



THE EASTERN ORTHODOX No 107: November 2018

**ЦЕРКОВЬ СВТ. ИОАННА ШАНХАЙСКОГО
ST JOHN'S RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Military Road, Colchester, Essex CO1 2AN**

**His Holiness Kyrill, Patriarch of Moscow and All the Russias
Most Rev. Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Church Outside Russia
Rt. Rev. Bishop Irenei, Bishop of Richmond and Western Europe**

The Church of St John of Shanghai, built in 1855, is the largest Russian Orthodox church building in the British Isles and is attended by 3,000 Orthodox of 24 different nationalities.

It is a parish of the East of England Orthodox Church Trust, part of the Russian Orthodox Church (Charity No: 1081707) comprising Colchester, Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Wisbech and Ashford, and looks after faithful Orthodox in the East of England.

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Website: www.orthodoxengland.org.uk

Расписание Богослужений / Timetable of Services

Saturday 3 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 4 November

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Saturday 10 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 11 November

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия

Saturday 17 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 18 November

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Saturday 24 November

5.30 pm: Vigil / Всенощное бдение

Sunday 25 November

10.00 am: Hours and Divine Liturgy / Часы и Божественная литургия.

Wednesday 28 November

Beginning of the Advent Fast/ Начало Рождественского Поста

Baptisms in October

6 October: Andrei Voium

6 October: Nicu Ciuperca

6 October: Nicolae Boghean

11 October: Ludmila Fitzgerald

13 October: Mihai Duhu

14 October: Kirill Duchuk

14 October: Rafael Tudor

20 October: Anna Hobjila

20 October: Alexandru Ciobanu

Wedding in October

22 October: Edward Phillips and Sadie Joanne Fitzpatrick

Church News

Conference at our Church

On Saturday 27 October, our Church hosted an international conference on the Tsar-Martyr St Nicholas II. This was attended by Metropolitan Jonah (Pfaffhausen), a retired Russian Orthodox Metropolitan from the USA, who kindly celebrated for us on Sunday 28.

FOUR TRIES: ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALY IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS

Introduction

We are witnessing the fourth and perhaps last attempt to establish an Autocephalous Church in Ukraine, despite the rejection of this idea by the Orthodox episcopate, the monasteries and their elders, the parish clergy and the great majority of active Orthodox believers in that country.

The characteristics of the current attempt follow broadly those of three previous ones, which all ended in failure. That is, interference from outside forces, encouragement from governments, and culture and nationalism overriding theological concerns.

It is important to look at these past events if we are to properly understand what is happening now.

1. Ukraine after the revolution

The February revolution of 1917 ushered in a lengthy period of political and social chaos in Ukraine, as in the rest of the former Russian Empire. An “autonomous government” was succeeded by Bolshevik rule; German-Austrian occupation; the regime of Hetman Skoropadsky; Simon Petlyura's ultra-nationalist government; General Denikin's White Army and finally the Bolsheviks again, after their capture of Kiev in February 1919.¹

It was the Bolsheviks who immediately introduced anti-religious legislation and who drew the borders of Soviet Ukraine. The latter were roughly based on the language spoken in the rural areas and did not include Crimea nor the lands now referred to everywhere as western Ukraine.² The latter was under Polish or Romanian rule.

The beginning of “Autocephaly” as a movement is often dated as June 29, 1919, when the priest Basil Lypivsky served the Liturgy in the Ukrainian language in St Sophia's cathedral in Kiev before a congregation of enthusiastic supporters. He did this without a blessing from his bishop and in fact in direct disobedience to episcopal instructions.

The local Bolsheviks were in those days strongly supportive of Ukrainian nationalism and were also keen to encourage schismatic movements of every kind to weaken the Orthodox Church.

The real break came on October 23, 1921 when Lypivsky's group, with the active support of the Ukrainian Soviet government, created their own church “Rada” and consecrated Lypivsky as Metropolitan of the “Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church”.

There was one snag. No Orthodox bishop would have any dealings with them at all.

This did not deter the priests and laity of the new “church”; contrary to the canons and dogmatic teachings of the Church, they collectively laid hands on Lypivsky, who then proceeded to “consecrate” five further “bishops”. One was John Theodorovich, whom we shall meet later.

The new Sobor went on to proclaim its complete separation from the Russian Church and denounced the resolutions of the famous Moscow Council of 1918.

