Aspects of Religion*.

¹⁰⁹² As reported by Zoe Knox, the great debate on the political involvement of priests led to a resolution according to which priests would not be allowed to stand for political office, adopted at the Holy Synod held on November 1993, and inspired by what happened on October 1993, when priests elected to the Congress of People’s Deputies found themselves in two opposite positions: Father Alesei Zlobin was in the White House, and Father Gleb Iakunin was with the President. See: Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*, pp. 96.

Moldova and Estonia, Church diplomacy continued to run both on the ecclesiastical and the state level.

The *Bases of the Social Concept* spelled out the model of State-Church relationship in Russia. According to its provisions “the Church has autonomy in relation to the State. She does not participate in political struggle, she has no political ambitions, she does not pretend to be a political leader. But by doing so, the Church simultaneously declares its right to be free from any political influences. And this is very important; it is important to make people understand that the Church cannot and should not serve particular political interests [...]”¹⁰⁹³. At least two questions arise in response to this statement: does this autonomy exist in practice or is it only theoretical? Has the Church ever had to appeal to this autonomy from the State?

At the crux of the debate was certainly the norm regarding the option of “peaceful civil disobedience”, “if the Church and her holy authorities find it impossible to obey state laws and orders, after a due consideration of the problem”¹⁰⁹⁴. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate referred exactly to this norm during President Kuchma’s initiatives with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in order to discuss the problem of creating an independent (autocephalous) Church in the country. Referring to the norm, the UOC-MP stressed that the negotiations of Ukrainian President with Bartholomew I represented a challenge, a “de facto a declaration of war” against the most influential denomination in Ukraine which was, is and will be canonical territory of the Russian Church. Also in this case indeed we can speak of a transnational view of the option of “peaceful civil disobedience”, whose application proved more effective than the national one. However, this analysis shows that during these twenty years, the Russian Orthodox Church was more concerned with the Ecumenical Patriarchate than the Kremlin: the Estonian case and the interruption of communion was mentioned several times as an example not to follow in order to avoid the same mistake in Ukraine. The competition with the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the influence on the Orthodox World runs in particular throughout Ukraine due to the number of parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate present in this territory, where Constantinople and Moscow are not equal and although the first is *primus inter pares*. Therefore, it is undeniable that the withdrawal of Ukraine from the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church can impact its role as the core of Slavic civilization.

The defence of the canonical territory, and the promotion of the Russkiy Mir, understood as civilizational project fits in the first model. In his talk at the conference for security held in Munich on 10 February 2007 and during an interview with Italian TV channel Rai, President Putin recalled that “NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the Alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe”¹⁰⁹⁵, and

¹⁰⁹³ Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в прямом эфире украинского телеканала «Интер».

¹⁰⁹⁴ III.5, The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, [Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church » Background Information », OrthodoxEurope.org](#), (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁹⁵ Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, kremlin.ru.

highlighted that this was in deep contradiction with what was said in 1990 by the NATO's General Secretary, Woerner: "the fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee"¹⁰⁹⁶. From Putin's perspective the real question to ask was "Where are these guarantees?"¹⁰⁹⁷. It follows that both Church and State intend to defend Russia's history and tradition by conducting an independent foreign policy. Indeed the *National Security Concept* (2000) listed among the fundamental threats in the international sphere: "the desire of some states and international associations to diminish the role of existing mechanisms for ensuring international security, above all the United Nations and the OSCE"¹⁰⁹⁸; "the strengthening of military-political blocs and alliances, above all NATO's eastward expansion"¹⁰⁹⁹; and an "outbreak and escalation of conflicts near the state border of the Russian Federation and the external borders of CIS member states"¹¹⁰⁰. As highlighted by Payne, it also stated that "assurance of the Russian Federation's national security also includes protecting the cultural and spiritual-moral legacy and the historical traditions and standards of public life, and preserving the cultural heritage of all Russia's peoples. There must be a state policy to maintain the population's spiritual and moral welfare, prohibit the use of airtime to promote violence or base instincts, and counter the adverse impact of foreign religious organizations and missionaries"¹¹⁰¹. Therefore, it is clear that expressions such as "spiritual-moral legacy and the historical traditions" and "cultural heritage of all Russia's people" are conceived in a wider, transnational perspective. The idea of nation as cultural expression, as model of civilization, finds expression also in the second paragraph of the *Social Concept*, where is presented through the category of patriotism¹¹⁰². In his paper, Bruening traced an interesting echo of Nikodim's attitude toward Christian patriotism and morality in the text of the *Social Concept*, which according to him came to express the theme of the secularized world substituting its concern within Russian Orthodox Church's ecumenical program. The stance for coexistence within the Soviet regime which this speech shows was addressed in the first chapter of this work. What is interesting here is to note that after the collapse of the Soviet Union this conception of patriotism as "ROC's increasing engagement in society"¹¹⁰³, and of morality as "fidelity to community values, as distinct from any

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁸ National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 10-01-2000, https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/589768, (last accessed October 2021).

¹⁰⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁰¹ Russian National Security Concept 2000, quoted in Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security*, pp. 3.

¹¹⁰² "Christian patriotism may be expressed at the same time with regard to a nation as an ethnic community and as a community of its citizens. The Orthodox Christian is called to love his fatherland, which has a territorial dimension, and his brothers by blood who live everywhere in the world. This love is one of the ways of fulfilling God's commandment of love to one's neighbour which includes love to one's family, fellow-tribesmen and fellow-citizens." See: The Basis of the Social concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, <http://orthodoxeurope.org/print/3/14.aspx...>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹¹⁰³ Bruening Alfons, "Morality and Patriotism :Continuity and Change in Russian Orthodox Occidentalism since the Soviet Era" in Krawchuk, A., T., Bremer, T., *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan Springer, 2014, pp. 39.

independent-minded, selfish, and egoistic lifestyle”¹¹⁰⁴ were firmly still in place, and represented the bases for addressing new circumstances.

This not only confirmed the general importance of the heritage of Soviet Union’s values in Russia, but in particular, confirmed the role of the Department for External Church Relations as the main incubator of ideas which inspired the relation of the Church with the external world. Indeed, just as Nikodim had done, the document drafted under the guidance of Metropolitan Kirill set aside the idea of the Church’s renunciation of the world, and called Christians to an active involvement in the society where they live. Paragraph VIII. 4 of the *Bases of Social Concept* defined the concept of patriotism in a stricter relation with Orthodoxy: “In this regard, the Church has a special concern for the military, trying to educate them for the faithfulness to lofty moral ideals. The agreement concluded by the Russian Orthodox Church with the Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies opens up considerable opportunities for overcoming the artificially created dividing walls, for bringing the military back to the established Orthodox traditions of service to the fatherland [..]”¹¹⁰⁵. What follows is a limited conception of religious pluralism, which disadvantaged religious groups considered “non-traditional”, and a direct relation between the traditional faith of Russia and other religious organizations. As we have seen, all these provisions found an expression in the *National Security Concept*, and was in dialogue with the path followed by the *Law on freedom of religions*, since the liberal version of 1990 up to the revised version of 1997. It follows that during these twenty years, in Russia the prevalent model of Church – State relations on the field of attitude to the external world is the State-Church model.

Ukraine

Although united by the common Eastern Christian faith tradition, Russia and Ukraine are separated by the development of policies toward religious institutions after the independence. Indeed, if the difference between the Eastern Orthodox tradition and the other Christian traditions is the prominence of the State and the organization of Orthodoxy on the nation-state model¹¹⁰⁶, the main differences between Russia and Ukraine are their respective approaches to religious pluralism, the existence of several centers of religious power in Ukraine. I have shown that although in terms of pluralism the Ukrainian model is quite far from the managed version spread in Russia, in terms of secularism the two countries share the same historical heritage. Since the recognition of national independence and the struggle for obtaining an autocephalus Church, Ukrainian presidents, politicians and political organizations actively took part in the process, sometimes leading it both in relation with the Russian side and with the Ecumenical

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁵ See also: Codevilla Giovanni, “Laicità dello Stato e Separatismo nella Russia di Putin”, note 73, pp. 175.

¹¹⁰⁶ Wanner Catherine, “Religion and Political Crisis in Ukraine”, in *Religion and Political Crisis in Ukraine*, Euxeinos, 17/2015, p. 4-8.

Patriarchate. The last example of this involvement can be considered Metropolitan Vladimir's secretary complaints concerning the degree of President Yushenko's interference in the organization of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus'. Drabinko affirmed that the state structures "stole" their idea of celebrating the anniversary, in order to use the holiday for political purposes, while Archbishop Mitrofan Yurchuk of Belotserkovsky and Boguslavsky pointed out that authorities should not have participated in the organization of a purely Christian holiday¹¹⁰⁷. However, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church advanced a different opinion on the interference of political leaders in Ukrainian religious issue. Some months before the celebrations, Drabinko had criticized as unfounded some experts' statements reporting that the head of the Ukrainian State was putting pressure on the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in order to separate it from the Russian Orthodox Church¹¹⁰⁸. In the report delivered at the Bishops' Council held in 2008, Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan highlighted that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, despite its tie with the Moscow Patriarchate, had become the true Church of the Ukrainian people, which "treats with due respect the national history and traditions of our country [..]"¹¹⁰⁹. During the twenty years considered in these pages, the Church guided by Vladimir (Sabodan), although it had always preserved a sort of autonomy (not only in terms of what was established in its *Statute*) from the Russian Orthodox Church, had always declared and preserved the spiritual and historical connection with Moscow. At the same time, the Church had undertaken initiatives of union with the other two Churches with the only aim of healing the religious divisions in the country. The same attitude had been adopted toward nationalism, not understood as struggle for the recognition of an autocephalous Church, but exactly by presenting itself to the Ukrainian society as a Church which cares for Ukrainian history and traditions. Conversely, the ideology promoted by Patriarch Filaret had always exhibited a decisive opposition to Moscow, and the defence of the equivalence between political and ecclesiastical independence. The struggle against Moscow in the perspective of Filaret regarded not only the conviction that the existence of a Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate was an echo of the former Soviet Union, but the idea that the Russian Orthodox Church used the Church in Ukraine as instrument to preserve Russia's influence on the country. The same conviction was shared by representatives of the Autocephalous Church who considered themselves heirs to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. As has been

¹¹⁰⁷ D W Made for Minds, Ющенко пообещал не вмешиваться в дела церкви [Yushchenko promised not to interfere in the affairs of the church], dw.com, <https://www.dw.com/ru/%D1%8E%D1%89%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%BE-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B5%D1%89%D0%B0%D0%BB-%D0%BD%D0%B5-%D0%B2%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%88%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%81%D1%8F-%D0%B2-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0-%D1%86%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%B2%D0%B8/a-3507648>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹¹⁰⁸ Patriarchia.ru, Митрополит Киевский Владимир заявил, что президент Украины не создает политического давления на Церковь [Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kiev said that the President of Ukraine does not create political pressure on the Church], 21-02-2008.

¹¹⁰⁹ Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [Report of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church], mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64467/>, (last accessed October 2021).

already highlighted, during these years, the most complicated relationship for Moscow has been the relation with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and the struggle against him for the mission in the Orthodox World. Regarding the position of the Greek Catholic Church instead, the main problems concerned the “cohabitation” in Western Ukraine with believers belonging to the Orthodox Church: the crux of the issue is the wider conception of the Baptism heritage in the perspective of the Greek-Catholic Church and the non recognition of the “primacy” of the Church of Moscow in these territories, as the claim to establish a Patriarchate, and the transfer of the See of the Greek Catholic Church from Lviv to Kiev clearly showed.

Resurgence of the Church: new Orthodoxy, new politics.

The fall of the Soviet Union saw an exponential increase in the number of self-described believers, who identified with Orthodoxy. Indeed this religious revival was un-churched, and most of the believers were not church members. In the two decades considered in this analysis one of the primary goals pursued by the Patriarch had been to increase active church membership, also online, which included the expansion of Church bureaucracy, the increase in the construction of Church buildings. The most important tasks the Church tried to fulfill were to manage its transnational structure and to bridge the enormous diversity in Orthodox views about the Church’s principles and ideology. It had to deal with internal, now external, warring factions, with the challenge placed by the Western otherness, with a new State and with a new conception of democracy and democratization. It did so continuing to present itself as the one true Church of the Apostolic Succession, and in 2006 Patriarch Aleksii II reassured his flock about this through the organization of the hand of John the Baptist to Russia. The pilgrimage of the hand went throughout Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia; the pilgrimage expenses for the translation were financed by a religious foundation chaired by Vladimir Yakunin, head of the Russia State railway network. The Patriarch Aleksii II, welcomed the hand at a ceremony on 7 June 2006 at the Church of Christ the Saviour¹¹¹⁰. What was the purpose of the Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church in the field of external activities?

As perfectly summed up by Garrard and Garrard, “Russians were to emerge from the Soviet shell reborn as pravoslavnye, - ‘true believers’ and inhabitants of Holy Rus again”¹¹¹¹. This true belief and new discovering of pravoslavnye feelings should be understood through a “new Russian identity that seeks to move forward to a Western-type democracy and backward to the moral roots of their own religious and cultural tradition”¹¹¹². In this mission, the Church did not conceive of itself only as an instrument of the State, and as such it could not be considered only as a source of soft power.

¹¹¹⁰ Walsh Nick Paton , Hand of John the Baptist in Russia, The guardian, 10-06-2006. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/jun/10/russia.religion>, (last accessed October 2021).

¹¹¹¹ Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*, pp. 69.

¹¹¹² Billington James H., *The True Heroes of the Soviet Union*, The New York Times, 30-08-1991, <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/08/30/opinion/the-true-heroes-of-the-soviet-union.html>, (last accessed October 2021).

Anderson talked of asymmetrical symphonia¹¹¹³ referring to the use Putin made of the Church. However, this analysis shows that the Church considered the alliance with the Kremlin as a way to make its ideology more influential. The Church was the most trusted institution after the fall of the Soviet Union, and after the restoration of its role, carried out mostly in the years of Yeltsin, Putin benefited from the role of the Church as reserve of a culture, shared by the government, but still in need of a higher legitimacy in order to be promoted abroad. Moreover, a poll published by Pro et Contra in 2008 showed that only 18% of respondents thought that it was a duty of the Church to gain political consent. The main part of respondents conversely thought that the Church should be the promoter of moral traditions and spiritual values. This result clearly says that a collaboration with the Church in which being only an obedient friend was not convenient to the Church and to its purpose to regain and reconstruct its role, a role that was also social. This civilizational agenda was confirmed also by relations interwoven in Ukraine, where the Moscow Patriarchate had been able to resist its independent status, despite numerous pushes toward the recognition of the jurisdiction of Ecumenical Patriarchate, the political alliance with the European Union, and with NATO, and the pressure to transcend the heritage of the tradition of Moscow.

As open issues, there remains the struggle for the unilateral appropriation of identity, with the aim of making this identity the core of a new Slavic model, a model which transcends the boundaries of the States, and represents the culture of a new trans-national empire founded on three pillars: diaspora, *ruskij mir*, and Slavic-Orthodox identity.

¹¹¹³

Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca*, pp. 494.

Bibliography

Monographs

Agadjanian Alexander, "Religious Pluralism and National Identity in Russia", in *Religious diversity in the Russian Federation* ed. by Koenig Matthias, International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), 2:2, 2000, pp. 97-124.

Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy," in *Eastern Orthodoxy in a Global Age: Tradition Faces the Twenty-first Century*, ed. by Victor Roudometof, Alexander Agadjanian, Jerry Pankhurst, Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2005, pp. 29-57.

Agadjanian Alexander, "Exploring Russian Religiosity as a source of morality today" in *Multiple Moralities and Religions in Post-Soviet Russia*, edited by Zigon Jarrett, New York-Oxford: Berghhn, 2011, pp. 16-26.

Agadjanian Alexander, *Turn of faith. Search for meaning. Orthodox Christianity and Post Soviet space*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014.

Alexeev Wassilij, *The foreign policy of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1939-1953. Materials for the History of the Russian Orthodox Church in the U.S.S.R.* II New York City: Research Program on the U.S.S.R., 1955.

Anderson John, *Religion, State and Politics in the Soviet Union and Successor States, 1953–1993*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Avvakumov Yury, "Ukrainian Greek Catholics, Past and Present" in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection*, edited by Krawchuk, Andrii., Bremer Thomas, New York: Palgrave Macmillan Springer, 2014, pp. 21-44.

Billington James, *Ikona i topór. Historia kultury rosyjskiej*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2008.

Blitt Robert C, *Russia's Orthodox Foreign Policy: the Growing Influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Shaping Russia's Policies Abroad*, 33 U. Pa. J. Int'l L. 363 , 2011, pp. 363-460.

Bociurkiw Bohdan, "The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, 1920–1930: A Case Study in Religious Modernization," in *Religion and Modernization in the Soviet Union*, ed. by Dunn Dennis J., Boulder, CO: Westview; 1978; pp. 310-347.

Bociurkiw Bohdan R. "The rise of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1919-22." in *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. by Geoffrey A. Hosking, 1991, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991, pp. 228-249.

Bremer Thomas, "Religion in Ukraine: Historical Background and the Present Situation", in Krawchuk Andrii, Bremer Thomas, *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, Springer Nature, Springer International Publishing, 2016, pp. 3-19.

Bruening Alfons, "Morality and Patriotism :Continuity and Change in Russian Orthodox Occidentalism since the Soviet Era" in Krawchuk, A., T., Bremer, T., *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of Identity and Otherness: Values, Self-Reflection*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan Springer, 2014, pp. 29-46.

Brusanowski Paul, "Autocephaly in Ukraine: The Canonical Dimension" in *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 47-77.

Burgess John P., *Holy Rus'. The rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017.

Chumachenko Tatiana A. *Church and State in Soviet Russia. Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Krushchev Years*, Armonk, NY, London: Sharpe, 2002, Hayward.

Codevilla Giovanni, *Stato e Chiesa nella Federazione Russa. La nuova normative nella Russia postcomunista*. R.C., La Casa di Matrona, 1998.

Codevilla, Giovanni, *Lo zar e il patriarca. I rapporti tra trono e altare in Russia dalle origini ai giorni nostri*, Milano: La Casa Di Matriona, 2008.

Codevilla Giovanni, Graciotti Sante, *Chiesa e impero in Russia: dalla Rus' di Kiev alla Federazione Russa*, Milano: Jaca Book, 2011.

Codevilla Giovanni, Caprio Stefano, *Storia della Russia e dei paesi limitrofi. Chiesa e impero. Vol. 4: La nuova Russia (1990-2015)*, Milano: Jaca Book, 2016.

Curanovic Alicja, *The Religious Factor in Russian Foreign Policy*, New York: Routledge, 2012.

Curtiss John Shelton, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State 1917-1950*, Boston: Peter Smith Pub Inc, 1953. Duncan Peter J.S. *Russian Messianism. Third Rome, revolution, Communism and after*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

Davie Grace, "Vicarious religion: a methodological challenge", in *Everyday religion: observing modern religious lives*, ed. by Nancy Ammerman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 21-37.

Destivelle Hyacinthe, *La chiesa del concilio di Mosca : (1917-1918)*, Magnano : Qiqajon, Comunità di Bose, 2003.

Dolińska-Rydzek Magda (et al.) "'Gays as a Weapon of the Antichrist": Religious Nationalism, Homosexuality, and the Antichrist on the Russian Internet" in Derks Marco, Mariecke van den Berg, *Discourses About Homosexuality and Religion in Europe and Beyond*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020.

Druzenko Gennadiy, "Religion and the Secular State in Ukraine", In J. Martínez-Torrón & W. C. Durham Jr. (Eds.), *Religion and the secular state: Interim national reports*, Provo: International Center for Law and Religion Studies, 2010, pp. 719–736.

Dushenov Konstantin, 'Выступление на открытии собрание верховажского отделения Союза Русского народа 25 марта 2006 года' [Speech at an open meeting of the North-Western section of the Union of the Russian People on 25 March 2006], in *Poka my russkie* [While We Are Russians], film, directed by Konstantin. Dushenov, Russia: Pole Kulikovo, 2006 cit. in Rutland Peter, "The place of economics in Russian national identity debate" in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015* ed. by Kolstø Pal, Blakkisrud Helge, Edinburgh University Press, 2016, pp. 336-361.

Ellis Jane, *The Russian Orthodox Church. A Contemporary history*, Oxford: Keston College, 1986.

Ellis Jane, *The Russian Orthodox Church. Triumphalism and Defensiveness*, New York: Palgrave, 1996.

Fletcher William, *Religion and the Soviet State. A Dilemma of Power*, New York: Frederick A. Praege, 1970.

Fletcher William, *Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy 1945-1970*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Garrard John, Garrard Carol, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent. Faith and Power in New Russia*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Garzaniti Marcello, *Il cristianesimo in Russia da Vladimir a Pietro il Grande*, Roma, Coletti, 1988.

Gerarhad Simon, *Church, State and Opposition in the USSR*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Gorodetsky, Gabriel, "Geopolitical Factors in Stalin's Strategy and Politics in the Wake of the Outbreak of World War II", in *Russia in the Age of Wars*, ed. by Romano Andrea, Milano: Feltrinelli, 2000.

Grib Vladislav, «25 лет по пути свободы совести» : материалы научно-практической конференции ["25 years on the path of freedom of conscience" : materials of the scientific and practical conference], Moscow: Jurist, 2015.

Hebly J.A., "The state, the church, and the oikumene: the Russian Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches, 1948-1985" in Ramet Sabrina P., *Religious policy in the Soviet Union*, New Yor: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 105-122.

Hegumen Philip Ryabyk, "New Challenges to Religious Freedom in Europe", in Pasquale Annicchino (ed.), *Freedom of Religion or Belief in Foreign Policy. Which One?*, Florence : European University Institute, 2013, pp. 21-25.

His Beatitude Vladimir Sabodan, *Доповіді, Звернення, Промови* [Reports, Addresses, Speeches], Tom XI, 2014,

Hovorun Cyril, "The Russian Orthodox Church and the Crisis in Ukraine; Interpreting the "Russian World"" in *Churches in the Ukrainian Crisis*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 163-171.

Kazmina Olga, "The Russian Orthodox Church in a new Situation in Russia", in *Eastern Orthodox Encounters of identity and otherness. Values, Self-Reflection, Dialogue*, ed. by Bremer Thomas, Krawchuck Andrii, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 219-231.

Kelly John N.D., *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*, Oxford, New York, 1986.

Kenworthy Scott, M. "Rethinking the Russian Orthodox Church and the Bolshevik Revolution." *Revolutionary Russia*, 1-23, 2018.

Kirby Dianne. *Religion and the Cold War*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Kirill Vladimir Radovic, Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, "La Chiesa Ortodossa Russa e la sfida della globalizzazione: la tensione tra i valori della tradizione e i valori liberali", in *L'Ortodossia nella Nuova Europa. Dinamiche storiche e prospettive.*, Ed. Pacini, Andrea, Torino, Fondazione Gianni Agnelli, 2003, pp. 331-342.

Knox Zoe, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church. Religion in Russia after communism*, London and New York: Routledge Cuzon, Taylor&Francis Group, 2005.

Knox Zoe, Mitrofanova Anastasia, "The Russian Orthodox Church" in *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the twenty-first century*, ed. by Leustean Lucian N., London and New York: Routledge, Taylor&Francis Group, 2014, pp. 38-66.

Knox Zoe, *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Secular World : From the 1870s to the Present*, London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Kuzio, Taras, *In Search of Unity and Autocephaly: Ukraine's Orthodox Churches, Religion, State & Society*, 25: 4, 1997, pp. 393-415.

Leustean Lucian N., *Orthodoxy and political myths in Balkan national identities*, National identities, 10: 4, 2008.

Linz Juan, "Der religiöse Gebrauch der Politik und/oder der politische Gebrauch der Religion: Ersatzideologie gegen Ersatzreligion" in *"Totalitarismus" und "Politische Religionen": Konzepte des Diktaturvergleichs*, ed. by Hans Maier, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1996, pp. 129-154.

Lugtherhandt Otto, "The Council for Religious Affairs" in *Sabrina P. Ramet, Religious policy in the Soviet Union*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 55-83.

Mancini Susanna, *Constitutions and Religions*, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2020.

Marsh Christopher, *Burden or Blessing? Russian Orthodoxy and the Construction of Civil Society and Democracy*, Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs, 2004

Merlo Simona. *All'ombra delle cupole d'oro. La chiesa di Kiev da Nicola II a Stalin (1905-1939)*, Milano: Guerini e Associati, 2005.

Mikhail Mchedlov, *О состоянии религиозности в современной России [On the state of religiosity in modern Russia]*, Natsionalnoe i Religioznoe, Moscow: Rossiiskii Nezavisimyi Institut Sotsialnykh I Natsionalnykh Problem, 1996.

Ministry Of Education And Science Of Ukraine Kyiv National University Of Construction And Architecture, *Сучасні Проблеми Архітектури Та Містобудування [Modern Problems Of Architecture And Urban Planning]*, 59, 1997.

Mitrofanova Anastasia, *Политизация православного мира [Politization of the Orthodox World]*, Moscow: Nauka, 2004.

Mitrofanova, Anastasia, *The politicization of Russian Orthodoxy: Actors and Ideas*, Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2005.

Mitrofanova Anastasia, "Russian ethnic nationalism and religion today" in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015* ed. by Kolstø Pal, Blakkisrud Helge, Edinburgh University Press, 2016, pp. 104-131.

Mitropolit Ilarion (Alfeyev), *Патриарх Кирилл [Patriarkh Kirill]*, Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2019.

Morozzo della Rocca Roberto, *Le Chiese Ortodosse. Una Storia contemporanea*, Bologna: Studium, 1997.

Morozzo della Rocca Roberto, "Nazione e religione in Europa orientale prima e dopo il 1989" ed. by Roccucci Adriano, *Chiese e culture nell'Est Europeo. Prospettive di dialogo*, Milano: Paoline, 2007.

Mramornov Aleksandr, *Discernere il tempo presente: il Concilio di Mosca del 1917-1918, Discernimento e vita cristiana : atti del 26. Convegno ecumenico internazionale di spiritualità ortodossa : Bose, 5-8 settembre 2018*, p. 269-290;

Nikol'skij Vladimir, *Основы релиоведения. Учебное пособие [Fundamentals of Religious Studies. Study guide]*, Moscow: Federal'noe agentstvo po obrazovaniju Moskovskii gosudarstvennyj industrial'nyj institut distantsionnogo obrazovanija, 2015.

Nye Josep, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, PublicAffairs, 2004.

Papkova Irina "The Freezing of Historical Memory? The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church and the Council of 1917", in *Religion, Morality and Community in Post-Soviet Societies* ed. by Steinberg Mark D., Waneer Catherine, Bloomington & Indianapolis: IN, Indiana University Press, 2008, pp. 55-84.

Papkova Irina, *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics*, Washington, New York: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Oxford University Press, 2011.

Partykevich Andre, *Between Kyiv and Constantinople: Olexander Lototsky and the Quest for Ukrainian Autocephaly*, Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1998.

Pelikan Jaroslav, *The Christian tradition: A history of the development of doctrine. The spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)*. Chicago, IL/London: University of Chicago Press, 1974.

Pipes Richard. *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Plokhyy Serhii, *Ukraine and Russia: Representations of the Past*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

Ponomarev Alexander, *The Visible Religion: The Russian Orthodox Church and her Relations with State and Society in Post-Soviet Canon Law (1992-2015)*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017.

Pospelovsky Dmitry, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime 1917-1982*, vol. I and II. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984.

Pospelovsky Dmitry, *A history of Soviet atheism in theory and in practice, and the believer*, 3 vol., Hampshire and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988.

Pospelovsky Dmitry, *Русская Православная Церковь в XX веке* [The Russian Orthodox Church in the XX century], Moscow: Respublika, 1995.

Pospelovskij Dimitrij V., "Stalin e la Chiesa. Il "Concordato" del 1943 e la vita della Chiesa Ortodossa Russa alla luce di documenti d'archivio" in *La notte della Chiesa Russa* ed. by Kirill di Smolensk, Averincev Sergej S., Bobrinskoy B., Comunità di Bose: Edizioni Qiqiaon, 2000, pp. 51-86.

Ramet Sabrina Petra. *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Riasanovsky Nicholas V., *Russian Identities: A historical survey*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Riccardi Andrea, *Il Vaticano e Mosca, 1940-1960*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1992.

Richters Katja, *The Post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church. Politics, Culture and Greater Russia*, London and New York: Routledge and Taylor and Francis Group, 2013.

Roccucci Adriano. "Russian Observers at Vatican II. The "Council for Russian Orthodox Affairs" and the Moscow Patriarchate between Anti-Religious Policy and International Strategies" in *Vatican 2. in Moscow (1959-1965) : acts of the Colloquium on the History of Vatican 2.*: Moscow, March 30-April 2, 1995 ed. Alberto Melloni, Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1997, pp. 45-73.

Roccucci Adriano, "La chiesa Ortodossa Russa nel XX secolo" in *L'Ortodossia nella nuova Europa. Dinamiche storiche e prospettive* edited by Pacini Andrea, Torino: Edizioni della Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2003, pp. 237-283.

Roccucci Adriano, "Impero e ortodossia nel mondo russo" in *Chiese e culture dell'est europeo*, ed. by Roccucci Adriano, Milano: Paoline, 2007, pp. 397-419.

Roccucci Adriano, *Stalin e il Patriarca: Chiesa Ortodossa e potere Sovietico 1917-1958* Torino: Einaudi, 2011.

Roslov Edward E. *Red Priests. Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Rousselet Kathly, "La Chiesa ortodossa russa nello spazio sovietico post-sovietico dagli anni sessanta ai giorni nostri" in *Crisi e rinnovamento dal 1958 ai giorni nostri* ed. by Aubert Roger, Mayeur Jean Marie, italian edition by Riccardi Andrea, Roma: Borla, Città Nuova, 2012.

Sergeev Evgenij, *Стратегия новой индустриализации России: автоматизация, роботизация* [Strategy for the New Industrialization of Russia: Automation, Robotization], Ekaterininburg: Litagent Ridero, 2016.

Shevzov Vera, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution*, Oxfor: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Shterin Marat, "New Religious Movements in Changing Russia" in *The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, ed. by Hammar O., Rothstein M., New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 286-302.

Solonevich Ivan, *Народная Монархия* [People's Monarchy], Moscow: Feniks, 1991.

Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church and human rights*, London and New York: Routledge and Taylor Francis group, 2014.

Stoeckl Kristina, "Three Models of Church-State Relations in Contemporary Russia" in *Constitutions and Religions*, ed. by Mancini Susanna, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2020, pp. 237-251.

Sulsov Mikhail, *Digital Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet World: The Russian Orthodox Church and Web 2.0*, Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2016.

Sysyn Frank E., *Politics and Orthodoxy in Independent Ukraine*, *The Harriman Review*, 2005, pp. 8-19.

Tsylin Vladislav, *История Русской Церкви (1917–1997)* [History of the Russian Church (1917-1997)], Izdatel'stvo Spaso-Preobrazhenskogo Valaamskogo monastyrya, 1997.

Uspenskij Boris A., *Царь и патриарх: харизма власти в России (Византийская модель и ее русское переосмысление)* [Tsar and Patriarch: Charisma of Power in Russia (The Byzantine Model and its Russian Reinterpretation)], Moskva: Shkola Yazyki Russkoy Kul'tury, 1998.

Uspenskij Boris, Zhivov Viktor, *Tsar and God and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics*, Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012.

Vasil'eva Olga Jur'evna, *Русская Православная Церковь в политике Советского государства в 1943-1948 гг.* [The Russian Orthodox Church in the Politics of the Soviet State in 1943-1948], Moscow: : In-t ros. istorii RAN, 2001.

Vasil'eva Olga Jur'evna, *Русская Православная Церковь и Второй Ватиканский Собор: факты, события, документы [Russian Orthodox Church and Second Vatican Council]*, Moscow: Lepta, 2004.

Vassiliadis Panos, "Orthodox Christianity". In *God's rule: The politics of world religions* edited by Neusner Jacob, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003.

Voegelin Eric, Opitz Peter, *Die politischen Religionen*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1993.

Volokitina Tatiana V., «Власть и церковь в Восточной Европе. 1944-1953. Документы российских архивов». [*Power and Church in Eastern Europe. 1944-1953. Documents from Russian archives*] in Volokitina Tatiana V, Murashko Galina Pavlovna. P., Noskova Albina Fedorovna, *Власть и церковь в период общественных трансформаций 40-50-х годов XX века: Очерки истории [Moscow and Eastern Europe. Power and the Church in the Period of social transformations of the 40-50s of the twentieth century: Essays on History]*, Rosspen: Moskva, 2008.

Vulpus Ricarda, *Nationalisierung der Religion. Russifizierungspolitik und ukrainische Nationsbildung 1860–1920*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005.

Wawrzonek Michael, Bekus Nelly, "Orthodox Christianity Vis-À-Vis Postcommunist Transformation: A Conceptual Framework" in *Orthodoxy Versus Post-Communism?: Belarus, Serbia, Ukraine and the Russkiy Mir*, ed. by Wawrzonek Michael, Bekus Nelly, Korzeniewska-Wiszniewska Mirella, New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016.

Yelensky Victor. "Globalization, Nationalism, and Orthodoxy: The Case of Ukrainian Nation Building." in *Eastern Orthodoxy in a global age. Tradition faces the twenty-first century*, edited by Victor Roudometof, Agadjanian Alexander, Rousselet Kathy, "Globalization and Identity Discourse in Russian Orthodoxy", Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005, pp. 144-175.

Zenkovsky Vasily, *Пять месяцев у власти [Five Months in Power]*, Regnum, 2011.

Zigon Jarrett, *Multiple moralities and religions in post-Soviet Russia*, New York-Oxford: Berghhn, 2011.

Journal articles

Agadjanian Alexander, *Revising Pandora's Gifts: Religious and National Identity in the Post-Soviet Societal Fabric*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 53:3, 2001, pp. 473-488.

Agadjanian Alexander, *Liberal Individual and Christian Culture: Russian Orthodox Teaching on Human Rights in Social Theory Perspective*, *Religion, State & Society* 38:2, 2010, pp. 97-113.

Agadjanian Alexander, *Tradition, morality and community: elaborating Orthodox identity in Putin's Russia*, *Religion, State & Society*, 45:1, 2017, pp. 39-60

Anderson John, *Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church: asymmetric symphonia?*, Journal of International Affairs, 61:1, 2007, pp. 185-201.

Beglov Alexseii, *Международная деятельность Русской Православной Церкви в период «нового курса» в государственно - церковных отношениях. Основные этапы и кризисные явления [International activities of the Russian Orthodox Church during the "new course" in State-church relations. Main stages and crisis phenomena]*, Kontury Global'nykh Transformatsij, 11:4, 2018, pp. 104-129.

Beissinger Mark, *"Demise of an Empire-State: Identity, Legitimacy, and the Deconstruction of Soviet Politics"*, The National Council for Soviet and Esat European Research, 1993, pp. 1-43.

Belyakova Nadezhda Alekseyevna, *Религиозная дипломатия на службе советского государства в годы холодной войны (в период Н.С. Хрущева и Л.И. Брежнева) [Religious diplomacy in the service of the Soviet state during the Cold War (during the period of N.S. Khrushchev and L.I. Brezhnev)]*, Kontury Global ' NYKH Transformatsiy 11:4, 2018, pp. 130-149.

Bociurkiw Bohdan R., *Church and State in the Soviet Union*, International Journal, 14:3, 1959, pp- 182-189.

Bociurkiw Bohdan R. *"The shaping of Soviet Religious Policy."* Problems of Communism, 32: 2, 1973, pp. 37-52.

Bociurkiw Bohdan, *The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev*, Probs Communism 39:1, 1990, pp. 1-19.

Bremer Thomas, *How the Russian Orthodox Church Views the "Russian World"*, Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe 35: 3, 2015, pp. 43-49.

Bruening Alfons, *Project Ukraine under threat; Christian Churches in Ukraine and their relations 1991-2015*, Journal of Eastern Christian Studies, 67:1-2, 2015, pp. 103-142.

Čentsov Vera, *Синодальное Решение 1686 Г. О Киевской Митрополии [Synodal Decision Of 1686 About The Kiev Metropolia]*, Pravoslaviye i Tserkov, pp. 89 110.

Chibisova Anastasiya Aleksandrovna, *Концепция «Русского мира» патриарха Кирилла и попытки ее реализации на Украине [Patriarch Kirill's concept of the "Russian World" and attempts to implement it in Ukraine]*, Istoriya, Politika, Kultur, 15, 2014, pp. 76-81.

Chibisova Anastasia, *The Ukrainian question» in the relations between Constantinople and Moscow at the beginning of the 21st century*, St Tikhon s University Review, 55:5, 2014, pp. 9-25.

Chibisova Anastasiya Aleksandrovna, *The Ukrainian question in the relations between Constantinople and Moscow at the beginning of the 21st century*, Vestnik PSTGU I: Bogosloviye. Filosofiy, 55:5, 2014, pp. 9-25.

Chynczewska-Hennelm Tereza, *The Political, Social, and National Thought of the Ukrainian Higher Clergy, 1569-1700*, *Ukrainian Church History*, 26:1/4, 2002-2003, pp. 97-152.

Chokalyuk Svyatoslav, *Kiev between Constantinople and Moscow: Geopolitics or devotion to the canons of the Church*, *Trudy Kyivskoyi Dukhovnoyi Akademiyi*, 18:190, 2018, pp. 330-349;

Codevilla Giovanni, "Laicità dello Stato e Separatismo nella Russia di Putin" in *Chiesa Cattolica ed Europa Centro-Orientale. Libertà religiosa e processo di democratizzazione*, edited by Ghizzoniti Antonio, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004, pp. 137-236.

Cooley Alexander, *Whose Rules. Whose Sphere? Russian Governance and Influence in Post-Soviet States*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2017, pp. 1-11.

Curanovic Alicja, *The Attitude of the Moscow Patriarchate towards Other Orthodox Churches*, *Religion, State & Society*, 35:4, 2007, pp. 301-318.

Curanovic Alicja, *The guardians of traditional values. Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church in the quest for status*, *Transatlantic Academy*, 1, 2014-15, pp. 1-22.

Davie Grace, *Is Europe an Exceptional Case?*, *The Hedgehog Review*, 6, 2006, pp. 23-34.

Davis Nathaniel, *A Long Walk To Church: A Contemporary History Of Russian Orthodoxy*, Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1995.

Denysenko Nicholas E., *Chaos in Ukraine: the churches and the search for leadership*, *International journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 14: 3, 2014, pp. 242-259.

Denysenko Nicholas E. *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine: A Century of Separation*, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018; Mureșan Coriolan, *Complex Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical Dialogue Following the Ukrainian Tomos of Autocephaly*, *Review of Ecumenical Studies Sibiu*, 11:1, 2019, pp. 120-127.

Dickinson Anna "A Marriage of Convenience? Domestic and Foreign Policy Reasons for the 1943 Soviet Church-State 'Concordat'", *Religion State & Society* 28:4, 2000, pp. 337-346.

Dunn Dennis J., *Religion And Modernization In The Soviet Union*. London: Routledge, 2019.

Filatov Sergey, Lunkin Roman, 'My Father's House has Many Mansions': *Ethnic Minorities in the Russian Orthodox Church*, *Religion, State & Society*, 38:4, 2010, pp. 361-378.

Freeze Gregory, *Russian Orthodoxy and Politics in the Putin Era*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2017, pp. 1-17.

Hilarion (Alfeyev), Bishop, 'Orthodoxy in a new Europe: problems and perspectives', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, 24, 2004, pp. 18-26.

Hryniewicz Wacław, *Ecumenical relations and theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church*, *Exchange*, *Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research*, 32:2, 2003, pp. 168-187.

Hug Adam, (ed.), *Traditional religion and political power: Examining the role of the church in Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova*, The Foreign Policy Center, 2015, pp. 1-77.

Iliushin Pavel, *Информационный бюллетень Отдела внешних церковных связей как источник по истории межрелигиозных отношений Русской Православной Церкви в 1965–2009 годах [Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate as a source on the history of interreligious relations of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1965-2009]*, *Christianity in the Middle East*, 2, 2020, pp. 214-225.

Isaeva Anastasia A., *Registration of Religious Organization, Legal Restrictions and Prospects of Development*, *Journal of Siberian Federal University, Humanities & Social Sciences* 8, 2015, pp. 1580-1590.

Jarzyńska Katarzyna, *Patriarch Kirill's game over Ukraine*, *Center for Eastern Studies*, 144, 2014, pp. 1-10.