From that time no Orthodox body would recognize the “Autocephalists”, and they gained the name “self-consecrated”.³

The Communists also encouraged another schism which was to achieve some success in Russian-speaking cities like Kharkov. This was the Ukrainian branch of the Russian Renovationist schism. It no longer exists as an organized body in either country but it's similarity to the Autocephalists was very close. Both groups introduced married bishops, second marriages for widowed priests, the turning of monasteries into “working collectives”, open support for the soviet authorities (including their persecution of the Orthodox) and hasty liturgical reforms, among them the use of the Ukrainian language in worship.

Of the two groups it is probable that the Renovationists were actually the more conservative. They certainly were able to attract some Orthodox bishops to their schism, which was more than the Autocephalists were able to do. It is significant that rejection or marginalizing of the monastic life will become a constant feature of the autocephalist movement.

What is important here is how much support the “autocephalists” really had. Of course they were backed by the more nationalistic of the intelligentsia, by Petlyura's followers and by a section of the married parish clergy. However at no time did they form a majority of the Orthodox Christians of Ukraine. At the very representative Church Council that met in June 1918, advocates of autocephaly controlled only a third of the votes,⁴ while in the mid-1920s, after years of government encouragement (and simultaneous harassment of the canonical

Orthodox) the “Ukrainian Autocephalous Church” comprised approximately 2000 clergy and eleven percent of the Orthodox parishes still functioning.⁵ The great majority of Orthodox believers remained faithful to Patriarch Tikhon and in solidarity with their persecuted brethren in the rest of the soviet state.



John Theodorovich

By 1929 the Party Line had changed. Stalin began his attack on “bourgeois nationalism”; a plot was of course detected which aimed at restoring private property and detaching Ukraine from the Soviet Union. Many Ukrainian cultural figures disappeared into labor camps and during the 1930s all the autocephalist bishops were arrested (as were those of the canonical Church and even the ever-loyal renovationists). Of the thirty-five “bishops” consecrated by Lypivsky, not one remained alive in Ukraine by 1938. The sole survivor was John Theodorovich, who had earlier been sent to care for Ukrainian immigrants in Canada. Most of these were former Greek Catholics (Uniates) and the autocephalist version of ethnic Orthodoxy suited them nicely.

Theodorovich wrote a passionate theological defence of consecrating bishops without bishops which makes interesting reading.⁶ It went into three editions, the last of which was in 1947.

In 1949, however, he was persuaded by a section of his clergy to receive a “valid” consecration from a bishop who had received his orders from the Polish Orthodox Church and a rather shadowy Greek bishop who claimed to represent the Church of Alexandria. Many of his Canadian flock deeply objected to this denigration of the memory of Lypivsky, their founding father.⁷

1. Ukraine under German occupation.

In June 1941, the German armies invaded the Soviet Union without any declaration of war. They penetrated the country so quickly that in three months they had occupied most of Soviet Ukraine.

There were scarcely any churches still open at that time but the German authorities permitted the revival of Church life, and after a period of confusion, due to shifting borders, two rival Orthodox synods of bishops emerged: the so-called Autonomists (who commemorated Metropolitan Sergius—later Patriarch—in Moscow but who had no direct communication with him)⁸ and the Autocephalists who naturally had no superior. The autocephalist bishops had been consecrated by the Metropolitan of Warsaw and were technically canonical, but they quickly established contact with the surviving clergy of the Lypivsky succession, who made themselves known in the new conditions of religious freedom. What is crucial here is that the bishops did not demand any reordination of such priests but accepted them in their orders. This was done officially and made any communion with the autonomous bishops impossible.⁹

Another problem with the autocephalous bishops was that they were essentially political figures (the Germans noticed this very quickly, referring to them as politicians in cassocks). The head of the Ukrainian Autocephalist Church in occupied Ukraine, Polycarp Sikorsky, had been head of the chancellery of Petlyura's Council of Ministers during the Civil War; bishop John Ohienko had been Minister of Religion in Petlyura's short-lived government; Palladius Rudenko had been Minister of Finance in the same administration and Mystislav Skrypnyk (many years later to become "Patriarch") was Petlyura's nephew and former secretary.¹⁰



Mystislav Skrypnyk. Photo: pravlife.org

Despite their contempt for such hierarchs, the German authorities generally favored the autocephalists and “Ukrainianization” over the autonomists, at least until the last phases of the war

There was certainly a great revival of Church life during the brief period of German rule but the actual statistics are unfortunately incomplete. The largest number of churches reopened was in the western half of the country (which was under German rule for longer) and in Kiev.