Kääriäinen Kimmo, Furman Dmitrii E., *Старые церкви, новые верующие. Религия в массовом сознании постсоветской России. Религия в массовом сознании постсоветской России [Old Churches, New Believers : Religion in the Mass Consciousness of Post-Soviet Russia]*, Moscow and Saint Petersburg: Letnij sad, 2000, pp. 150-181.

Kääriäinen K., Furman D., *Orthodoxy as a Component of Russian Identity*, *East-West Church Ministry Report*, 10: 1, 2002 pp. 12-13.

Karpov Vyaceslav, *Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework*, *Journal of Church and State* 52:2, 2010, pp. 232–270.

Kartashev Anton, *Вселенские соборы [Ecumenical Councils]*, Eksmo, 2006, / (last accessed July 2021), https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Anton_Kartashev/vselenskie-sobory

Kasatkin Petr, *Русская православная церковь как актор современной мировой политики [Russian Orthodox Church as actor of contemporary world policy]*, *Научные школы Мгимо*, 6:15, 2010, pp. 141-151.

Kazmina Olga, Filippova Olga, *Re-Imagination of Religion in Post-Soviet Society: Challenges and Responses (Russian and Ukrainian Case Studies)*, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* , 73: 4, 2005, pp. 1049-1076.

Kharlamov Vladimir, *Vatican II on Ecumenism, and the Eastren Orthodox Church*, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 38:2-3, 2001, pp.168-188.

Kirill (Gundyaev), *Обстоятельства нового времени. Либерализм, традиционализм и моральные ценности объединяющейся Европы [The Circumstances of the New Age. Liberalism, Traditionalism, and the Moral Values of a Unifying Europe]*, *Church and Time*, 2:9, 1999, pp. 79-88.

Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, *The Russian Orthodox Church and the Third Millenium'*, *Ecumenical Review*, 52:3, 2000, pp. 300-308.

- Knox Zoe, *Postsoviet challenges to the Moscow patriarchate, 1991–2001*, Religion, State and Society, 32:2, 2004, pp. 87-113
- Knox Zoe, *Russian Orthodoxy, Russian Nationalism and Patriarch Aleksii II*, Nationalities Paper 33:4, 2005, pp. 533-545.
- Kormina Jeanne, Naumescu Vlad, *A new 'Great Schism'? Theopolitics of communion and canonical territory in the Orthodox Church*, Anthropology Today, 36, 2020, pp. 7-11.
- Kostiuk Constantin, *Православный фундаментализм [Orthodox Fundamentalism]*, Politicheskie issledovaniia 5, 2000, pp. 133-154.
- Kouskouvelis Ilias, Serafeim Pavlos, *The Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Church Crisis*, E-International Relations, 14-11 -2018, pp- 1-6.
- Krawchuk Andrii, *The Orthodox Church of Ukraine on the inter-Orthodox agenda at Amman: the dynamics of ecclesiastical recognition*, Canadian Slavonic Papers- Revue Canadienne des Slavistes, 62: 3-4, 2020, pp. 463-476.
- Krindatch Alexei D., *Religion in Postsoviet Ukraine as a Factor in Regional, Ethno-Cultural and Political Diversity*, Religion State & Society, 31: 1, 2003, pp. 37-73.
- Laine Veera, Saarelainen Iiris., *Spirituality As A Political Instrument The Church, The Kremlin, And The Creation Of The 'Russian World'*, Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 98, 2017, pp. 4-33.
- Laruelle Marlene, *Russia's Niche Soft Power Sources, Targets and Channels of Influence*, Ifri, 122, 2021, pp. 6-27.
- Laschuk Aleksander, *Assemblies of Hierarchs and Conferences of Bishops: A Comparative Study*, Canada: Saint Paul University, 2016.
- Leustean Lucien, *The politics of Orthodox churches in the European Union*, [International Journal for the Study of Christian Church](#), 18:2-3, 2018.
- Lossky Nicolas., *L'église orthodoxe et le mouvement œcuménique : les difficultés*, Recherches de Science Religieuse, 89:2, 2001, p. 225-245.
- Lotman Jurij, Uspenskij Boris, *Il Concetto di "Mosca Terza Roma" nell'ideologia di Pietro I*, Europa Orientalis 5, 1986, pp. 481-494.
- Madeley John, *A framework for the comparative analysis of church–state relations in Europe*, West European Politics, 26: 1, 2003, pp. 23-50.
- Meyendorff John., *Byzantine theology: Historical trends and doctrinal themes*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1974.
- Migranian A., Tsipko, A., *Slabaya vlast', slabaya tserkov' i slaboye obshchestvo mogut byt' sil'nymi tol'ko vmeste*, Nezavisimaja gazeta, 20 August 1997.
- Mitrokhin Nikolay, *Orthodoxy in Ukrainian Political Life 2004–2009*, Religion, State & Society, 38:3, 2010, pp. 229-251.

Morozov Ilya, *Автокефалия Украинской православной церкви как инструмент обострения российско-украинского территориально-политического конфликта* [*Autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as an instrument of aggravation of the Russian-Ukrainian territorial-political conflict*], *Society: Politics, Economics, Law*, 2:1, 2019, pp. 31-35.

Mudrov Sergei, *The Christian Churches as Special Participants in European Integration*, *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 7:3, 2011, pp. 363-379.

Mudrov Sergei, *The European Union and Christian Churches: The patterns of interaction*, *Europa-Kolleg Hamburg, Institute for European Integration*, Hamburg, 3:14, 2014.

Mudrov Sergei A., *The autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church: a new dividing line for Ukraine?*, *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 27:2-3, 2019, pp. 271-277.

Novaković Igor, Đurđević Nenad, *Serbian-Romanian Relations And The Status Of The Vlach Minority In Serbia Policy study*, *International and Security Affairs Centre*, 2015, pp. 3-88.

Pankhurst Jerry, *Religious Culture: Faith in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, *University of Nevada, Center for Democratic Culture*, 2012, pp. 1-34.

Pankhurst Jerry, Kilp Alan, *Religion, the Russian Nation and the State: Domestic and International Dimensions: an Introduction*, *Religion state and Society*, 41:3, 2013, pp. 226-243.

Papkova Irina, *Russian Orthodox concordat? Church and state under Medvedev*, *Nationalities Papers*, 39:5, 2011, pp. 667 – 683.

Payne Daniel, *Spiritual Security, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Russian Foreign Ministry: Collaboration or Cooptation?*, *Journal of Church and State* 52:4, 2010, pp. 712-727.

Payne Daniel. Kent Jennifer, *An alliance of the sacred: prospects for a Catholic–Orthodox partnership against secularism in Europe*, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 46, 2011, pp. 41–66.

Plokhyy Serhii, “Kiev vs. Moscow: The Autocephalus Movement in Independent Ukraine” in *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* ed. by Plokhyy Serhii, Sysyn Frank E., Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2003, pp. 136-145.

Plokhyy Serhii, *Church, State and Nation in Ukraine*, *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, 19:5, 1999, pp. 1-34.

Poe Marshall, *Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a “Pivotal Moment*, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 49:3, 2001, pp. 412-429.

Ponkin Igor, *Opinion on act (decision), adopted by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on 11 October 2018*, *Stato, Chiese e pluralismo confessionale*, 2, 2019, pp. 1-11.

Potts Richard D., *The triad of Nationality revised: the Orthodox Church and the State in Post-Soviet Russia*, University of Maine: Digital Commons, 2016, 1-55.

Prutskova Elena, *Social vs. Individual Centrality of Religiosity: Research in Religious and Non-Religious Settings in Russia*, Religions 12:15, 2021, pp. 1-18.

Quadri Rosa M., *Ortodossia di Stato*, La Nuova Europa, 5, 1993, pp. 41-44.

Rimestad Sebastian, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Western Europe: one or many?* Religion, State & Society, 43:3, 2015, pp. 228-243.

Rock Stella, *'Militant Piety': Fundamentalist Tendencies in the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood Movement*, George Fox University: Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 22:3, 2002, pp. 1-18.

Roussellet Kathy J., "The Challenges of religious pluralism in post-soviet Russia", in *Religious diversity in the Russian Federation* ed. by Koenig Matthias, International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), 2:2, 2000, pp. 55-75.

Sherr James, Kullamaa Kaarel, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Faith, Power and Conquest*, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, 2019, pp. 1-32.

Shishkov Andrey, *Church Autocephaly as Sovereignty: A Schmittian Approach*, St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 60:3, 2016, pp. 369–395.

Sprinceana Vitalie, *Бог в «зонах пограничья» [Moldova: God in Border Zones]*, Pro et Contra, 2013, pp. 1-12.

Spohn Willfried, *Europeanization, religion and collective identities in an enlarging Europe: a multiple modernities perspective*, European Journal of Social Theory, 12, 2009, pp. 358–374.

Stoeckl Kristina, *Modernity and its critique in 20th century. Russian Orthodox thought*, Stud East Eur Thought 58, 2006, pp. 243-269.

Stoeckl Kristina, *The Impact of the Return of Religion on Theoretical Approaches to Democracy and Governance in the Social and Political Sciences*, Sociology Compass 4:6, 2010, pp. 354–364.

Stoeckl Kristina, *European integration and Russian Orthodoxy: Two multiple modernities perspectives*, European Journal of Social Theory, 14: 2, 2011, pp. 217-233.

Stoeckl Kristina, *The Russian Orthodox Church as moral norm entrepreneur*, Religion, State & Society, 44:2, 2016, pp. 132-152.

Suslov Mikhail, *"Holy Rus": The Geopolitical Imagination in the Contemporary Russian Orthodox Church*, Russian Politics and Law, 52:3, 2014, pp. 67-86.

Rousselet Kathy, *The Church in the Service of the Fatherland, Europe*. Asia Studies, 67:1, 2015, pp. 49-67.

Tonoyan Lidya, Payne Daniel., *The Visit of Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in 2009 and its Significance in Ukraine's Political and Religious Life*, Religion, State & Society, 38:3, 2010, pp. 463-476.

Uerz Rudolf, *Menschenrechte, Demokratie und Rechtsstaat in der Sozialdoktrin – eine politikwissenschaftliche Betrachtung. In Beginn einer neuen Ära? Die Sozialdoktrin der Russisch-Orthodoxen Kirche vom August 2000 im interkulturellen Dialog*, Moscow: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung e.V, 2004, pp.77–96.

Ure Percy, *Justinian and his age*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979.

Uzzell Lawrence, *Les restrictions aux droits des minorités religieuses dans le sein de la Fédération de Russie*, Istina XLII:4, 1997, pp. 349-351.

Vassilij Alekseev, *Неожиданный диалог [Unexpected dialogue]*, in Agitator 6. 1989, pp. 41-44.

Verkhovsky Alexander, *The Orthodox in the Russian Ultranationalist Movements*, George Fox University: Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe, 22:3, 2002, pp. 1-20.

Verkhovsky Alexander, *The Role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Nationalist, Xenophobic and Antiwestern Tendencies in Russia Today: Not Nationalism, but Fundamentalism*, Religion, State and Society, 30:4, 2002, pp. 333-345.

Vishnevsky Anatoly, *Modernization and Counter-Modernization in Russia, Russia in Global Affairs*, 2, 2006, pp. 8-23.

Wanner Catherine, "Religion and Political Crisis in Ukraine", in *Religion and Political Crisis in Ukraine*, Euxeinos, 17/2015, p. 4-8.

Yakovlev Aleksandr, *Кризис в отношениях между Константинопольским и Московским Патриархатами в контексте мировой политики XX-XXI веков [The crisis in relations between the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow in the context of World politics of the XX-XXI centuries]*, Institut vostokovedeniya Rossiyskoy akademii nauk (RAN), IV, 2020, pp. 26-66.

Yelenky Viktor, *Украинское православие и украинский проект. Церкви и «непредвиденная государственность» в эпоху религиозного возвращения [Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the Ukrainian project. Churches and "unforeseen statehood" in the era of religious return]*, Pro et Contra, 2013, pp. 27-44.

Zigon Jarrett, "A Disease of Frozen Feelings": *Ethically Working on Emotional Worlds in a Russian Orthodox Church Drug Rehabilitation Program*, Medical Anthropology Quarterly, 24:3, 2010, pp. 326-343.

L'abrogation de la loi russe de 1990 sur la liberté de conscience, Istina XLII, 1997, pp. 341-343.

Information Bulletin of the Department for Church External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate

Information Bulletin of the Department for Church External Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *К церковной ситуации на Украине [On the Church situation in Ukraine]*, 1992/18, pp. 8-10.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Материалы конференции. Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на открытии межконфессиональной конференции "христианская вера и человеческая вражда"*, 21 июня 1994 года, 1994/ 11-12, pp. 7.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *На Международной Конференции «Христианские Мессия в XVIII-XX ВВ» [At the international conference Christian Messiah in the XVIII-XX centuries]*, 1995/8, pp. 1-4.

Information Bulletin Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Беззаконные в Эстонии Расколо Православный Мир. Русская Православная Церковь Приостанавливает Общшения С Константинопольской Церковью [Lawless In Estonia. Split The Orthodox World. The Russian Orthodox Church Suspends Communion With The Church Of Constantinople]*, 1996/3, pp. 1-2.

Information Bulletin of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *К церковной ситуации в Эстонии. Пресс Конференция 4 марта 1996 года [About the Church Situation in Estonia. Press Conference, 4 March 1996]*, 1996/5-6, pp. 1-5.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Обсуждение вопроса религиозной безопасности России [Discussing the Religious Safety of Russia]*, 1997/2, pp. 11-12.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Встреча между делегациями Украинской Православной Церкви и Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви [Meeting between the delegations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church]*, 1998/7, pp. 12-13.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Киевский И Всея Руси Рассказал О Положении Церкви На Украине [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine talks of Church situation in Ukraine]*, 2000/9, pp. 10-12.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Визит Папы в Украину чреват обострением правосло- католических отношений [The Pope's visit to Ukraine is fraught with an aggravation of Orthodox Catholic relations]*, 2001/6, pp. 38-41

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *"Поцелуи откладываются". К демонстрации на РТР документального фильма "Территория раскола" ["Kisses Postponed." For the RTR screening of the documentary "Split Territory"]*, 2001/6, pp. 42-44

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Российский Парламент выступил с заявлением о дискриминации православных верующих в Эстонии [The Russian parliament issued a statement on discrimination against pro-Orthodox believers in Estonia]*, 2001/6, pp. 44-46;

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл и митрополит Корнилий приняли участие в Министерстве иностранных дел России по проблеме нарушения прав верующих в Эстонии [Metropolitan Kirill and Metropolitan Kornilij participated in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the problem of the violation of believers' rights in Estonia]*, 2001/6, pp. 46-47.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *На конференции балтийских государств в Гамбурге министр иностранных дел РФ выразил позицию России по поводу нарушений прав верующих в Эстонии [At a conference of Baltic states in Hamburg, the Russian foreign minister expressed Russia's position on violations of believers' rights in Estonia]*, 2001/6, pp. 47.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Проблема ущемления прав православных верующих в Эстонии была обсуждена на встрече в рамках ОБСЕ в Гааге [The problem of infringement of the rights of Orthodox believers in Estonia was discussed at the OSCE meeting in The Hague]*, 2001/6, pp. 48-50.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Служба Верховного комиссара ОБСЕ по делам национальных меньшинств озабочена ситуацией Эстонской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата [OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities is concerned about the situation of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, 2001/6, pp. 50-51.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Президент России В.В.Путин и Президент Украины Л.Д. Кучма приняли участие в церемонии установки креста на куполе Свято-Владимирского собора в историко-археологическом заповеднике Херсонес [President of Russia Vladimir Putin and President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma took part in the ceremony of installing a cross on the dome of St. Vladimir's Cathedral in the historical and Archaeological Reserve of Chersonesos]*, 2001/7, pp. 29-30.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Комиссар совета Европы по правам человека встревожен нарушениями прав православных верующих в Эстонии [Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Alarmed by Violations of the Rights of Orthodox Believers in Estonia]*, 2001/10, pp. 63.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Московский Патриархат, Официальные Документы Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви в связи с учреждением новых католических епархий на Украине [Official Documents Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Establishment of New Catholic Dioceses in Ukraine]*, 2002/7, pp. 3-4.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Послание Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия архиепископу Августину и всем верным чадам Львовской епархии [Message from His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia to Archbishop Augustine and all the faithful of the Diocese of Lviv]*, 2002/9, pp. 9-10.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Подписан Документ об имущественных правах Эстонской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата [Document on the Property Rights of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, 2002/10, pp. 47-48.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий Вручили Премии Международного Фонда Единства Православных Народов [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii was presented with prizes from the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations]*, 2003/1, pp. 42-44.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Второе заседание совместной рабочей группы по сотрудничеству между Русской Православной Церковью и Евангелическо-Лютеранской Церковью Норвегии [Second meeting of the joint working group on cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway]*, 2003/2, pp. 37-38.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Константинопольский Патриарх подтвердил свою позицию в отношении Украинской Православной Церкви [The Patriarch of Constantinople confirmed his position on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church]*, 2003/3, pp. 51.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялось Заседание Рабочей Группы По Взаимодействию Русской Православной Церкви И Министерства Иностранных Дел Российской Федерации [A meeting of the working group on interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation took place]*, 2003/5, pp. 46-47.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Русскую Православную Церковь посетил представитель Константинопольского Патриархата митрополит Сассимский Геннадий [The representative of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Gennady of Sassim visited the Russian Orthodox Church]*, 2003/12, pp. 77.

Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, *Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского*

*Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла
Архиерейскому Собору Русской Православной Церкви. О внешней церковной
деятельности [Report of the Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations
of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, to the
Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. About external church activity], 2004/
Spezvipusk, pp. 64-106.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate,
Президент России Владимир Путин Наградил Орденом Дружбы Иерархов
Украинской Православной Церкви [Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded the Order
of Friendship of Hierarchs to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 2004/1, pp. 51-54.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, В
Московском Патриархате выразили недоумение в связи каноническими
притязаниями Константинополя на территорию Украины [The Moscow
Patriarchate expressed bewilderment over Constantinople's canonical claims to Ukrainian
territory], 2005/3, pp. 86-89.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate, К
60-летию Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата [On the
60th anniversary of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow
Patriarchate], 2006/6, pp. 13-16.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate,
Слово Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия на
торжественном акте, посвященном 60-летию ОВЦС-МП [The word of His Holiness
Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia at the solemn act dedicated to the 60th
anniversary of the DECR-MP], 2006/6, pp. 16-18.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate,
Итоговый документ встречи представителей христианских Церквей и общин
стран СНГ и Балтии в рамках второго этапа подготовки III Европейской
экуменической ассамблеи [The final document of the meeting of representatives of
Christian Churches and communities of the CIS and Baltic countries within the framework
of the second stage of preparation for the III European Ecumenical Assembly], 2007/2, pp.
54-57.*

*Information Bulletin, Department for External Church Relations, Moscow Patriarchate,
Юбилейное заседание рабочей группы по взаимодействию Министерства
иностраннных дел России и русской православной церкви произошло в большом
особняке МИД [The jubilee meeting of the working group on cooperation between the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church took place in the
Ministry's grand mansion], 2007/11, pp. 107-111.*

ZhMP

Митрополит Николай, Речь на Всемирном Конгрессе народов мира в Стокгольме [*Speech at the World Congress of the Peoples of the World in Stockholm*], ZhMP, 1958/8, pp. 30-34.

Отношение Русской Православной Церкви к западным инославным церквям [*The attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church towards Western heterodox churches*], ZhMP, 1963/11, pp. 36-46.

Слово Святейшего Патриарха Пимена в Московском Кремле [*The word of His Holiness Patriarch Pimen in the Moscow Kremlin*], ZhMP, 1988/9, pp. 31-32.

Safonov V., На Самарской земле [*In the Lando f Samara*], ZhMP, 1999/12, pp. 38-41.

Websites

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Архиепископ Львовский и Галицкий Августин обратился с письмом к Президенту Украины в связи с притеснениями православных во Львовской области [*Archbishop of Lviv and Galicia Augustin sent a letter to the President of Ukraine in connection with the oppression of Orthodox Christians in the Lviv region*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82359/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Архиепископ Львовский и Галицкий Августин: "Позиция Константинополя вселяет тревогу" [*Archbishop Avgustin of Lviv and Galicia: "The position of Constantinople is alarming"*], mosap.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79138/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Поместная Церковь в Украине уже существует». See also: Митрополит Кирилл принял Посла Украины в России О.А.Демина [*Metropolitan Kirill received the Ambassador of Ukraine to Russia O.A. Demin*], mosapat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66416/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Благодарность Предстоятеля Русской Православной Церкви за братскую поддержку Православия на Украине [*Gratitude of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church for fraternal support of Orthodoxy in Ukraine*], mospat.ru, (last Accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84604/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Автокефалия не может быть инструментом достижения консолидации Церкви» [*His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir: "Autocephaly cannot be an instrument for achieving the consolidation of the Church"*], mospat.ru, (last Accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64465/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Бывший митрополит Филарет Денисенко теряет сторонников на Украине, но пытается обрести их за океаном* [Former Metropolitan Filaret Denisenko loses supporters in Ukraine, but tries to gain them overseas], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84182/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В. В. Путин и Л.Д. Кучма установили крест на куполе Свято-Владимирского собора* [Vladimir Putin and Leonid Kuchma installed a cross on the dome of St. Vladimir's Cathedral], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84771/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Киеве прошли торжества по случаю 15-летия Харьковского Архиерейского Собора* [Celebrations on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops ' Council were held in Kiev], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/69280/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Кремле состоялась встреча Предстоятеля Русской Православной Церкви и Президента России В.В.Путина* [The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and President of Russia Vladimir Putin met in the Kremlin], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65383/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Во время пребывания в Москве Президент Украины Л.Д.Кучма посетил Храм Христа Спасителя и встретился со Святейшим Патриархом Московским и всея Руси Алексием* [During his stay in Moscow, President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma visited the Cathedral of Christ the Savior and met with His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84488/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Киево-Печерской лавре состоялись собеседования Предстоятелей Константинопольской и Русской Православных Церквей* [Interviews of the Primates of the Constantinople and Russian Orthodox Churches were held at the Kiev Pechersk Lavra], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64109/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Кремле состоялась встреча Святейшего патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II с Президентами России и Украины* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia met with the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine in the Kremlin], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84492/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Москве завершил работу Съезд славянских народов Беларуси, России, Украины* [The Congress of Slavic Peoples of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine has completed its work in Moscow], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), [Il Congresso dei Popoli Slavi di Bielorussia, Russia, Ucraina ha completato i suoi lavori a Mosca: LA NOTIZIA DEL DECS \(mospat.ru\)](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84492/)

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *В Московском Патриархате выразили недоумение в связи каноническими притязаниями Константинополя на территорию Украины* [The Moscow Patriarchate expressed bewilderment over Constantinople's canonical claims to Ukrainian territory], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79228/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"В ХХI Веке Недопустимо Заниматься Возведением Новой Берлинской Стены". Интервью Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла Агентству "Интерфакс" И Газете "Московские Новости"* ["In The Xxi Century, It Is Not Permissible To Construct A New Berlin Wall". Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83950/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Ватикану Необходимо Изменить Взгляд На Цели И Задачи Своего Присутствия В России". Святейший Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Алексий II Ответил На Вопросы Итальянского Католического Журнала "Фамилия Кристиана" (22 Сентября 2002 Года)* ["Vatican Needs To Change The View On The Goals And Objectives Of Its Presence In Russia." His Holiness Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Aleksii II Answered The Questions Of The Italian Catholic Magazine "Surname Of Christian" (September 22, 2002)], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://Mospat.Ru/Ru/News/83853/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Верховная Рада Украины рекомендовала Президенту наказать чиновников, виновных в дискриминации общин Украинской Православной Церкви* [The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine recommended that the President punish officials guilty of discrimination against communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76268/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Визит Папы Не Принес И Не Мог Принести Умиротворения В Межконфессиональную Напряженность На Украине". Ответы Святейшего Патриарха Московского И Всея Руси Алексия II на вопросы информационного агентства «Интерфакс»* ["The Visit of the Pope Didn't Brown And Could Not Bring Pleasure To Interconfessional Tension In Ukraine". Answers of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II to the questions of the Interfax news agency], mospat.ru, (last Accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84804/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Визит Папы Римского на Украину чреват обострением православно-католических отношений* [Pope's visit to Ukraine fraught with aggravation of Orthodox-Catholic relations], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84837/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине* [All Orthodox Churches Negatively Assess

Prospects of Creating Greek Catholic Patriarchate in Ukraine], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82406/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине* [All Orthodox Churches negatively assess the prospect of a Greek Catholic patriarchate in Ukraine], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), [Все Православные Церкви негативно оценивают перспективы создания греко-католического патриархата на Украине.: новость ОБЦС \(mospat.ru\)](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82406/)

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate. *Встреча между делегациями Украинской Православной Церкви и Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви* [Meeting between the delegations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86074/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Генеральная прокуратура Украины опротестовала регистрацию филаретовского "Киевского Патриархата"* [The General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine protested the registration of the Filaret "Kiev Patriarchate"], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84304/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Действовать в осознании ответственности перед Богом, историей и человечеством. (Полный текст статьи, сокращенный вариант которой опубликован в "Российской газете" 5 июля 2002 года)* [To act in the awareness of responsibility before God, history and humanity. (The full text of the article, an abridged version of which was published in the "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" on July 5, 2002)], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84109/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Делегация Константинопольского Патриархата посетила Украину по приглашению Президента страны* [A delegation from the Patriarchate of Constantinople visited Ukraine at the invitation of the president], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64889/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви* [Report of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64467/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, 13.08.2000. *Доклад/ Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви. (13–16 августа 2000 года)* [13.08.2000. Report/Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Jubilee Council of

Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. (August 13-16, 2000)], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85357/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заместитель председателя Государственной Думы В.В.Жириновский посетил Отдел внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата [Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Vladimir Zhirinovskj visited the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84996/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate , *Заседание Смешанной комиссии по диалогу между Католической и Православной Церквами [Meeting of the Mixed Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85425/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Священного Синода 10 июня 1997 года [Meeting of the Holy Synod on June 10, 1997],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86244/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Священного Синода 17 июля 1997 г.[Holy Synod meeting July 17, 1997],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), [Заседание Священного Синода 17 июля 1997 г.: новость ОБЦС \(mospat.ru\)](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84027/)

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заседание Священного Синода 26-27 декабря 2001 года [Meeting of the Holy Synod on December 26-27, 2001],* mospat.ru, (last Accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84421/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви в связи с учреждением новых католических епархий на Украине [Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in connection with the establishment of new Catholic dioceses in Ukraine],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84027/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Из доклада Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия Второго на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 18-23.2.1997 [From the report of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church on 18-23.2.1997],* mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86249/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Интервью митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла программе “Вести” [Interview of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad to the Vesti program],* mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84337/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Итоговые документы Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви 18-23.2.1997 [Final*

documents of the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church 18-23. 2. 1997], (last Accessed October 2021), mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86248/#1>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"К вопросу о действиях Константинопольского Патриархата в связи с религиозной ситуацией на Украине и в Эстонии". 21.08.1995 ["On the question of the actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in connection with the religious situation in Ukraine and Estonia." 08.21.1995], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86254/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Киев Является Важным Духовным Центром Вселенского Православия" Святейший Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Алексий ІІ Дал Интервью Газете "Кієвскій Телеграфъ" ("Кієвскій Телеграфъ" № 9 (151), Приложение "Православный Міръ", 17 Марта 2003 Года) ["Kiev Is An Important Spiritual Center Of Universal Orthodoxy". His Holiness Aleksii II Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Gave An Interview To The Newspaper "Kiev Telegraph" ("Kiev Telegraph" № 9 (151), "Orthodox World" Supplement, 17 March 2003)], (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83490/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Комментарий Службы коммуникации Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата по вопросу о перенесении резиденции главы Украинской Греко-Католической Церкви в Киев [Commentary of the Communication Service of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate on the issue of transferring the residence of the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to Kiev], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77912/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Коммюнике о встрече митрополита Кирилла с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером [Communiqué on Metropolitan Kirill's meeting with Cardinal Walter Kasper], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82400/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Коммюнике о встрече официальных делегаций Константинопольского и Московского Патриархатов [Communiqué on the meeting of the official delegations of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Moscow], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84803/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate. *Константинопольский Патриархат категорически опроверг заявление депутата Верховной Рады Украины П.Мовчана [The Patriarchate of Constantinople categorically denied the statement of the deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine P. Movchan], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84458/>*

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Константинопольский Патриархат опроверг заявление самозванного "митрополита Киевского и всея Руси-Украины" Моисея [The Constantinople Patriarchate denied the statement of the self-proclaimed "Metropolitan of Kyiv and All*

Russia-Ukraine" Moses], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/83780/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Межцерковные Отношения Не Должны Основываться На Принципах Рыночной Конкуренции"* [*"Interchurch Relations Should Not Be Based On Market Competition Principles"*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/81853/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Митрополит Иностранных Дел" Председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы нашего корреспондента. (Газета "Росся" от 15 марта)* [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, answered our correspondent's questions. (The newspaper "Rossia" from March 15)], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85037/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Киевский и всея Украины Владимир направил письмо Папе Римскому Иоанну Павлу II* [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir sent a letter to Pope John Paul II], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85121/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл: "Духовное единство народов - надежная основа для развития стратегического партнерства между государствами"* [Metropolitan Kirill: "The spiritual unity of peoples is a reliable basis for the development of strategic partnership between states"], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82448/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл встретился с Президентом Украины Л.Д.Кучмой* [Metropolitan Kirill met with President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84786/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл на пресс-конференции в информационном агентстве «Интерфакс»: «Торжества по случаю 1020-летия Киевской Руси явили торжество Православия»* [Metropolitan Kirill at a press conference at the Interfax news agency: "Celebrations on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of Kievan Rus revealed the triumph of Orthodoxy"], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64081/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Одесский и Измаильский Агафангел выступил с протестом против учреждения католической епископской кафедры в Одессе* [Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail protested against the establishment of a Catholic bishop's pulpit in Odessa], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84039/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы корреспондента газеты "La Stampa" [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from a correspondent of La Stampa]*, mospat.ru, <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79013/> (last accessed October 2021)

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл принял кардинала Эдварда Кассиди [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad received Cardinal Edward Cassidy]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85476/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Председатель ОБЦС встретился с украинскими законодателями [DECR Chairman meets with Ukrainian legislators]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84787/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Митрополит Кирилл направил кардиналу Вальтеру Касперу письмо с осуждением прозелитической деятельности греко-католиков на юге Украины [Metropolitan Kyrill sent a letter to Cardinal Walter Kasper condemning the proselytizing activities of Greek Catholics in southern Ukraine]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79310/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Мы достигли консенсуса в вопросе о предоставлении автокефалии». Интервью председателя ОБЦС Журналу Московской Патриархии [We have reached consensus on the autocephaly procedure' – DECR chairman's interview with the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/57316/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Открытое письмо Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира Папе Римскому Бенедикту XVI в связи с перенесением кафедры главы Униатской церкви из Львова в Киев [Open Letter of His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kyiv and All Ukraine to Pope Benedict XVI in Connection with the Transfer of the Chair of the Uniate Church from Lviv to Kyiv]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77733/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Очередное заседание Священного Синода [Regular meeting of the Holy Synod]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86180/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Очередная ложь лжепатриарха Филарета (Денисенко) [Another lie of the "false" Patriarch Filaret]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85059/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Поездка Святейшего Патриарха в Одесскую епархию [Trip of His Holiness the Patriarch to the*

Odessa diocese], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/86216/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Папа Уехал, Проблемы Остались. Возвращение К Пройденному: Митрополит Кирилл Комментирует Итоги Поездки Иоанна Павла II На Украину"*. Интервью Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла Газете "Солидарность". "Солидарность" №39 (334), Октябрь 2001 [*"The Pope Is Gone, The Problems Remain. Returning To The Past: Metropolitan Kyrill Comments On The Results Of John Paul II's Trip To Ukraine. Interview With Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad For The Newspaper Solidarnost. "Solidarnost" N°39 (334), October 2001*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84575/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Послание Синода Украинской Православной Церкви по случаю десятой годовщины Харьковского Архиерейского Собора 1992 года* [*Message from the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Kharkov Council of Bishops in 1992*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84087/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Перспектива создания на Украине "единой поместной церкви" с нарушением церковных канонов может вызвать кризис мирового Православия, считает представитель Русской Православной Церкви* [*The prospect of creating a "single local church" in Ukraine in violation of church canons may cause a crisis of world Orthodoxy, the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church believes*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021),
<https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84835/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Пребывание членов делегации Константинопольского Патриархата в Украинской Православной Церкви* [*Staying of members of the delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church*], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84235/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Представители Московского Патриархата приняли участие в межправославной встрече, посвященной богословскому диалогу с Ватиканом* [*Representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate participated in an inter-Orthodox meeting on theological dialogue with the Vatican*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77549/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Представитель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата принял участие в парламентских слушаниях, посвященных российско-украинским отношениям* [*A representative of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations took part in parliamentary hearings on Russian-Ukrainian relations*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65547/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Президенты России и Украины В.В.Путин и Л.Д.Кучма посетили Киево-Печерскую лавру*

и встретились с иерархами Украинской Православной Церкви [*Presidents of Russia and Ukraine Vladimir Putin and Leonid Kuchma visited the Kiev Pechersk Lavra and met with hierarchs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82523/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Премьер-министр России посетил Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира* [*The Prime Minister of Russia visited His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/65217/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Прошло заседание Священного Синода Украинской Православной Церкви* [*Meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held*], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/75726/>

Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Разрыв Отношений Или Продолжение Диалога? На вопросы корреспондента "Независимой Газеты" отвечает Секретарь по межхристианским связям игумен Иларион (Алфеев) ("Независимая Газета" от 29.07.2000)* [*Breaking Off Relations Or Continuing Dialogue? The Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, Hegumen Hilarion (Alfeev), answers the questions of the correspondent of Nezavisimaja Gazeta ("Nezavisimaja Gazeta" 29.07.2000)*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85398/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Раскол ценой обмана: в завершение дискуссии о неканонических «чекалинских хиротониях» так называемой «Православной церкви Украины»* [*Schism at the cost of deception: at the end of the discussion about the non-canonical "Chekalin ordinations" of the so-called "Orthodox Church of Ukraine"*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/46041/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Речь Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия на торжественном заседании в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси Киев, дворец «Украина», 28 июля 2008 года* [*Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia at a solemn meeting in honor of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus Kiev, Ukraine Palace, July 28, 2008*], mospat.ru, (last Accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64096/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Рождественское поздравление сотрудников ОБЦС* [*Christmas greetings to the staff of the DECR*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85995/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Искренне надеюсь, что следующий Предстоятель Римско-Католической Церкви будет способствовать развитию отношений с Русской Православной Церковью в положительном направлении"* [*His Holiness Patriarch*

Aleksii: "I sincerely hope that the next Primate of the Roman Catholic Church will contribute to the development of relations with the Russian Orthodox Church in a positive direction], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79126/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Мы надеемся на взвешенный и разумный подход со стороны Римско-Католической Церкви"* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "We hope for a balanced and reasonable approach on the part of the Roman Catholic Church"*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77763/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: «Точки соприкосновения с Ватиканом есть» Предстоятель Русской Православной Церкви дал эксклюзивное интервью главному редактору московского бюро Русской службы Би-би-си Константину Эггерту* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "There are points of contact with the Vatican" The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church gave an exclusive interview to Konstantin Eggert, Editor-in-Chief of the Moscow Bureau of the BBC Russian Service]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76282/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий: "Убежден, что современный мир нуждается в совместном свидетельстве о Христе"* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "I am convinced that the modern world needs a joint testimony of Christ."*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78981/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий встретился с В.С.Черномырдиным* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii meets with V.S. Chernomyrdin*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84743/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий встретился с Премьер-министром Украины Ю.И.Ехануровым* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Yu.I.Yekhanurov*], mosapt.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/77404/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий обсудил проблемы взаимоотношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквами с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii discussed problems of relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches with Cardinal Walter Kasper*], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82393/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий призвал всемерно поддержать каноническую Украинскую Православную Церковь в ее стоянии за церковное единство* [*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii called on to support the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church in every possible way in her standing for church unity*], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64495/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий примет участие во встрече Предстоятелей и представителей Поместных Православных Церквей* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii will participate in the meeting of the Primates and representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/63241/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Алексий принял председателя Папского совета по содействию христианскому единству кардинала Вальтера Каспера* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii received Cardinal Walter Kasper, Chairman of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64789/>

Department for External Church Relations, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл принял участие в открытии III Всемирного конгресса соотечественников, проживающих за рубежом* [Patriarch Kirill attends the opening of the 3d Congress of Compatriots living abroad], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/58093/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий встретился с руководителем Коммунистической партии Украины П.Н.Симоненко* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii of Moscow and All Russia met with the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine, P.N. Symonenko], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84474/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий II принял участие во встрече Предстоятелей и представителей Поместных Православных Церквей* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia took part in a meeting of Primates and representatives of Local Orthodox Churches], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/63217/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Святейший Патриарх принял кардинала Роже Эчегарая* [His Holiness the Patriarch received Cardinal Roger Etchegaray], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85221/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Священный Синод Украинской Православной Церкви направил Президенту Украины В.А.Ющенко обращения по вопросам преодоления раскола и провозглашения дня памяти св.Владимира Национальным праздником* [The Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church sent appeals to the President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko on the issues of overcoming the schism and proclaiming the day of remembrance of St. Vladimir as a National holiday], mospa.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78067/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Синода Украинской Православной Церкви по случаю десятой годовщины Харьковского*

Архиерейского Собора 1992 года [Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops ' Council in 1992], (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84087/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквами: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев* [The Current State of Relations between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: An Official View, Alekei Dikarev], mospat.ru, (last accessed July 2021), [Современное состояние отношений между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквами: официальный взгляд, Алексей Дикарев: новость ОБЦС \(mospat.ru\)](https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79417/)

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялось внеочередное заседание Священного Синода Украинской Православной Церкви* [A regular meeting of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place], mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79417/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира с Президентом России В.В.Путиним* [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir met with Russian President Vladimir Putin], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/79347/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко* [Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine Vladimir met with President of Ukraine V.A.Yushchenko], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66238/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Кирилла с кардиналом Вальтером Каспером* [Metropolitan Kirill met with Cardinal Walter Kasper], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/78364/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Ukraine V.A. Yushchenko], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/66060/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Председателем Верховной Рады Украины В.М.Литвиным* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Vladimir Litvin], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/76612/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate , *"Телеинтервью Митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла программе "Подробности" (РТР 12 марта 2001 года)* ["TV Interview with Metropolitan Kirill of

Smolensk and Kaliningrad on Podrobnosti" (RTR March 12, 2001)], mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/85023/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Торжественным актом в Государственном Кремлевском дворце начались торжества в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси [The celebrations in honor of the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus began with a solemn act in the State Kremlin Palace]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64394/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Удивительные инициативы митрополита Константина [Metropolitan Constantine's amazing initiatives]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84318/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Украина. Горсовет Львова отказал приходу Московского Патриархата в строительстве храма [Ukraine. Lviv City Council refused to build a church for the Moscow Patriarchate parish]*, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84093/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Украинские раскольники не получили очевидной поддержки Папы Римского [The Ukrainian schismatics did not receive the obvious support of the Pope]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84826/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Церковь Отвечает На Вызовы Нового Времени, Утверждая В Обществе Христианские Ценности" ["The Church Responds To The Challenges Of The New Time, Affirming Christian Values In Society"]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/82377/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *"Церковь Старается Напоминать Властям, Что Любые Преобразования Должны Идти На Пользу Людям". Полный Текст Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Московского И Всея Руси Алексия II Итальянскому Информационному Агентству "Анса" ["The Church Is Trying To Remind The Authorities That Any Transformations Must Benefit The People. Full Text Of The Interview Of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II Of Moscow And All Russia To The Italian News Agency Ansa]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/84791/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Ющенко едет в Москву ради подписания плана сотрудничества с Россией, но готов заодно провести переговоры по газу [Yushchenko is going to Moscow to sign a cooperation plan with Russia, but is ready to hold gas talks at the same time]*, IA Regnum, 12-02-2008; *Митрополит Кирилл принял Посла Украины в Российской Федерации [Metropolitan Kirill received the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Russian Federation]*, mospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64166/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24.07.2008/ «Власти Украины оставляют визит Алексия II в тени». Интервью митрополита Кирилла РИА «Новости» (опубликовано 24 июля 2008 года, [24.07.2008/ "The Ukrainian authorities are leaving the visit of Aleksii II in the shadows." Metropolitan Kirill's interview with RIA Novosti (published on July 24, 2008)], mospat.ru, (last Accessed August 2021), <https://mospat.ru/ru/news/64119/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate , Department, mospat.ru/en, (last accessed October 2021), <https://mospat.ru/en/department/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, *Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church 8 November 2000*, mospat.ru, 08-11-2000, (last accessed August 2021), <https://web.archive.org/web/20180612143211/https://mospat.ru/archive/en/2000/11/se011081/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Вера и труд: духовно-культурные традиции и экономическое будущее России. 16-17 декабря 2002 года. Соборное слово VII Всемирного Русского Народного Собора [Faith and Labor: Spiritual and Cultural Traditions and the Economic Future of Russia. December 16-17, 2002 Conciliar speech of the VII World Russian People's Council]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/church-and-society/30415.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С.Иванова на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе [Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I. S. Ivanov at the VIII World Russian People's Council]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/6352/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the VIII World Russian People's Council]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/church-and-society/30419.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад Святейшего Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Архиерейском Соборе 2000 года [Report of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia at the Bishops ' Council in 2000]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/page/sobors/2000-2/369.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Основы Социальной Концепции Русской Православной Церкви [The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/ru/documents/social-concepts/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Состоялась встреча митрополита Киевского Владимира с премьер-министром Украины Виктором Януковичем [Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, (last Accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/07/7406-1/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Внешние Церковные Связи В 1997 Году [Foreign Church Relations In 1997]*, oldmospat.ru, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 24-12-1997, (last accessed October 2021), https://old.mospat.ru/archive/1997/12/ecr_ru97