The capital provides the most complete figures. 798 churches were functioning by 1943, 500 autonomous (i.e. canonical) and 298 autocephalous, served by 600 autonomist and 434 autocephalist priests. Everywhere the majority of parishes were autonomist, in most of the east overwhelmingly so. In Chernigov diocese there were no autocephalous churches at all. All reopened monasteries supported the canonical Church.¹¹

All reports indicate that the fact that the autocephalists accepted Lypivsky-ordained priests was a strong factor in their lack of support among the faithful.

When the Germans were driven out of Ukraine, about half the autonomous bishops and all the autocephalous ones were evacuated with them.¹²

Autocephalous parishes were established in Europe and the Americas with this second emigration, though they were never recognized by other Orthodox Churches.¹³ Neither did their bishops ever issue any statement of repentance for the actions of Lypivsky in 1921.

In 1990 the autocephalists in Canada, and in 1994 those in the USA, were accepted into the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This caused some controversy but was finally accepted by other Churches on the grounds that there were no longer any non-ordained priests left alive.

In Soviet Ukraine the autocephalists ceased to exist as a legal body.

3. Post-communist Ukraine

The events after Perestroika are well documented. The lifting of all restrictions on religious freedom led to the re-emergence of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and, on a much smaller scale, of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church.

A period of confusion followed.

The Metropolitan of Kiev, the most senior member of the Russian Orthodox Church after the Patriarch, was Philaret Denisenko who was expected to be elected next Patriarch of Moscow. This did not happen.

Meanwhile the Autocephalist Church had been revived and Mstyslav Skrypnyk (aged 92) was summoned from America to be their first “Patriarch”. He was “enthroned” in 1990 but later returned to his home in New Jersey.

Metropolitan Philaret, now allied to his friend President Kravchuk, announced that he was joining the revived Autocephalist church as exarch for Mstyslav. There was much opposition to this and after the death of Mstyslav, in 1993, two rival uncanonical autocephalist churches emerged. They called themselves the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kiev Patriarchate)—under Philaret, who proclaimed himself Patriarch—and the Ukrainian Autocephalist Orthodox Church under Patriarch Dimitry Yarema. This is still the situation. The two groups have exactly the same views about Ukrainian autocephaly but cannot agree about the controversial figure of Philaret and his leadership. After the death of Dimitry in 2000, the head of the UAOC no longer used the patriarchal title and established close ties with the Orthodox Ukrainians of Canada (and therefore indirectly with Constantinople).

Meanwhile the Orthodox episcopate of Ukraine completely rejected Philaret's path and elected a new Metropolitan of Kiev, Vladimir Sabodan. Until October 2018 his was the only

local Church in Ukraine recognized by the Orthodox world. Most of the parishes and practically all the monasteries and convents gathered under Metropolitan Vladimir.

It has been repeated many times that the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church under Metropolitan Vladimir, and since his death in 2014, under Metropolitan Onuphry, holds the vast majority of the Orthodox parishes, monasteries and seminaries in the country. It is the only group to be found in every part of Ukraine, and in some provinces it is without any autocephalist rivals at all.

What is not sufficiently appreciated is that the two uncanonical bodies are also highly localized. The small UAOC, which is shrinking fast, is virtually confined to three western provinces which together comprise much of the old Austrian “Galicia”—in other words the people there are former Greek Catholics (“Uniates”) or their descendants, for this region was almost without an Orthodox population before the Second World War.¹⁴



Philaret Denisenko

Even the “Kiev Patriarchate” is thin on the ground in the south, east and northern provinces of the country. It’s great strength is again in Galicia, plus Volhyn and Rovno (in the far west) and Kiev province. Even in these latter three regions it is far exceeded by the canonical Church.

In other words both uncanonical churches receive their main support from only three provinces out of the 26 provinces of Ukraine. These are Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil, which are also the most nationalistic and anti-Russian regions and the ones where the Ukrainian language is most used.¹⁵

It is clear that this third attempt, in the 1990s, to establish an independent Orthodox church, antagonistic towards the Moscow Patriarchate, was defeated by Orthodox believers themselves.

During this period a new factor emerged: both Philaret and President Kravchuk visited Patriarch Bartholomew in Istanbul at different times to seek his help in the establishment of an autocephalous church. The patriarch reiterated his unconditional support for Metropolitan Vladimir and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—the autonomous Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. This continued to be the policy of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate for many years to come.

4. Last try?

As this is being written (October 2018) a fourth attempt to establish Ukrainian autocephaly is underway.