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *«Быть единомышленными и единомысленными» [“To be unanimous and of one mind.”]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 30-11-1999, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/1999/11/8398/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *16.08.2000. Доклад/ митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных сношений Московского Патриархата, на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [16.08.2000. REPORT/ by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 16-08-2000, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2000/08/s2000r15/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *13.08.2000. ДОКЛАД/ Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Юбилейном Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви. (13–16 августа 2000 года) [13.08.2000. REPORT/Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksii II at the Jubilee Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. (August 13-16, 2000)]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 18-08-2000, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2000/08/s2000r03/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата, на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе «Россия и православный мир» [Report by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the VIII World Russian People's Council "Russia and the*

Orthodox World"], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03.02.2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/27302/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации И.С.Иванова на VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе*, [Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I.S. Ivanov at the VIII World Russian People's Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 03-02-2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/02/6352/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for external Church Relations, *Украинская Православная Церковь использует финансовую помощь, поступившую от России, для строительства кафедральных соборов* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church uses the financial assistance received from Russia for the construction of cathedrals], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 16.07.2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/07/7319-1/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла Архиерейскому Собору Русской Православной Церкви (3-8 октября 2004 года). О внешней церковной деятельности [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, to the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (October 3-8, 2004). About external church activity], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04.10.2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/10/26414/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Святейший Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Алексий II встретился с премьер-министром Украины В.Ф.Януковичем* [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia met with Prime Minister of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 08-10-2004, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2004/10/7846-1/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Блаженнейший митрополит Владимир: «Поместная Церковь в Украине уже существует»* [His Beatitude Metropolitan Volodymyr: "The local Church in Ukraine already exists"], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 05-07-2005, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2005/07/9669/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Всемирный Русский Народный Собор примет мировоззренческий документ, рассматривающий проблему прав и свобод человека в контексте отечественной духовной традиции* [The World Russian People's Council will adopt an ideological document considering the problem of human rights and freedoms in the context of the

national spiritual tradition], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 01.04.2006, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/29810/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Выступление министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова на X Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе* [Speech of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the 10th World Russian People's Council], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04-04-2006, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30696/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *В день открытия X Всемирного Русского Народного Собора председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы ведущего телепрограммы "Вести. Подробности" Эрнеста Мацкявичюса* [Metropolitan Kirill: No religion calls people to hatred on the opening day of the 10th World Russian People's Council, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from the host of the Vesti. Details "by Ernest Matskyavichyus], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04.04.2006, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30865/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Митрополит Кирилл: Ни одна религия не призывает людей к ненависти. В день открытия X Всемирного Русского Народного Собора председатель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл ответил на вопросы ведущего телепрограммы "Вести. Подробности" Эрнеста Мацкявичюса* [Metropolitan Kirill: No religion calls people to hatred On the opening day of the 10th World Russian People's Council, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad answered questions from the host of the Vesti. Details "by Ernest Matskyavichyus], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 04.04.2006, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30865/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Состоялось заседание секции Всемирного Русского Народного Собора «Права человека и достоинство личности. Церковно-общественный взгляд»* [A meeting of the section of the World Russian People's Council "Human rights and dignity of the individual. Church and public view], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 05.04.2006, (accessed on August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2006/04/30724/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *«О преподавании Основ православной культуры в школе», «О единстве Церкви», «О развитии отечественной системы религиозного образования и науки», XI Всемирный Русский Народный Собор завершил свою работу* [XI World Russian People's Council completed its work], Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 07.03.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/03/35357/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Соборное слово XI Всемирного Русского Народного Собора (Москва, 5-7 марта 2007 года)* [Conciliar

speech of the XI World Russian People's Council (Moscow, March 5-7, 2007), Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 07.03.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/03/35350/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Итоговый протокол Соборных слушаний Всемирного Русского Народного Собора по теме «Русская доктрина» [Final Protocol of the Council Hearings of the World Russian People's Council on the topic "Russian Doctrine"]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 20.08.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/08/37458/>

Russian Orthodox Church, Department for External Church Relations, *Вступительное слово митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата, на соборных слушаниях по проекту «Русская доктрина» 20 августа 2007 года, Москва [Opening remarks by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the conciliar hearings on the "Russian Doctrine" project on August 20, 2007, Moscow]*, Archive of the official site of the Moscow Patriarchate 1997-2009, 20.08.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/archive/2007/08/37456/>

The Russian Orthodox Church. Department for External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, oldmospat.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://old.mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Организации [Organizations]*, Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/organizations/30970/>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Заявление Священного Синода Русской Православной Церкви от 8 ноября 2000 года [Declaration of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11.05.2005, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4923053.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Концепция участия Русской Православной Церкви в борьбе с распространением ВИЧ/СПИДа и работе с людьми, живущими с ВИЧ/СПИДом [The conception of the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS and of working with people living with HIV/AIDS]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24.06.2005, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/81695.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Журналы заседания Священного Синода от 27 декабря 2005 года. Журнал № 112 [Journals of the meeting of the Holy Synod of December 27, 2005. Journal No. 112]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-12-2005, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1501491.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Визит митрополита Варшавского и всея Польши Саввы в Россию. Посещение подворья Православной Церкви в Америке — храма св. вмц. Екатерины* [Visit of the Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland Sava to Russia. Visit to the courtyard of the Orthodox Church in America - the church of St. Catherine], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21-01-2007, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/185330.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Основы Социальной Концепции Русской Православной Церкви* [The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/419128.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение «О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время»* [Definition "On the Relationship of the Church with the State and Secular Society in the Canonical Territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the Present Time], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18-01-2009, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/530460.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Русская православная церковь, Организация* [Russian Orthodox Church. Organization], (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/organizations/30970/>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Представительство Русской Православной Церкви При Европейских Международных Организациях* [Representation Of The Russian Orthodox Church To The European Institutions], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed October 2021, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/1590844.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Документы* [Documents], (last accessed May 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/document/100048/>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Межрелигиозный совет* [Interreligious Council], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3456392.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Епископ Иларион: «Разделение, которое существует между нами, возникло по политическим причинам»* [Bishop Hilarion: "The division that exists between us arose for political reasons"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 20-03-2006, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/98739.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Госдума рассмотрит блок законопроектов, направленных на защиту персональных данных* [The State Duma will consider a block of bills aimed at protecting personal data], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 05.07.2006, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/123686.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *В Русской Православной Церкви указывают на неприемлемость отдельных либеральных положений Экуменической хартии* [The

Russian Orthodox Church indicates the unacceptability of certain liberal provisions of the Ecumenical Charter], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 28.02.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/205108.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Концепция миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви [The Concept of the Missionary Activities of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27-03-2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/220922.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, О «церковниках-тракобесах» и законах рынка [About "obscurantistic churchmen" and the laws of the market], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 19.04.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/230761.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Румынская Церковь намерена учредить православные приходы для соотечественников, проживающих в Южной Корее и Японии [The Romanian Church intends to establish Orthodox parishes for compatriots living in South Korea and Japan], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 03.07.2008, (last Accessed August 2021), [Румынская Церковь намерена учредить православные приходы для соотечественников, проживающих в Южной Корее и Японии / Новости / Патриархия.ru \(patriarchia.ru\)](http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2416490.html)

Russian Orthodox Church, Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей [Russian Orthodox Church Abroad], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 20-08-2007, (last accessed, October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2416490.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Алексия на очередной сессии ПАСЕ [Speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii at the regular session of PACE], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 02-10-2007, (last accessed May 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/301775.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Патриаршее обращение к посетителям фотовыставки «Русская Православная Церковь и межрелигиозный диалог» в штаб-квартире ООН [Patriarchal address to the visitors of the photo exhibition "The Russian Orthodox Church and Interreligious Dialogue" at the UN headquarters], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 04.10.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/302661.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Ответы Святейшего Патриарха Алексия на вопросы членов ПАСЕ [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii 's answers to the questions of PACE members], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29.10.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/314613.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Молдовы Владимиром Ворониным [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21.01.2008, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/353655.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Епископ Венский Иларион призывает Ватикан обсудить вопрос о статусе католических епархий в России [Bishop Hilarion of Vienna calls on the Vatican to discuss the status of Catholic dioceses in Russia]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 26-02-2008, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/370447.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Акт об отлучении от Церкви Глеба Павловича Якунина [The act of excommunication from the Church of Gleb Pavlovich Yakunin]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07.06.2008, (last Accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/417802.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата по вопросам взаимоотношений с Русской Зарубежной Церковью и старообрядчеством [Report by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate on relations with the Russian Church Abroad and Old Believers]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06- 2008, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423152.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла, председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата о внешней церковной деятельности [Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations on External Church Activities]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/423147.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад Патриарха Московского и всея Руси Алексия II на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 3 октября 2004 года [Report of Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church on October 3, 2004]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/420130.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Основные принципы отношения Русской Православной Церкви к инославиям [Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418840.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Православная Церковь есть истинная Церковь Христова, созданная Самим Господом и Спасителем нашим, Церковь утвержденная и исполняемая Духом Святым [The Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ, created by our Lord and Savior Himself, a Church approved and filled with the Holy Spirit]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 07-06-2008, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418840.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Архиерейский юбилейный Собор Русской Православной Церкви 2000 г. [Jubilee Bishops's Council of the Russian Orthodox Church of year 2000], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/418767.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Об основах социальной концепции Русской Православной Церкви». Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных сношений митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла [On the foundations of the social concept of the Russian Orthodox Church". Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, (last accessed April 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/422562.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Устав русской православной церкви [Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 09-06-2008, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/419782.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл: «Церкви удалось добиться положительной динамики в построении отношений с обществом и государством» [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad: "The Church has managed to achieve positive dynamics in building relations with society and the state"]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, (last accessed October 2021), 21-06-2008, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/424818.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Православное единство и православное свидетельство в современном мире. Доклад председателя Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата митрополита Смоленского и Калининградского Кирилла на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 года [Orthodox Unity and Orthodox Witness in the modern world. Report of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2008]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24-06-2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/427253.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Доклад митрополита Кишиневского и всея Молдавии Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [Report of Metropolitan Vladimir of Chisinau and All Moldova at the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 25.06.2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428321.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *«Состояние и актуальные вопросы церковно-государственных и церковно-общественных отношений» ["The state and current issues of church-state and church-public relations"]*, Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 26.06.2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428423.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *В Латинской Америке пройдут Дни русской духовной культуры [Days of Russian Spiritual Culture will be held in Latin America]*, Official site of

the Moscow Patriarchate, 29.06.2008, (last accessed August 2021),
<http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/467132.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Доклад митрополита Кишиневского и всея Молдавии Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви [Report by Metropolitan of Kishinev and All Moldova Vladimir at the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 25.07.2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428321.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Послание Святейшего Патриарха Алексия от имени Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви Президенту Республики Молдова В.Н. Воронину [Message of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii on behalf of the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church to President of the Republic of Moldova V. N. Voronin], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 27.07.2008, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428858.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Митрополит Кирилл: «Торжества по случаю 1020-летия Киевской Руси явили торжество Православия» [Metropolitan Kirill: "Celebrations on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of Kievan Rus revealed the triumph of Orthodoxy"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 30-07-2008, (last accessed, October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/443064.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Святейший Патриарх Алексий: «Сегодня все мы призваны хранить церковное единство» [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii: "Today we are all called to preserve church unity"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 24-10-2008, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/478949.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Определение «О взаимоотношениях Церкви с государством и светским обществом на канонической территории Московского Патриархата в настоящее время» ["On the relations of the Church with the State and secular society in the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate at the present time"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18.01.2009, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/530460.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Христианские Церкви Баренц-региона обсудили в Мурманске перспективы сотрудничества [Christian Churches of the Barents region discussed prospects of cooperation in Murmansk], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 21.02.2009, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/564473.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, Святейший Патриарх Кирилл встретился с сотрудниками Отдела внешних церковных связей [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the staff of the Department for External Church Relations], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 11-02-2009, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/556365.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла с президентом Молдавии Владимиром Ворониным* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 18.03.2009, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/590368.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Выступление Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла в прямом эфире украинского телеканала «Интер»* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill speaks live on the Ukrainian TV channel "Inter"], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 28-07-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/706055.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл: «То, что народ, прошедший через три поколения безбожия, сегодня в большинстве своем заявляет о приверженности Православной Церкви, — это чудо Божие...»* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill: "The fact that people who have gone through three generations of godlessness today declare most of their commitment to the Orthodox Church is a miracle of God..."], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29-07-2009, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/707360.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Интервью Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла телеканалу «Весту»* [Interview of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill to the VESTI TV channel], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 29-07-2009, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/707472.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Состоялось заседание Постоянного комитета комиссии «Вера и церковное устройство»* [A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Commission "Faith and Church Structure" was held], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, , 25.03.2014, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3612218.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Святейший Патриарх Кирилл возглавил открытие V Всецерковного съезда епархиальных миссионеров* [His Holiness Patriarch Kirill presides over the opening of the 5th All-Church Congress of Diocesan Missionaries], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 23.11.2014, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3851703.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *Определение Освященного Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви о внесении изменений и дополнений в Устав Русской Православной Церкви* [Russian Orthodox Church Consecrated Bishops' Council's Decision on amendments and additions to the Charter of the Russian Orthodox Church], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 03.02.2016, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4367659.html>

Russian Orthodox Church, *«Строить будут после меня». К 75-летию со дня кончины Патриарха Сергия (Страгородского)* ["They will build after me." On the 75th anniversary of the death of Patriarch Sergius (Stragorodsky)], Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate, 10-07-2019, (last accessed July 2021), <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5468664.html>

Academic Initiative, *On the succession of Kievan Rus and common space of Ukraine with Russia: analysis of sociological data. Foundation for supporting academic theology in Ukraine, On the succession of Kievan Rus and common space of Ukraine with Russia: analysis of sociological data*, (last accessed August 2021), https://www.academic-initiative.org.ua/en/2021/08/19/common_space_of_ukraine_with_russia/?fbclid=IwAR1Rt6SFhkKv6ndXaLE81eA6HI-i-PqeZJEv7fkbIj-EjK0YbuWd419ZO3o

Asrinda Idrus, "Православная церковь в Индонезии: специфика становления взаимодействия с Русской Православной Церковью [The Orthodox Church in Indonesia: specifics of formation and Interaction with the Russian Orthodox Church]", in *Россия И Мир: История, Политика, Культура, Образование [Russia And The World: History, Politics, Culture, Education]* Researchgate.net, 2014, pp. 181-185, (last accessed October 2021), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337186621_Pravoslavnaa_cerkov_v_Indonezii_specifika_stanovlenia_i_vzaimodejstvia_s_Russkoj_Pravoslavnoj_Cerkovu

Bargrad.ru, *Выступление Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла, Председателя Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата, На Конференции "Христианство И Европа: Социальная Мысль Русской Православной Церкви"* [Speech By Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad, Chairman Of The Department For External Church Relations Of The Moscow Patriarchate, At The Conference "Christianity And Billington James, "The True Heroes of the Soviet Union," New York Times, August 30, 1991, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/08/30/opinion/the-true-heroes-of-the-soviet-union.html>

Bukalov Alexey, *The Distance Between the First and Third Rome*, 12.01.2021, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www2.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-distance-between-the-first-and-third-rome>

Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library, *Подписано «Беловежское Соглашение» [The "Belovezhskoe Agreement" Was Signed]*, prlib.ru, 08.12.1991, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.prlib.ru/en/history/619792>

Bureau Of Democracy, Human Rights, And Labor, *International Religious Freedom Report 2005, Russia*, (last accessed August 2021), <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2005/51576.htm>

Corley Felix, *Russia: The Patriarch and the KGB*, Keston News Service, 9:14, 2000, keston.org.uk, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.keston.org.uk/kns/misc/kns-russia-the-patriarch-and-the-kgb.html>

Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith, *Note On The Expression «Sister Churches». A Letter To The Presidents Of The Conferences Of Bishops*, (last accessed October 2021), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000630_chiese-sorelle_en.html

Council of Europe, (last accessed October 2021), www.coe.int

Consultant Plus, *Федеральный закон "О свободе совести и о религиозных объединениях" от 26.09.1997 N 125-ФЗ (последняя редакция)* [Federal Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" dated 26.09.1997 N 125-FZ (latest edition)], N 125-ФЗ, 26-09-1997, (last accessed October 2021), [Федеральный закон "О свободе совести и о религиозных объединениях" от 26.09.1997 N 125-ФЗ \(последняя редакция\) / КонсультантПлюс \(consultant.ru\)](http://www.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc&base=ESU&n=3671#7ftjGoSkBSDy4tCy)

Consultant Plus, *Закон СССР от 01.10.1990 N 1689-1 (ред. от 04.06.1991) "О свободе совести и религиозных организациях"* [The Law of the USSR of 01.10.1990 N 1689-1 (ed. of 04.06.1991) "On freedom of conscience and religious organizations"], 15-01-2021 (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc&base=ESU&n=3671#7ftjGoSkBSDy4tCy>

Credo Press, *Мнение: "Католические Миссионеры Ни За Кем Не Гоняются, Но Если Люди Понимают, Что Истинная Церковь – Это Церковь Католическая, Они Должны Быть Приняты Туда"* - Кандидат Богословия Игумен Иннокентий Павлов [Opinion: "Catholic Missionaries Don't Chase Anyone, But If People Understand That the True Church Is the Catholic Church, They Should Be Accepted There" - Candidate Theologian Abbot Innocent Pavlov], credo. press, 31.10.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://credo.press/87002/>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Département des relations extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou, Kirchliches Außenamt des Moskauer Patriarchats, *Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, orthodoxeurope.org, (last accessed October 2021), <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/3/14.aspx>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Département des relations extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou, Kirchliches Außenamt des Moskauer Patriarchats, *Basic Principles of the Attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church Toward the Other Christian Confessions*, orthodoxeurope.org, (last accessed October 2021), <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/7/5/1.aspx>

Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Département des relations extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou, Kirchliches Außenamt des Moskauer Patriarchats, *Le métropolite Kirill à Berlin*, Europaica Bulletin, 59, 2005, (last accessed August 2021), <http://orthodoxeurope.org/page/14/59.aspx#2>

Department of the Minister of Internal Affairs – Sakhlain Region, *Что означает содержащийся в паспорте гражданина Российской Федерации реквизит «личный код»?* [What does the "personal code" detail in the passport of a citizen of the Russian Federation mean?], (last accessed August 2021), <https://65.xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/document/835350>

Deseret news, *The Boston Globe*, *Russian priests call bar code evil*, deseret.com, 24.02.2001, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.deseret.com/2001/2/24/19571533/russian-priests-call-bar-code-evil>

Drabinko Alexander, *"Православие в посттоталитарной Украине"* [Orthodoxy in Post-Totalitarian Ukraine], Kiev Theological Academy, 2002, (last accessed August 2021), (pereeslaveparchia.kiev.ua)

Djenovic Drasko, *Serbia: Romanian Orthodox Church Threatened With Demolition*, Forum 18, 15-03-2005, (last Accessed August 2021), https://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=523

D W Made for Minds, *Ющенко пообещал не вмешиваться в дела церкви* [Yushchenko promised not to interfere in the affairs of the church], dw.com, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.dw.com/ru/%D1%8E%D1%89%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%BE-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B5%D1%89%D0%B0%D0%BB-%D0%BD%D0%B5-%D0%B2%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%88%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%81%D1%8F-%D0%B2-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0-%D1%86%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%B2%D0%B8/a-3507648>

Eur-Lex, *Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part*, Official Journal of the European Union, eur-lex.europa.eu, 30.08.2014, (last accessed August 2021), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_2014.260.01.0004.01.ENG

Evseeva Tatiana, *Архієрейський Собор УПЦ в Харкові* [UOC'Archbishops Council in Karkhov], Цей День В Історії, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.inism.com.ua/h/0527T/>

Fagan Geraldine, *Russia's Ambitious New Patriarch*, Open Democracy, 12, 12-02-2009, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/russia-s-ambitious-new-patriarch/>

Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications, *Путин назначил исполнительным директором правления фонда по популяризации русского языка "Русский мир" политолога Никонова* [Russian President Vladimir Putin has appointed political scientist Nikonov as the Executive Director of the board of the Russian Language Promotion Foundation "Russkiy Mir"], Федеральное агентство по печати и массовым коммуникациям, fapmc.gov.ru, 25-06-2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://fapmc.gov.ru/slabovid/newsandevents/media/2007/06/item2983.html>

Fert Andriy, *Never-ending Competition: Orthodox Celebrations in Ukraine*, Zois Spotlight, 29/2021, (last accessed October 2021), <https://en.zois-berlin.de/publications/never-ending-competition-orthodox-celebrations-in-ukraine>

Foma, *Государство и Церковь: возможна ли сегодня их симфония?* [The State and the Church: is their symphony possible today?], foma.ru, 2014, (last accessed October 2021), <https://foma.ru/gosudarstvo-i-tserkov-vozmozhna-li-segodnya-ih-simfoniya.html>

Hertog Katrien, *The Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and in Europe*, <https://lirias.kuleuven.be> › retrieve, 2008, pp. 1-23.

Holley David, *Russian Orthodox split is mended*, Los Angeles Times, 18.05.2007, (last accessed August 2021), [Russian Orthodox split is mended - Los Angeles Times \(latimes.com\)](https://www.latimes.com)

Huseynov Husan, *К межцерковному диалогу в России* [Towards an inter-church dialogue in Russia], 10.07.2003, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.dw.com/ru/%D0%BA-%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B6%D1%86%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%BC%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%83-%D0%B2-%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8/a-917005>

Interfax Religion, *Московский Патриархат Считает "Канонически Незаконной" Передачу Эстонской Апостольской Православной Церкви Под Юрисдикцию Константинопольского Патриархата* [The Moscow Patriarchate Considers "Canonically Illegal" the Transfer of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church to the Jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople], Interfax-religion.com, 04-03-1996. (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=archive&div=5810>

Interfax Religion, *The address of Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate DECR on the panel discussion on Human Rights and Intercultural Dialogue at the 7th session of UN Human Rights Council*, Interfax-religion.com, 22.03.2008, (last accessed August 2021), [Interfax-Religion](http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=49898)

Interfax Religion, *Российский политолог констатирует усиление позиций "Бессарабской митрополии" в Молдавии* [The Russian political scientist notes the strengthening of the positions of the "Metropolitan of Bessarabia" in Moldova], 17-02-2009, (last accessed August 2021), [Интерфакс-Религия: Российский политолог констатирует усиление позиций "Бессарабской митрополии" в Молдавии \(interfax-religion.ru\)](http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=49898)

Interfax Religion, *Китай и Япония официально дополнили список стран канонической территории Русской церкви* [China and Japan officially added to the list of countries of the canonical territory of the Russian Church], 06.02.2013, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=49898>

Interreligious dialogue in Russia and in other CSI countries, Межрелигиозный совет (MC) СНГ [Interreligious Council (MC) CSI], interreligious.ru, (last accessed May 2021), <http://interreligious.ru/interreligious-council/>

Istorychna Pravda, *"Гонений на религию в СССР нет" - интервью митрополита Сергея. 1930 год. Ответы митрополита Сергея (Страгородского) на пресс-*

конференции с представителями советской печати о положении православной церкви в СССР 15 февраля 1930г. ["No persecution of religion in the USSR" - interview with Metropolitan Sergius. 1930. Answers of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) at a press conference with representatives of the Soviet press on the situation of the Orthodox Church in the USSR, February 15, 1930.], istpravda.com, 2010, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.istpravda.com.ua/blogs/4ccb2a4e3427a/>

Kommersant, "Армянская церковь традиционно дорожит связями с русским православием"

Интервью патриарха Московского и всея Руси [The Armenian Church values the traditional ties with Russian Orthodoxy ". Interview with the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia], kommersant.ru, 175, 26.09.2001, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/284383>

Komsomol'skaja Pravda, Ватикан собирается Захватить Россию? [Is The Vatican Going To Involve Russia?], ualberta.ca, 70, 18-04-2002, (last accessed October 2021), https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/KP_98_2003/1123526.htm

Konygina Natalia, Время собирать церкви [Time to unify the Churches], Rossijskaja Gazeta, 18-05-2007, <https://rg.ru/2007/05/18/akt.html>, (last accessed July 2021).

Kryazheva-Kartseva, Yelena Idrus, Asrinda Ayub, Новые Векторы Миссионерской Деятельности Русской Православной Церкви В Начале Хxi В. (На Примере Миссий В Таиланде, Камбодже И Индонезии) [New Vectors Of Missionary Activity Of The Russian Orthodox Church In The Beginning Of The Xxi Century. (By The Example Of Missions In Thailand, Cambodia And Indonesia)], RUDN Journal of Russian History, 2, 2014, pp. 148-159, (last accessed August 2021), <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/novye-vektory-missionerskoy-deyatelnosti-russkoy-pravoslavnoy-tserkvi-v-nachale-xxi-v-na-primere-missiy-v-taillande-kambodzhe-i-indonezii/viewer>

Levada Center – Yuri Levada Analytical Center, Институциональное Доверие [Institutional Trust], 24.10.2019, levada.ru, (last accessed July 2021), <https://www.levada.ru/2019/10/24/institutsionalnoe-doverie-5/>

Levi Clifford J., Ukrainian Prime Minister Reinvents Himself, New York Times, 30.09.2007, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/world/europe/30ukraine.html>

Lukianiuk Volodymyr, Проголошення незалежності України [Declaration of independence of Ukraine], Цей День В Історії, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.jnsm.com.ua/h/0824M/>

Lynch Dov, «Общее соседство» или новая линия фронта? Молдавский перекрёсток», ["Common neighborhood" or a new front line? Moldavian crossroads], Russie.Cei.Visions, 2, 2005, pp. 2-13.

Markova Maria, The Political Use of Soviet Nostalgia to Develop a Russian National Identity, 14.07.2020, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/07/14/the-political-use-of-soviet-nostalgia-to-develop-a-russian-national-identity/>

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk (Alfeyev), *Принцип "канонической территории" в православной традиции* [The principle of "canonical territory" in the Orthodox tradition], Russkaya Narodnaya Liniya, 10.02.2005, (last accessed August 2021), https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2005/02/10/princip_kanonicheskoi_territorii_v_pравoslavnoj_tradicii

Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev): *Митрополит Иларион: Деятельность ОБЦС можно сравнить со служением пограничников* [Metropolitan Ilarion: The activities of the DECR can be compared with the service of border guards], Tserkovno-diplomaticheskaya i obshchestvennaya deyatel'nost', 20-05-2021. (last accessed October 2021), <https://hilarion.ru/social/mitropolit-ilarion-deyatelnost-ovtss-mozhno-sravnit-so-sluzheniem-pogranichnikov.html>

Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill, *Русская Православная Церковь, ее служение примирению и перспективы межконфессионального миротворческого сотрудничества в странах СНГ и Балтии* [The Russian Orthodox Church, its ministry of Reconciliation and prospects for interfaith peacemaking cooperation in the CIS and Baltic countries], Teologija: Moscow, 3, 1994, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.katolik.ru/tserkov-i-obshchestvo/item/1563-tserkov-obshchestvo-mir-hr.html>

Ministry of information policy of Ukraine, *Наказ Міністерства культури та інформаційної політики України від 14.04.2020 року № 1657 "Про річну статистичну звітність з питань державно-конфесійних відносин в Україні за 2019 рік (релігійні організації)* [Order of the Ministry of culture and information policy of Ukraine No. 1657 dated 14.04.2020 "on annual statistical reporting on state-confessional relations in Ukraine for 2019 (religious organizations)], 05-06-2020, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.mkip.gov.ua/documents/202.html?PrintVersion>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Стенограмма выступления Министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова на торжественном приеме по случаю Православной Пасхи, Москва, 30 апреля 2008 года* [Transcript of the speech of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the reception on the occasion of Orthodox Easter, Moscow, April 30, 2008], mid.ru, 01.05.2008, (last accessed August 2021), https://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/340004

Miroshnikova Elena, *National Report on the Political Aspects of Religion: Russia*, iclrs.org, pp. 573-590, (last accessed October 2021), <https://classic.iclrs.org/content/blurb/files/Russia.1.pdf>

Missionary Department of the Novosibirsk Diocese, *Концепция возрождения миссионерской деятельности Русской Православной Церкви* [The Concept of the Rebirth of the Missionary Activities of the ROC], ansobor.ru, 1995, (last accessed August 2021), <http://ansobor.ru/library.php?book=66>

МКІП: число релігійних громад ПЦУ становить понад 7 тисяч, УПЦ (МП) – майже 12 з половиною [МКІП: the number of religious communities of the OCU is more than 7 thousand, the UOC-MP – almost 12 and a half], 28-12-2020, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-chyslo-relihiinyh-hromad/31023363.html>

Metropolitan Theophilus (Pashkovsky), orthodoxcanada.ca, (last accessed October 2021), [https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Theophilus_\(Pashkovsky\)](https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Theophilus_(Pashkovsky))

Moldavskie Vedomosti, В Москве прошла встреча Воронина с Медведевым [In Moscow was held the meeting between Voronin and Medvedev], vedomosti.md, 18.03.2009, (last accessed August 2021), http://www.vedomosti.md/news/V_Moskve_Proshla_Vstrecha_Voronina_S_Medvedevy_m

Narochnitskaya Natalia - Russian Federation, Valdaï Discussion Club, (last accessed October 2021), <https://valdaiclub.com/about/experts/383/>

Nedumov Oleh, РПЦ и Папские визиты [The ROC and the visit of the Pope], Nezavisimaja Gazeta – Religia, 14.12.2000, https://www.ng.ru/ng_religii/2000-12-14/3_vizit.html?id_user=Y (last accessed October 2021).

Okara Andrei, Sovereign Democracy: A New Russian Idea Or a PR Project?, Russia in Global Affairs, 3, 2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/sovereign-democracy-a-new-russian-idea-or-a-pr-project/>

Official site of the Moscow Patriarch, Взаимоотношения с протестантами и англиканским сообществом [Relationships with Protestants and the Anglican community], patriarch.patriarchia.ru, (last accessed July 2021), <https://patriarch.patriarchia.ru/vzaimootnosheniya-s-protestantami-i-anglikanskim-soobshchestvom/>

Orthodox reading information and educational project, Заявление Службы коммуникации ОВЦС МП. "Беззаконие в отношении большинства православных жителей Эстонии продолжается" [Statement of the DECR MP Communication Service. "Lawlessness relations against the majority of Orthodox residents of Estonia continues"], zavet.ru, 08.05.2001, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.zavet.ru/news/news-p010507.htm>

Orthodoxcanada.ca, Metropolitan Sawa (Hrycuniak), (last accessed October 2021), [https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Sawa_\(Hrycuniak\)](https://orthodoxcanada.ca/Metropolitan_Sawa_(Hrycuniak))

Osipov Aleksei, Революция Вышла Из Семинарии [The Revolution Came Out Of The Seminary], Pravoslavie.ru, 04-10-2017, (last accessed October 2021), [Революция вышла из семинарии / Pravoslavie.ru \(pravoslavie.ru\)](http://pravoslavie.ru/революция_вышла_из_семинарии/)

Palveleva Lilya, *950th anniversary of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra against the background of the split of Orthodox churches in Ukraine*, Svoboda.org, 28-08-2001, (last Accessed October 2021), <https://www.svoboda.org/a/24223165.html>

Pavlov Innokentiy, *Вне Предания. Основы социальной концепции РПЦ стали архивным документом [Beyond Tradition. The basics of the social concept of the ROC have become an archival document]*, NG. Religii, 19-06-2002, NRL-N°. 004 (last accessed October 2021), https://www.ng.ru/ng_religii/2002-06-19/7_predanie.html

Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union, *The Foreign Policy Concept Of The Russian Federation*, russiaeu.ru, 12-07-2008, (last accessed May 2021), [THE FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION \(russiaeu.ru\)](http://russiaeu.ru/ru/foreign-policy-concept-of-the-russian-federation)

Pervushin M. V., «Информационный Бюллетень Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата» [*Information Bullettin of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate*], Orthodox Encyclopedia, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.pravenc.ru/text/468861.html>

Petro Nicolai, *Russia's Orthodox Soft Power*, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, 23-03-2015, last accessed October 2021, https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/articles_papers_reports/727

Petrov Alexander, *Патриарх в "зоне конфликта" [The Patriarch in "Conflict zone"]*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 16.11.2005, (last accessed August 2021), https://www.ng.ru/politic/2005-11-16/1_patriarh.html

Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Uniatism, Method Of Union Of The Past, And The Present Search For Full Communion**, Balamand (Lebanon), June 23rd, 1993, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-lingua-inglese.html>

Portal-credo, *Митрополит Владимир (Сабодан) принял делегацию Киевского патриархата, пообещав рассмотреть обращение Патриарха Филарета и епископата УПЦ КП на Соборе УПЦ МП [Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan) received a delegation of the Kiev Patriarchate, promising to consider the appeal of Patriarch Filaret and the Episcopate of the UOC-KP at the Council of the UOC-MP]*, portal –credo.ru, 20-12-2007, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=news&id=59242>

Portal-credo, *Власти Молдовы намерены депортировать четырех румынских священников и монахиню [The Moldovan authorities intend to deport four Romanian priests and a nun]*, portal-credo.ru, 10.01.2008, (last accessed August 2021). [Портал-Credo.ru: Власти Молдовы намерены депортировать четырех румынских священников и монахиню \(portal-credo.ru\)](http://portal-credo.ru/ru/authorities-intend-to-deport-four-romanian-priests-and-a-nun)

Portal- Credo, Митрополия Бессарабии пожаловалась на президента Молдовы Владимира Воронина в Совет Европы [The Metropolitan of Bessarabia complained about the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin to the Council of Europe], portal credo.ru, 14.01.2008, (last Accessed August 2021) , [Портал-Credo.ru: Митрополия Бессарабии пожаловалась на президента Молдовы Владимира Воронина в Совет Европы \(portal-credo.ru\)](http://portal-credo.ru)

Pravmir, Архиерейский Собор включил Монголию в каноническую территорию РПЦ [The Bishops ' Council included Mongolia in the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church], pravmir.ru, 04.02.2016, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.pravmir.ru/arhiereyskiy-sobor-vklyuchil-mongoliyu-v-kanonicheskuyu-territoriyu-rpts/>

Pravoslavnoe obrazovanie, Определение Освященного Архиерейского Собора 1994 года «О православной миссии в современном мире» [Definition of the Council of Bishops of 1994 "On the Orthodox Mission in the Modern World"], pravobraz.ru, 1994, (last accessed August 2021), <https://pravobraz.ru/opredelenie-osvyashhennogo-arxierejskogo-sobora-1994-goda-o-pravoslavnoj-missii-v-sovremennom-mire/>

Pravoslavie.ru, Митрополит Кирилл Ответил На Вопросы Еженедельника «Аргументы И Факты» [Metropolitan Kirill Answered The Questions Of The Argumenty I Fakty Weekly], 05-04-2006, (last Accessed October 2021), [Http://Www.Pravoslavie.Ru/16922.Html](http://www.pravoslavie.ru/16922.html)

Pravoslavie.ru, Резолюция XI Всемирного Русского Народного Собора «О преподавании Основ православной культуры в школе» [Resolution of the XI World Russian People's Council "On Teaching the Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture at School"], 07.03.2007, (last Accessed October 2007), <http://pravoslavie.ru/21162.html>

Pravoslavie.ru, Святейший Патриарх Алексий Принял Участие В Заседании Рабочей Группы По Взаимодействию Минд России И Русской Православной Церкви [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii Took Part In A Meeting Of The Working Group On The Cooperation Between The Russian Foreign Ministry And The Russian Orthodox Church], 21.11.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://pravoslavie.ru/24939.html>

Pravoslavie.ru, «Украинское Православие на рубеже эпох. Вызовы современности, тенденции развития». Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 г. [Ukrainian Orthodoxy at the turn of the epochs. Modern challenges, development trends". Report of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine at the Bishops ' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2008], pravoslavie.ru, 25-06-2008, (last accessed June 2021), «Украинское Православие на рубеже эпох. Вызовы современности, тенденции развития». Доклад Блаженнейшего митрополита Киевского и всея Украины Владимира на Архиерейском Соборе Русской Православной Церкви 2008 г. / Православие.Ru (pravoslavie.ru)

President of Russia, *Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy*, kremlin.ru, 20-02-2007, (last accessed October 2021), <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>

President of Russia, *Интервью ведущим российским телеканалам* [Interview with leading Russian TV channels], kremlin.ru, 24-12-2008, (last accessed October 2018), <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/interviews/2602>

President of Russia, *Стратегия национальной безопасности Российской Федерации до 2020 года* [The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020], kremlin.ru, 13-05-2009, (last accessed October 2021), (<http://www.kremlin.ru/supplement/424>)

Razumkov Centre, *Держава І Церква В Україні-2019: Підсумки Року І Перспективи Розвитку Відносин* (Інформаційні Матеріали) [State And Church In Ukraine-2019: Results Of The Year And Prospects For The Development Of Relations (Informational Materials)], Kiev, 2019, (last accessed October 2021), https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/article/2019_Religiya.pdf

"Real Estate and Investments. Legal Regulation", the journal, *Code of ethical principles and rules in business*, Журнал "Недвижимость и инвестиции. Правовое регулирование" [The magazine "Real Estate and investment. Legal regulation"], dpr.ru, 04:21, 2004, (last accessed August 2021), https://dpr.ru/journal/journal_16_2.htm

Regnum, *Меморандум Козака": Российский план объединения Молдовы и Приднестровья* [Russian plan for the unification of Moldova and Transnistria], regnum.ru, 23.05.2005, (last accessed August 2021) <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/458547.html>

Regnum, *Меморандум об основных принципах государственного устройства объединенного государства (2003)* [Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State structure of the United State (2003)], regnum.ru, 23.05.2005, (last accessed August 2021), <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/458547.html>

Ria Novosti, *Воссоединение РПЦ и РПЦЗ* [Reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad], ria.ru, 07-06-2008, (last Access July 2021), <https://ria.ru/20060515/48135892.html>

Ria Novosti, *Межрелигиозный совет России принял "Свод нравственных принципов и правил в хозяйствовании"* [The Interreligious Council of Russia adopted the "Code of Moral Principles and rules in economic management"], 09.12.2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://ria.ru/20041209/756107.html>

Ria Novosti, *Россия предложила начать под эгидой ООН диалог мировых религий* [Russia has proposed to start a dialogue of world religions under the auspices of the UN], 29.09.2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://ria.ru/20070929/81601802.html>

Ria Novosti, *РПЦ призвала не учреждать румынских епархий в Молдавии и на Украине* [The Russian Orthodox Church urged not to establish Romanian dioceses in Ukraine]

Moldova and Ukraine], ria.ru 07.11.2007, (last accessed August 2021), [РПЦ призвала не учреждать румынских епархий в Молдавии и на Украине - РИА Новости, 07.06.2008 \(ria.ru\)](https://ria.ru/20100525/238031233.html)

Ria Novosti, *Всемирный Русский Народный Собор (ВРНС). Справка [World Russian People Concil]*, ria.ru, 25.05.2010, (last accessed August 2021), <https://ria.ru/20100525/238031233.html>

Rossijskaja Gazeta, *Время собирать церкви [Time to unify the Churches]*, 18-05-2007, <https://rg.ru/2007/05/18/akt.html>, (last Access July 2021).