The scenario follows closely that of the early 1990s but with two important additional factors. President Poroshenko, like Kravchuk before him, has visited Patriarch Bartholomew to ask for him to directly intervene in establishing a single united Orthodox Church entirely separate from Moscow and including the two uncanonical bodies. This time Constantinople has

agreed. At first Bartholomew and his supporters seemed to be basing this change of mind (and gross interference in the affairs of another Church), on his role as Orthodox primate (using quasi-Papal language). Later it turned out that Ukraine was now regarded in Istanbul as having always been part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate—the past 350 years having been forgotten.

The second new circumstance is the tacit support for autocephaly from the American government though how far this will be acted on is still obscure.¹⁶

But as this article was being finished, two interesting events occurred. On October 14 (the Feast of the Protection of the Virgin) a much publicized rally was held in central Kiev to celebrate the hoped for united Church. Speeches were given by the President (of a supposedly secular state), Philaret and the Metropolitan of the UAOC. The crowd, which was not vast, shouted and waved national flags. No one at all seemed to be holding an icon. For anyone with any personal knowledge of Church life in Ukraine this would have sent an unmistakable message: these events are not supported by the faithful.¹⁷

Then was made public an earlier [letter from Patriarch Irenej of Serbia](#) to the Patriarch of Constantinople condemning the whole notion of granting autocephaly to schismatics and interfering in the affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Irenej reveals that very recently Patriarch Bartholomew had reassured him that only Metropolitan Onuphry was recognized by the Phanar. He also mentions the outrageous activities of Philaret in the Balkans, including concelebrations with a group of priests calling themselves the Church of Montenegro (an unheard-of entity).¹⁸

Will this bring some to their senses?

I only want to add that despite the seemingly overwhelming odds stacked against the canonical Ukrainian Church, this fourth try will not succeed if the believing Orthodox people—bishops, priests, monks and nuns, and above all the faithful laity—stand firm, as they have always done.



Cross procession headed by Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine of the canonical UOC-MP

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up (Daniel 3.17-18).

This article, the work of an Orthodox layman living in the United Kingdom, has sacrificed much important detail in order to emphasize the parallels between four historical movements. A great deal more information can be found by following up the footnotes.

[John M Harwood](#)

10/23/2018

1 There is a very useful time-line covering this confused period in the (strongly nationalistic) “A Thousand Years of Christianity in Ukraine: an encyclopedic chronology” (New York, 1988). This book also has valuable lists of ruling bishops in the Ukrainian area over the centuries.

2 “Western Ukraine” usually means four areas incorporated into the Soviet Union after the Second World War: Volhynia (Orthodox; part of Russia before the revolution but Polish between the Wars), Galicia (Greek Catholic until 1947; an Austrian province before 1918 but Polish between the Wars), northern Bukovina (Orthodox; Austrian and then Romanian) and finally Carpatho-Rus (mixed Greek Catholic and Orthodox; Hungarian and then administered by Czechoslovakia). All these regions differ from each other and from the rest of Ukraine.

3 Or “samosviaty”. Dimitry Pospelovsky's “The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime vol. 1” (New York,1984) is very good on the foundation of the Ukrainian autocephalists in the context of the many schisms from the Russian Orthodox Church which took place in the early 1920s.

4 Reshetar, J.S. “Ukrainian Nationalism and the Orthodox Church”, *American Slavic and East European Review* No. 1 (1951), p. 41.

5 Reshetar, J.S. “Ukrainian Nationalism and the Orthodox Church”, *American Slavic and East European Review* No. 1 (1951), p. 41.

6 Reshetar (1951), pp 45-47 for an amusing summary.

7 After WWII one Ukrainian autocephalist bishop (himself consecrated validly in Poland) who was concerned with the number of samosviaty priests in his Canadian diocese would summon them on the pretext of making them archpriests; while awarding them with the archpriests hat he would whisper the Ordination prayer over them. Bishop Job (Smakouz) “Born of Schism: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada” orthochristian.com/116116.html

8 The Autonomous bishops were however in friendly contact with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with its headquarters in Yugoslavia. Later in the War Metropolitan Anastassy, its head, moved to Vienna and several new Autonomous bishops were consecrated there.

9 Alexeev, W. and Stavrou, T. G., “The Great Revival: the Russian Church under German Occupation” (Minneapolis, 1976), p. 157.