Rusak Vladimir, *История Российской Церкви [History of the Russian Church]*, Pravoslavnaia biblioteka, 1993, (last accessed October 2021), https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Istoriia_Tserkvi/istorija-rossijskoj-tserkvi/9

Russkaja Obshina, *Католический прозелитизм среди православного населения России. Справка [Catholic proselytism among the orthodox population in Russia. References]*, russian.kiev.ua, 03 July 2002, (last accessed July 2021), <https://russian.kiev.ua/katolicheskij-prozelitizm-sredi-pravoslavnogo-naseleniya-rossii-spravka>

Russkiy Mir Foundation, *Days Of Russian Spiritual Culture To Attract Viewers Around The World*, russkiy mir.ru, 19-11-2020, (last accessed August 2021), <https://russkiymir.ru/en/news/280562/>

Russkiy Mir Foundation, russkiymir.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://russkiymir.ru/>

Sibireva Olga, "Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Restrictions and Challenges in 2015", in *Religion in secular society – Reports and Analyses*, ed. by Verkhovsky Alexander, Sova Center for Information and Analysis, (last accessed July 2021), [Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Restrictions and Challenges in 2015 / April / 2016 / Reports and Analyses / Religion in secular society / SOVA \(sova-center.ru\)](https://sova-center.ru/freedom-of-conscience-in-russia-restrictions-and-challenges-in-2015-april-2016-reports-and-analyses-religion-in-secular-society/)

Synod of Bishops Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, *Окружное послание архиерейского собора русской православной церкви за границей. От 27 августа/9 сентября 1927 г. [The district message of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad. From August 27/September 9, 1927]*, sinod.ruschurchabroad.org, 27-08/09-09-1927, (last accessed, October 2021), [OCR Document \(ruschurchabroad.org\)](https://sinod.ruschurchabroad.org/)

Sova Centre for Information and Analysis, *На VIII Всемирном Русском Народном Соборе принят "Свод нравственных принципов и правил в хозяйствовании" [The VIII World Russian People's Council adopted the "Code of Moral Principles and rules in economic management"]*, 05.02.2004, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.sova-center.ru/religion/news/authorities/religion-general/2004/02/d1739/>

The Center for Public Integrity, *International Orthodox Christian Charities*, (last accessed April 2021), 30.11.2006, <https://publicintegrity.org/health/international-orthodox-christian-charities/>

The Church-Compound of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Bari, *Выступление Митрополита Смоленского И Калининградского Кирилла, Председателя Отдела Внешних Церковных Связей Московского Патриархата, На Конференции "Христианство И Европа: Социальная Мысль Русской Православной Церкви" [Speech By Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad, Chairman Of The Department For External Church Relations Of The Moscow Patriarchate, At The Conference "Christianity And Europe: Social Thought Of The Russian Orthodox Church"]*, Bari, Italy, bargrad.ru, 20-12-2004, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.bargrad.ru/biblioteka/vystuplenie-mitropolita-kirilla-na-konferencii/>

The Church-Compound of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Bari, *Europe: Social Thought Of The Russian Orthodox Church*], bargrad.ru, 20-12-2004, (last accessed August 2021), <http://www.bargrad.ru/biblioteka/vystuplenie-mitropolita-kirilla-na-konferencii>

The Federal Service for Surveillance of Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-Being of the Russian Federation, *Country Progress Report of the Russian Federation on the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, Adopted at the 26th United Nations General Assembly Special Session, June 2001 Reporting period: January 2006 – December 2007*, Moscow, 2008, (last accessed April 2021), [Russia \(en\) - Country Progress Report \(unaids.org\)](http://www.unaids.org/Russia)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation*, 10-01-2000, (last accessed October 2021), https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/589768

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Концепция национальной безопасности Российской Федерации (утратила силу) [National Security Concept Of The Russian Federation]*, mid.ru, 10-01-2000, (last accessed August 2021), https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/589768

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Intercultural Dialogue on Human Rights Discussion at the 7th Session of the UN Human Rights Council*, mid.ru, 21.03.2008, (last accessed August 2021), https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/un/-/asset_publisher/U1StPbE8y3al/content/id/344918

The Patriarchal Parishes in the USA – Moscow Patriarchate, *Statute Of The Russian Orthodox Church*, (last accessed May 2021), [STATUTE-OF-THE-RUSSIAN-ORTHODOX-CHURCH.pdf \(mospatusa.com\)](http://mospatusa.com/STATUTE-OF-THE-RUSSIAN-ORTHODOX-CHURCH.pdf)

United States Department of State, *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda*, October 1987, (last accessed August 2021), [state-department---a-report-on-active-measures-and-propaganda.pdf](https://www.state-department---a-report-on-active-measures-and-propaganda.pdf) (typepad.com)

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *International Religious Freedom Report*, 2003 (last accessed October 2021), <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2003/index.htm>;
<https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/2003%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

Vyzhanov Igor, *Перспективы межцерковных отношений [Perspectives of Interchurch relations]*, Nezavisimaja Gazeta – Religia, 3:74, 14-02-2001, (last accessed October 2021), https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/NG_00_01/1152206.htm

Walsh Nick Paton, *Hand of John the Baptist in Russia*, The guardian, 10-06-2006, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/jun/10/russia.religion>

World Council of Churches, (last accessed August 2021), <https://www.oikoumene.org/>
Zatulin Konstantin, *"Москва - Третий Рим" - не только метафора, но историческое задание для России ["Moscow Third Rome" is not only a metaphor, but a historical task for Russia]*, Russkaya narodnaya liniya, 12-02-2004, (last accessed October 2021), [https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2004/02/12/moskva - tretij rim - ne tol ko metafora no istoricheskoe zadanie dlya rossii/](https://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2004/02/12/moskva_-_tretij_rim_-_ne_tolko_metafora_no_istoricheskoe_zadanie_dlya_rossii/)

Всемирный Русский Народный Собор [World Russian People's Council], vrns.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.vrns.ru/>

Consiglio d'Europa, coe.int, (last accessed October 2021), www.coe.int/it/web/portal

European Council of Religious Leaders, ecrl.eu, (last accessed October 2021), <https://ecrl.eu/>

The Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993), constitution.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm>

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), (last accessed October 2021), <https://www.unaoc.org/resource-type/unaoc-annual-reports/>

United Nations Archives, 21-11-2007, (last accessed August 2021), <https://search.archives.un.org/uploads/r/united-nations-archives/a/2/8/a28e9192657a0d86e54bb15d8aed15febe949bcb89da3b54c36ba58e1f87b7c4/S-1956-0026-0008-00015.PDF>.

Динамика Отношения Населения Украины К России И Населения России К Украине, Каких Отношений С Россией Хотели Бы Украинцы [Dynamics Of The Attitude Of The Population Of Ukraine To Russia And The Population Of Russia To Ukraine, What Kind Of Relations With Russia Would Ukrainians Like], (last accessed August 2021), kiis.com.ua, <http://www.kiis.com.ua/?cat=reports&id=236&lang=rus>

Интервью С Кандидатом В Президенты Украины Леонидом Кучмой [Interview With Ukrainian Presidential Candidate Leonid Kuchma], 22-06-2994, (last accessed August 2021), https://sites.ualberta.ca/~khineiko/segodnia_93_95_98_99/1121896.htm

Международный Общественный Фонд [The International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christians Nations], ifuocn.com, (last accessed October 2021), [Главная | Международный общественный Фонд единства православных народов \(ifuocn.com\)](#)

Мир Православия, «Я посетил дорожку моему сердцу Эстонскую землю» [“I have visited the Estonian land dear to my heart”], (last accessed August 2021), <http://baltwillinfo.com/mp10-03/mp-08.htm>

Православие и экуменизм [Orthodoxy and Ecumenism], predanie.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://predanie.ru/book/83546-pravoslavie-i-ekumenizm/#/toc2>

Постоянное представительство Российской Федерации при Европейском союзе [Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union], russiae.u.ru, (last accessed October 2021), <https://russiae.u.ru/ru>

Храм Христа Спасителя [Cathedral of Christ the Savior], www.tonkosti.ru, (last accessed October 2021), https://tonkosti.ru/%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC_%D0%A5%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0_%D0%A1%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%8F

Христианского межконфессионального консультативного комитета (ХМКК) [Christian Interfaith Advisory Committee (HMCC)], (last accessed May 2021), <https://www.xmkk.org/>

Il proselitismo cattolico. Tra la popolazione ortodossa in Russia. Informazione generale, 25-06-2002, (last accessed July 2021), http://spazioinwind.libero.it/sanmassimo_decaita/testi/confronti/proselitismo.htm

Archives

Beletsky M., *Religious Situation in Ukraine*, Kiev Center for Political Studies and Conflictology, pp. 1-9 + приложение 1, 2, 4 [+appendix 1, 2, 4]. (Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

Дневник. Пребывания в Киеве 8-членной Подкомиссии Священного Синода РПЦ по вопросам расширения самостоятельности Украинской Православной церкви (УШ) 29-30 августа 1990 г. [DIARY. The staying in Kiev of the 8-members of the Subcommittee of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the issues of expanding the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (USH) on August 29-30, 1990], 05 September 1990, pp. 2-15 (Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

Справка. Об Украинской Православной Церкви. 1990 – 1994 гг. [Information. About the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. 1994-1994], 13 May 2014, pp. 2-6, (Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patmriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], Message from Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Episcopate, Clergy and Lay Believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 7-5-92, pp. 1-5 (Document from the archive of Metropolitan Sabodan. Original translation in English).

Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patmriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], 22.5.92, pp. 16, (Document from the Archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

Отдел Внешних Церковных Сношении Московского Патриархата Бюро Коммуникации [Moscow Patmriarchate Department for External Church Relations, Communication desk], Сообщение Для Органов Информации [Press Release], Новый представитель Украинской Православной Церкви [New Representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 27.5.92, pp. 17, (Document from the Archive of Metropolitan Sabodan).

Garf, фонд 10170, описи 1, дела 51, Бессмертный-Анзимиров А. Статья «Третьего не дано. О полемике между отцом Виктором Потаповым, профессором Д. Поспеловским и Д. Шумариным» Компьютерная машинопись [Bessmertny-Anzimirov A. Article "The third is not given. On the controversy between Father Viktor Potapov, Professor D. Pospelovsky and D. Shumarin "Computer typescript], pp. 1-13.

Garf, фонда.10170, описи 1, дела 56, Протоиерей Лев Лебедев. Статья «Диалог Русской православной церкви за границей с Московской Патриархией: для чего и как?» Ксерокопия компьютерной машинописи [Archpriest Lev Lebedev. The article "Dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with the Moscow Patriarchate: Why and How?" Photocopy of computer typing], pp. 1-10.

Сдаго, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2659. Цк Компартии Украины, О дополнительных мерах по преодолению униатства [The Central Committee of the Ukranian Communist Party, On Additional Measures to Overcome Uniatism], 14-07-1989 N°260, pp. 17-19.

Сдаго, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2659, Об активизации выступлений на Западе за легализацию украинской католической церкви в УССР [On the intensification of protests in the West for the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR], Цк Компартии Украины [Central Commitee of the Communist Party of Ukraine], 04-11-1989, pp. 32-37.

Cdago, фонд 1 опис 32 дело 2887, Про релігійну ситуацію в західних областях України [About the Religious Situation in the Outlying Regions of Ukraine], Цк Компартии Украины [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine], 02-02-90, pp. 8-11.

Tsdavo, Фонд 5252, опис 6. Спр. №3, 64 in Фонд 5252, опис 6, роки 1991.2000, Передмова [Preface], p. 1.

Integrum and Eastview

Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Вышел В Свет Сотый Номер Газеты Украинской Автокефальной Православной Церкви "Наша Вера" [The Hundredth Issue Of The Newspaper Of The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church "Our Faith" Has Been Published]*, Moscow, 23-09-1996.

Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Предстоятели Украинских Православных Церквей Против Визита Папы Римского На Украину [Representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches Against the Visit of the Pope of Rome to Ukraine]*, 22-11-1996.

Agentstvo Blagovest-info, *Жизнь Уапц: Патриарх Димитрий Не Сдается [Life Of The Uaoc: Patriarch Dimitri Does Not Give Up]*, 18-11-1996.

Agentstvo Itar-Tass – Moscow, *Россия-Религия-Встреча-Патриарх-Папа [Russia-Religion-Meeting-Patriarch-Pope]*, 12-06-1997

Blagovest, *Церковный Конфликт В Подмосковном Ногинске: Филарет (Денисенко) Апеллирует К Ельцину [Church Conflict In Noginsk, Near Moscow: Filaret (Denisenko) Appeals To Yeltsin]*, 04-10-1996.

Blagovest, *Передача Зданий Киево-Печерской Лавры Упц-Мп: Украинская Интеллигенция Негодует [Transfer Of The Buildings Of The Kiev-Pechersk Lavra Of The Uoc-Mp: The Ukrainian Intelligentsia Is Indignant]*, 23-10-1996.

Blagosvest, *Разрастается Очередной Церковно-Имущественный Конфликт [Another Church-Property Conflict Is Growing]*, 04-12-1996.

Blagovest.ru, *Верующие Упц-Мп Требуют Передачи Церкви Помещений Киево-Печерской Лавры [Believers Of The Uoc-Mp Demand The Transfer Of The Premises Of The Kiev Pechersk Lavra To The Church]*, 04-11-1994.

Blagovest.info, *Глеб Якунин Снова Угрожает [Gleb Yakunin Threatens Again]*, 08-10-1996.

Blagovest.info, *Конфликт Вокруг Ногинского Храма: Суд Берёт Паузу [The Conflict Over The Noginsky Temple: The Court Takes A Pause]*, 11-10-1996.

Blagovest.info, *Митрополит Владимир Сабодан - За Автокефалию, Но "Малой Кровью" [Metropolitan Vladimir Sabodan-For Autocephaly, But With "Little Blood"]*, 21-11-1996.

Blagovest.info, Митрополит Кирилл: Филарету Денисенко Архиерейский Сан Не Будет Возвращен Ни При Каких Условиях [Metropolitan Kirill: The Episcopal Dignity Will Not Be Returned To Filaret Denisenko Under Any Circumstances], 02-12-1996.

Blagovest.info, Украинское Православное Братство Святого Андрея Первозванного Выступило С Заявлением Об Антигосударственной Деятельности Упц-Мп [The Ukrainian Orthodox Brotherhood Of St. Andrew The First-Called Issued A Statement About The Anti-State Activities Of The Uoc-Mp], 21-02-1997.

Blagovest.info, Киевский Городской Совет Принял Решение О Передаче Отдельных Объектов Киево-Печерской Лавры Упц-Кп [The Kiev City Council Decided To Transfer Certain Objects Of The Kiev Pechersk Lavra To The Uoc-Kp], 29-05-1997.

Blagovest-info agency, Священный Синод Русской Православной Церкви Обсудил Взаимоотношения С Римско-Католической Церковью На Современном Этапе [The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Discussed Relations with the Roman Catholic Church at the Present Stage], Moscow, 11-06-1997.

Blagosvest, Патриарх Филарет: Московский Патриархат Угрожает Украинским Иерархам Обнародовать Архивы Кзб [Patriarch Filaret: Moscow Patriarchate Threatens Ukrainian Hierarchs To Publish Kgb Archives], 05.01.1999.

Blavest.info, Президент Украины Встретился С Патриархом Филаретом [The President Of Ukraine Met With Patriarch Filaret], 21-11-1996.

Vjulleten' Instituta stran SNG, По итогам визита Владимира Путина на Украину и встречи с Кучмой в Прохоровке [Following Vladimir Putin's visit to Ukraine and meeting with Kuchma in Prokhorovka], 06-05-2000.

Den', Московский патриарх доволен президентскими выборами в Украине [The Moscow Patriarch is pleased with the presidential elections in Ukraine], Kiev, 01-12-1999.

Den', К Каноническому Признанию Украинского Православия Сделан Еще Один Важный Шаг [Another Important Step Has Been Taken Towards The Canonical Recognition Of Ukrainian Orthodoxy], Kiev, 26-12-2000.

Ekspress, "Я Противник Возвращения В Московский Патриархат" [Patriarch Filaret: "I Am Against Returning To The Moscow Patriarchate"], 01-12-2000.

Estonian Agency of News, Христианско-Народный Союз За Автокефалию Упц [Christian-People's Union For Autocephaly Of The Uoc], 19-10-1998.

Eurasia Daily Monitor, Yanukovych Has Moscow Patriarchate On His Side, 1:127, 15-11-2004.

Express Agency, Украинская Православная Церковь Киевского Патриархата Не Может Перейти В Оппозицию К Нынешней Власти Потому, Что Церковь Поддерживает Украинское Государство [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Kiev

Patriarchate Cannot Go Into Opposition To The Current Government Because The Church Supports The Ukrainian State], 18-11-1995.

GlavRed, *Филарет готов объединиться с УПЦ МП с одним условием* [Filaret is ready to unite with the UOC MP with one condition], 04-12-2006.

Golos Rossii, *Священник Николай Балашов: «Мы Не Должны Подвергать Нашу Веру Испытаниям И Раздорам»* [Priest Nikolaj Balashov: "We Should Not Subject Our Faith To Trials And Discord"], 22-04-2008.

IA Regnum, *В Киеве Алексей II и Варфоломей I проводят литургию по случаю 1020-летия крещения Руси* [Aleksii II and Bartholomew I hold a liturgy in Kiev on the occasion of the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus], 27-08-2008.

Igumen Veniamin, *Анализ 1-5 Глав "Основ Социальной Концепции Русской Православной Церкви"* [Analysis Of Chapters 1-5 Of The "Fundamentals of the Social Concept Of the Russian Orthodox Church"], Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia, 01-04-2002, SCS-No. 004.

ImaPress, *Подчинение Упц Московской Патриархии Равносильно Зависимости Верховной Рады От Российского Парламента, Считает Патриарх Филарет* [Subordination Of The Uoc To The Moscow Patriarchate Is Equivalent To The Dependence Of The Verkhovna Rada On The Russian Parliament, Patriarch Filaret Believes], 26-06-1998.

Interfacs, *В Киеве Проходит Поместный Собор Украинской Православной Церкви - Киевский Патриархат* [The Local Council Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church - The Kiev Patriarchate Is Being Held In Kiev], 20-10-1995.

Interfax, *Киевские Иерархи Проведут Переговоры О Возможности Объединения Двух Самостоятельных Православных Церквей Украины* [Moscow, Kiev Hierarchs To Hold Talks On The Possibility Of Uniting Two Independent Orthodox Churches Of Ukraine], 14-11-1995.

Intefax, *Решения Русской Православной Церкви Не Имеют Юридической Силы Для Упц Киевского Патриархата - Заявление Синода Упц-Кп* [The Decisions Of The Russian Orthodox Church Have No Legal Force For The Uoc Of The Kiev Patriarchate-Statement Of The Synod Of The Uoc-Kp], 20-02-1997.

ItarTass, *Россия-Религия-Ватикан-Встреча* [Meetings: Russia, Religion, Vatican], 15-01-1998.

Itar Tass, *Ситуацию в религиозной жизни на Украине прокомментировал митрополит Смоленский и Калининградский Кирилл* [Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad commented on the situation in religious life in Ukraine], 19-07-1995.

Itar Tass, *Рубрика: Украина-Россия-Религия* [Rubric: Ukraine, Russia, Religion], 27-09-1995.

Itar Tass, *На патриарший престол Украинской Православной церкви претендуют два кандидата* [Two candidates are applying for the patriarchal throne of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 04-10-1995.

ItarTass, *Украина-Церковь-Собор* [Ukraine, Church, Council], 21-10-1995.

ItarTass, *Украинская православная и украинская автокефальная православная церковь объявили о намерении объединиться* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church have announced their intention to unite], 28-02-1996.

Itar Tass, *Religiya i obshchestvo, Совместная делегация Московского Константинопольского Патриархатов посетила Киев для изучения церковной ситуации на Украине* [Religion and Society (operational tape), A joint delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate of Constantinople visited Kiev to study the church situation in Ukraine], 30-05-2001.

Itar Tass, *В Киеве прошли беспрецедентные встречи с представителями неканонических церковных образований* [Unprecedented meetings were held in Kiev with representatives of non-canonical church formations], 01-06-2001.

Itar Tass, *Religiya i obshchestvo, Московский Патриархат осуждает попытки "митрополита Киевского и всея Руси-Украины" Моисея объединить православных Украины* [Moscow Patriarchate Condemns Attempts by "Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia-Ukraine" Moses to Unite Orthodox Ukrainians], 02-12-2002.

Kostiuk Konstantin, *Возникновение социальной доктрины Русской православной церкви, Общественные науки и современность* [The Emergence of the Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church, Social Sciences and Modernity], ONA, N°. 006, 11-01-2001.

Koval'skiy Valentin, *Архиепископ Игорь Исиченко: "В Церковных Конфликтах Прослеживается Почерк Спецслужб"* [Archbishop Igor Isichenko: "There Is A Handwriting In Church Conflicts Special Services"], Segodnja, 29-01-1999.

Krasndo, *Не Дали Ходу Православным На Украине Завершилась Крупномасштабная Провокация Против Русской Православной Церкви* [Have Not Given The Orthodox Going In Ukraine A Large-Scale Procedure Against The Russian Orthodox Church Is Completed], 20-08-1999.

Lenta.ru, *В организации кампании против РПЦ митрополит Кирилл обвинил советских атеистов* [Metropolitan Kirill accused Soviet atheists of organizing a campaign against the ROC], 02-02-2004.

Moscow Church Bullettin, *Межцерковные Отношения На Украине На Переговорах Между Русской Православной И Римско-Католической Церквами* [Inter-Church Relations In Ukraine At The Talks Between The Russian Orthodox And Roman Catholic Churches], 12-06-1997.

Moscow Church Bulletin, *Встреча С Представителем Ватикана [Meeting with representative in the Vatican]*, 09-07-1998.

Newru, *Украина выдвинула своего кандидата не по уставу [Ukraine has put forward its candidate not according to the charter]*, 23-12-2008.

NEWSru.com, *Президент Украины попросил Патриарха Варфоломея помочь в создании единой поместной православной Церкви [Ukrainian President asks Patriarch Bartholomew to help create a united local Orthodox Church]*, 16-07-2008.

Nezavisimaja gazeta, *Между Москвой и Константинополем [Between Moscow and Constantinople]*, 24-07-2008.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Новые Катакомбы Галиции, Некоторые данные о религиозной ситуации во Львовской области [New Catacombs Of Galicia, Some data on the religious situation in the Lviv region]*, 06-06-1996.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Президент России Готовится К Визиту В Рим [Russian President Prepares for Visit to Rome]*, 16-01-1998.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Пути Выхода Из Кризиса Русская Православная и Римско-Католическая Церкви: проблемы и перспективы взаимоотношений [Ways Out Of The Crisis The Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches: problems and prospects of relations]*, 23-01-1998.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Религии, Львовский Собор 1946 Года Рпц Всегда Считала Каноническим [Religions, the ROC has always considered canonical the 1946 Council of Lviv]*, 16-09-1998.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Религии, Крестный Ход Или Политическая Акция? [Religion, Procession, or Political Action?]*, 14-07-1999.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Кучма Вступил В Должность [Kuchma Took Office]*, 01-12-1999.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Русский мир. Возможные цели самоопределения [Russian world. Possible goals of self-determination]*, 14, 2000.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, *Разрыв Отношений Или Продолжение Диалога? На вопросы корреспондента "Независимой Газеты" отвечает Секретарь по межхристианским связям игумен Иларион (Алфеев), [Breaking Off Relations Or Continuing Dialogue? The Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, Hegumen Hilarion (Alfeev), answers the questions of the correspondent of Nezavisimaja Gazeta]*, 29-07-2000.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta Religia, *Русская Церковь И Ватикан: До Перемирия Еще Далеко [The Russian Church And The Vatican: A Truce Is Still A Long Way Off]*, 19-11-2003.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Religia, *Реален Ли Статус Украинского Патриархата [Is the Status of the Ukrainian Patriarchate Real?]*, 16-09-1998.

Nezavisimaja Gazeta , Religia, Ukrainskiy Most, *Между Москвой И Ватиканом [Between Moscow and the Vatican]*, 04-12-2002.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta-Religii, *Перспективы Самостоятельности [Perspective of independence]*, 23.08.2000

Nezavisimaja Gazeta- Religii, *Троянский Конь Автокефалии [The Trojan Horse of Autocephaly]*, 04-12-2007.

Novosti Novokuznetska. Gorod novostej, *Ющенко объявил, что крестили не Русь, а Украину [Yushchenko announced that it was not Russia that was baptized, but Ukraine]*, 25-07-2008.

NTV Novosti, *В Киеве избран глава Украинской Автокефальной Православной Церкви [The head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church has been elected in Kiev]*, 18-09-2000.

NTV – Novosti, *Президент Украины встретился с иерархами Украинской Автокефальной Церкви [The President of Ukraine met with the hierarchs of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church]*, 25-10-2000.

NTV – Novosti, *Леонид Кучма мечтает о единой Украинской Православной Церкви [Leonid Kuchma dreams of a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church]*, 08-11-2000.

NTV – Novosti, *Украинский президент встретился с Варфоломеем I [The Ukrainian President met with Bartholomew I]*, 27-11-2000.

NTV-Novosti, *Украинская Православная Церковь Московского Патриархата надеется на Владимира Путина [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate hopes for Vladimir Putin]*, 22-12-2000.

NTV Novosti, *Кардинал Каспер не искал в Киеве встреч с представителями УПЦ КП [Cardinal Kasper did not seek meetings with representatives of the UOC-KP in Kiev]*, 23-10-2002.

Obozrevatel, *Московский Патриархат возмущен универсалом Ющенко [The Moscow Patriarchate is outraged by the universal Yushchenko]*, Kiev, 28-07-2006.

Patriarchia.ru, *Украинские автокефалисты просят защитить их от «объединения» с «киевским патриархатом» [Ukrainian Autocephalists ask for protection from "unification" with the "Kyiv Patriarchate]*, 01-11-2005.

Patriarchia.ru, *Управляющий делами УПЦ архиепископ Митрофан выразил беспокойство по поводу позиции Константинопольского Патриархата [Archbishop Mitrofan, Managing Director of the UOC, expressed concern about the position of the Patriarchate of Constantinople]*, 07-03-2006.

Patriarchia.ru, *В Отделе внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата прокомментировали инициативы Ющенко по созданию на Украине*

«единой поместной церкви» [The Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate commented on Yushchenko's initiatives to create a "single local church" in Ukraine], 15-01-2007.

Patriarchia.ru, В «Киевском патриархате» отвергли предложение Архиерейского Собора о присоединении к Украинской Православной Церкви через покаяние [The "Kiev Patriarchate" rejected the proposal of the Bishops' Council to join the Ukrainian Orthodox Church through repentance], 30-01-2007.

Patriarchia.ru, Состоялась встреча Святейшего Патриарха Алексия с Президентом Украины В.А.Ющенко [His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii met with President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko], 21-02-2008.

Patriarchia.ru, Митрополит Киевский Владимир заявил, что президент Украины не создает политического давления на Церковь [Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev said that the President of Ukraine does not create political pressure on the Church], 21-02-2008.

Patriarchia.ru, Представитель Отдела внешних церковных связей Московского Патриархата принял участие в парламентских слушаниях, посвященных российско-украинским отношениям [A representative of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations took part in parliamentary hearings on Russian-Ukrainian relations], 02-04-2008.

Patriarchia.ru, В Киево-Печерской Лавре отпраздновали шестнадцатую годовщину Харьковского Собора [The Kiev Pechersk Lavra celebrated the sixteenth anniversary of the Kharkiv Cathedral], 28-05-2008.

Patriarchia.ru, Митрополит Кирилл рассказал участникам Собора о проблемах, которые провоцирует выдвинутое Константинопольским Патриархатом новое толкование канонических правил, касающихся юрисдикции Православных Церквей вне своих территориальных пределов [Metropolitan Kyrill told the Council about the problems provoked by the Constantinople Patriarchate's new interpretation of canonical rules concerning the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Churches outside their territorial boundaries], 24-06-2008.

Patriarchia.ru, В пресс-службе Украинской Православной Церкви отмечают деструктивный характер действий представителей УАПЦ [The press service of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church notes the destructive nature of the actions of representatives of the UAOC], 12-03-2007.

PoliBaiki, Филарет издал декларацию о причинах раскола УПЦ [Filaret issued a declaration on the reasons for the split of the UOC], 01-06-2007.

PostFactum, Патриарх Киевский Владимир Намерен Объединить Украинскую Православную Церковь Киевского И Московского Патриархатов [Patriarch Of Kiev Vladimir Intends To Unite The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Kiev And Moscow Patriarchates], 12-11-1993.

Postfactum, *Группа Священнослужителей Украинской Православной Церкви Обратилась К Патриарху Московскому И Всея Руси С Просьбой О Присоединении К Московскому Патриархату* [A Group Of Clergymen Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Appealed To The Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia With A Request To Join The Moscow Patriarchate], 23-02-1994.

Postfactum, *Представители Украинской Автокефальной Церкви Захватили Один Из Православных Храмов В Тернопольской Области* [,Representatives Of The Ukrainian Autocephalous Church Seized One Of The Orthodox Churches In The Ternopil Region], 30-03-1995.

Postfactum, *Сторонница Украинской Православной Церкви Московского Патриархата Осквернила Могилу Патриарха Владимира* [A Supporter Of The Ukrainian Orthodox Church Of The Moscow Patriarchate Desecrated The Grave Of Patriarch], 17-10-1995.

Postfactum, *Московский Патриархат Делает Все, Чтобы На Украине Погибла Независимая Национальная Церковь, Считает Патриарх Упцкп* [The Moscow Patriarchate Is Doing Everything To Ensure That An Independent National Church Uoc-Kp], 24-10-1995.

Pravaja.ru, *Talking of anti-church propaganda, Metropolitan Kirill referred to a wide kind of actions, that should be investigated further. Anti-Church actions are actions which support secularistic conceptions, or support separatism of Churches from the Russian Orthodox Church as in Ukraine, or critics against the Interreligious Council of Russia. See for example: Антицерковное лобби против Межрелигиозного Совета России* [Anti-church lobbies against Interreligious Council of Russia], 24-10-2005.

Press Lvov, *В Событиях На Софийской Площади В Киеве Замешана Православная Церковь Московского Патриархата?* [Is The Orthodox Church Of The Moscow Patriarchate Involved In The Events On Sofia Square In Kiev?], 27-07-1995.

Regions.Ru / Russia, *Визит Папы Римского На Украину Ухудшит Православно-Католические Отношения* [Pope's Visit To Ukraine Will Worsen Orthodox-Catholic Relations], 03-04-2007.

Regnum.ru, *Румынский патриархат отказывается от создания своих епархий на территории Молдавии, Приднестровья и Украины?* [Romanian Patriarchate refuses to create its own dioceses on the territory of Moldova, Transnistria and Ukraine?], 14-11-2007.

Regnum.ru, *Румынская патриархия готова отказаться от "Бессарабской митрополии" ради автокефальной Молдавской православной церкви?* [Is the Romanian Patriarchate ready to abandon the "Metropolitan of Bessarabia" for the sake of the autocephalous Moldovan Orthodox Church?], 22-11-2007.

Religia i Smi, *Митрополит Владимир (Сабодан) благословил только Виктора Януковича* [Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan) blessed only Viktor Yanukovich], 10-11-2004.

Religioznaya zhizn' v Rossii, *В Киеве Идет Борьба За Единую Украинскую Православную Церковь* [Religious Life In Russia, There Is A Struggle For A Single Ukrainian Orthodox Church In Kiev], 17-08-2000.

Ria Novosti, *Патриарх Московский И Всея Руси Алексий П Высказался Против Попыток Создания Независимой Православной Церкви На Украине* [Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia Aleksii P Spoke Out Against Attempts To Create An Independent Orthodox Church In Ukraine], 29-03-2000.

Ria Novosti, *Швейцария-Россия-Религия-Переговоры* [Switzerland-Russia-Religion-Negotiations], Moscow, 07-04-2000.

Rosbalt, *Украинский патриархат благославил союз Украины и НАТО* [The Ukrainian Patriarchate blessed the Union of Ukraine and NATO], 06-10-2008.

Rossijskaya Pechat' *O Stranakh Sng (Vps) Ukraina Ng-Religii, Большой Договор И Церкви Украины* [The Big Treaty And the Churches of Ukraine], 27-03-1999.

Rupor.info, *Ющенко получил благословение Московского патриархата* [Yushchenko received the blessing of the Moscow Patriarchate], 10-11-2004.

Russkaja linija (St. Petersburg), *Митрополит Владимир поддержал киево-печерских монахов* [Metropolitan Vladimir supported the Kiev-Pechersk monks], 02-04-2003.

Russkaja linija (Sankt-Peterburg), *Ющенко продолжает вмешиваться в церковные дела* [Yushchenko continues to interfere in church affairs], 26-06-2007.

Russkaya Mysl, *Не Дали Ходу Православным На Украине Завершилась Крупномасштабная Провокация Против Русской Православной Церкви* [The Orthodox Were Not Allowed To Move In Ukraine, A Large-Scale Provocation Against The Russian Orthodox Church Ended], 20-08-1999.

Russkaja Mysl', *Правительство Украины Добивается Объединения Всех Православных Юрисдикций В Стране* [The Government Of Ukraine Is Seeking The Unification Of All Orthodox Jurisdictions In The Country], Paris, 27-07-2000.

Russkaja Mysl', *Беззаконие В Действии* [Lawlessness in Action], 15-04-1998.

Russkaya Mysl, *"Я был первым из архиереев УАПЦ, вернувшихся в УПЦ...". Интервью с епископом Ивано-Франковским Николаем* [Paris, France, "I was the first of the UAOC bishops to return to the UOC..". Interview with Bishop Nikolai of Ivano-Frankivsk], Paris, 09-07-1998.

Russkaja Mysl, *Украинские Автокефалисты Провели Свой Собор* [Ukrainian Autocephalists Hold Their Own Council], Parizh, Frantsija, 21-09-2000.

Sedmina.ru, *Украинская Православная церковь отмечает 15-летие Харьковского Архиерейского Собора* [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church celebrates the 15th anniversary of the Kharkiv Bishops ' Council], 21-05-2007.

Sedmina.ru, Варфоломей I изложил свое видение вопроса о переходе Киевской митрополии из юрисдикции Константинопольской Церкви в состав Московского Патриархата в 1687 г. [Bartholomew I laid out his vision for the transition of the metropolitanate of Kiev from the jurisdiction of the Church of Constantinople to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1687], 26-07-2008.

Sedmina.ru, Виктор Ющенко и Патриарх Варфоломей провели торжества на Софийской площади в Киеве по случаю 1020-летия крещения Руси [Victor Yushchenko and Patriarch Bartholomew held celebrations on St. Sophia Square in Kiev to mark the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus], 26-07-2008.

Sedmina.ru, Историки указывают на ряд ошибок и натяжек в обращении Патриарха Варфоломея I к украинской нации на торжествах в честь 1020-летия Крещения Руси [Historians point to a number of errors and misstatements in Patriarch Bartholomew I's address to the Ukrainian nation at the celebrations marking the 1020th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia], 31-07-2008.

Sedmina.ru, Украинские власти не будут вмешиваться в дела Церкви, обещает Ющенко [Ukrainian authorities will not interfere in the affairs of the Church, promises Yushchenko], 23-07-2008.

Sedmina.ru, Патриарх Константинопольский Варфоломей отказался совершать богослужение в Киеве в присутствии раскольников-филаретовцев [Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople refused to perform a divine service in Kiev in the presence of dissenters-filaretovites], 15-07-2008.

Sedmina.ru, Отлученный от Церкви и преданный анафеме самозванный «патриарх Киевский» рассуждает о каноничности [Excommunicated and anathematized self-styled "Patriarch of Kiev" talks about canonicity, 10.07.2008], 10-07-2008.

Semina.ru, Синод Украинской Православной Церкви призвал Патриарха Константинопольского прекратить вмешательство в ее дела [The Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church called on the Patriarch of Constantinople to stop interfering in its affairs], 24-07-2008.

Sevodnya, Леонид Кучма Выразил "Сожаление И Озабоченность" В Связи С Событиями 18 Июля Конфиденциальные Источники Сообщают, Что Указания Об Атаке Похоронной Процессии Шли Из Администрации Президента [Leonid Kuchma Expressed "Regret And Concern" In Connection With The Events Of 18 July Confidential Sources Report That Instructions About The Attack Of The Funeral Procession Came From The Presidential Administration], 28-07-1995.

Shmyrev Maksim, Большой Договор И Церкви Украины [The Great Treaty And The Churches Of Ukraine], Nezavisimaja Gazeta, Religia, 6, 24-03-1999.

Sinod.ru, Синод принял решение по украинскому вопросу [The Synod made a decision on the Ukrainian issue], 17-07-2001.

Sotsiologicheskie issledovanija, SCS, Основы социальной концепции Русской Православной Церкви ("круглый стол") [Basics of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church (roundtable), N°.008, 08-01-2001.

Strana.ru, Патриарх Константинопольский стремится к установлению своей юрисдикции на Украине [The Patriarch of Constantinople seeks to establish his jurisdiction in Ukraine], 09-12-2000.

Strana.ru, Сторонники преданного анафеме раскольника Филарета Денисенко провели в Киеве свой собор [Supporters of the anathematized schismatic Filaret Denisenko held their council in Kiev], 10-01-2001.

Strana.ru, Президент Леонид Кучма встретился с главными украинскими раскольниками [President Leonid Kuchma met with the main Ukrainian dissenters], 06-04-2001.

Strana.ru, УПЦ КП и УАПЦ решили предстать перед Папой вместе [The UOC-KP and the UAOC decided to appear before the Pope together], 19-06-2001.

Strana.ru, УПЦ КП и УАПЦ добиваются признания у Папы Римского [UOC-KP and UAOC are seeking recognition from the Pope], 25-06-2001.

Strana.ru, Синод принял решение по украинскому вопросу [The Synod made a decision on the Ukrainian issue], 17-07-2001.

Strana.ru, В Киеве открывается российско-украинская православная конференция [Russian-Ukrainian Orthodox Conference opens in Kiev], 22-07-2001.

Strana. Ru, Визит митрополита Кирилла испугал Филарета Денисенко [The visit of Metropolitan Kirill frightened Filaret Denisenko], 31-07-2001.

Strana.ru, Московский Патриархат обеспокоен позицией Госкомрелигий Украины в отношении УПЦ КП [The Moscow Patriarchate is concerned about the position of the State Religions of Ukraine in relation to the UOC-KP], 14-03-2002

Trud, Митрополит Смоленский И Калининградский Кирилл: Надежда На Спасение Есть Даже На Дне Пропasti [Metropolitan Kirill Of Smolensk And Kaliningrad: There Is Hope For Salvation Even At The Bottom Of The Abyss], 7, 06-01-1999.

Ukrainform, Патриарх Киевский И Всей Украины-Руси Филарет Обнародовал Историко-Каноническую Декларацию Архиерейского Собора Упц Киевского Патриархата [Patriarch Filaret Of Kiev And All Ukraine-Russia Has Published The Historical And Canonical Declaration Of The Bishops ' Council Of The Uoc-Kyiv Patriarchate], 01-06-2007.

Vechernyaya Moskva, Крестный ход или политическая акция? [Religious procession or political action], 05-07-1999.

Vek, "Память" протестует на украинском. Жаль, что бедами православных общин интересуются только крайне правые [Pamjat' protests in Ukrainian. It is a

shame that only the extreme right is interested in the problems of Orthodox communities], Moscow, 6, 06-02-1998.

Vremia Novastei, Киевский Патриарх Филарет: Алексей Загоняет Русскую Православную Церковь В Угол [Time of news, Patriarch Filaret Of Kiev: Aleksii Drives The Russian Orthodox Church Into A Corner], 17-11-2000.

Zerkalo nedeli, Патриарх Филарет: "Объединение Украинских Церквей Может Произойти Уже В Этом Году" [Patriarch Filaret: "The Unification Of The Ukrainian Churches Can Happen Already This Year"], 05-08-2000.