10 Alexeev and Stavrou (1976), pp. 150 and 152.

11 Alexeev and Stavrou (1976), p. 157. There is a great deal of statistical information in this essential book. The authors made much use of the memoirs of Orthodox bishops who had worked in occupied Ukraine and interviewed several. The Kiev Caves Lavra was strongly opposed to the autocephalist movement, which is still the case today.

12 The Autonomous bishops joined ROCOR, the autocephalists joined existing parishes of Lypivskyites.

13 Pospelovsky (1984), p. 238.

14 A great deal of information about the often scandalous events of the early 1990s can be found in three long articles in the journal “Religion, State and Society”: Kuzio, T. “In Search of Unity and Autocephaly: Ukraine's Orthodox Churches” vol. 25 no. 4 (1997) pp. 393-415.; Mitrokhin, N., “Aspects of the Religious Situation in Ukraine”, vol. 29 no. 3 (2001), pp. 173-196.; Fagan, G. and Shchipkov, A., “Rome is not our Father, but neither is Moscow our Mother”, vol. 29 no. 3 (2001), pp. 197-205.

15 The Ukrainian Greek Catholic website RISU (risu.org.ua) until recently posted annual statistics of the different religious bodies (including numbers of churches, monasteries, clergy, seminarians etc., which showed in graphic detail the regional discrepancies between the canonical Orthodox and the two schismatic groups) as well as providing national totals. See also Harwood, John, “A Response to Antoine Arjakovsky: on the State of the Russian Patriarchate”, *Chrysostom Newsletter* vol. 18 (2015), pp. 15-18.

16 The American Ambassador for International Religious Freedom met President Poroshenko on the September 12, 2018 and pledged America's "continual support" for the struggle for an autocephalous church. orthochristian.com/115693.html

17 risu.org.ua/eng/index/exclusive/photogallery/risu_video/73036.

18 orthochristian.com/116617.html.

THE DECISION OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH IS UNCANONICAL

[Metropolitan Amfilohije \(Radovich\)](#)

His Eminence, Amfilohije, Archbishop of Cetinje and Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, and of the Highlands of Brda, and Exarch of the Throne of Peć gave an interview to "Channel One" Russia.



“The decisions of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew and his Synod concerning the Ukrainian issue, are, in my opinion catastrophic, both for the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and for resolving the Church question in Ukraine, as well as for the unity of the Orthodox Church. We in our Church are simply shocked at how the Ecumenical Patriarch—an expert on the canons—made such a decision, which is without a doubt uncanonical,” said His Eminence Amfilohije, Metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, and Brda, Archbishop of Cetinje, and Exarch of the Throne of Peć in an interview with the Russian Channel One.

Commenting on the canonical aspects of the latest decision of the Patriarch of Constantinople and his Synod, Archbishop Amfilohije explained that the Patriarch of Constantinople “in this decision refers, as other bishops of the Patriarchate of Constantinople have recently referred to, the right to appeal to the Patriarch of Constantinople from other Local Churches. This is the so called “*Ekkliton*.”^[1]

Whenever a problem arises in any of the Local Churches between individual bishops, it is alleged that they have the possibility of appealing to Constantinople, and then Constantinople could make its decision on the matter.

However, do they *actually* have this right of appeal? Especially in the spirit in which Denisenko applied to it now? The Ecumenical Patriarch validates this with some historical facts, and certain Church canons. For example, the 9th, 17th, and 28th Canons of the Fourth

Ecumenical Council, which were written in antiquity, and therefore, which relate to the status of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and its role *at that* time.

On what basis then, was this right given? First of all, this right concerns the Metropolises under the canonical administration of the Patriarch of Constantinople. It did not apply to the whole Church. Secondly, this right is based on the canons of the Ecumenical Council, according to which the Ecumenical Patriarch received this status as the Bishop of the City of Byzantium—Constantinople—on the grounds that this city, in which this bishop is located, is the Imperial City—the residence of the emperor and the Imperial Council.

Now, however, the imperial capital no longer exists. Constantinople ceased to be the imperial capital in 1453. And therefore, this right to which the Patriarch of Constantinople is referring is questionable. The Orthodox Church does not question its status as the first in honor in the Orthodox church, but this does not give him the right to interfere in this way in the life of any other Local Church, including the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Patriarch is referring here to a certain decision in 1686, in which by *economia*^[2] the right to ordain (appoint) the Metropolitan of Kiev was given to the Patriarch of Moscow, provided that the Metropolitan of Kiev commemorates the Constantinople Patriarch first at the Liturgy.

However, Kievan Rus'^[3], and Vladimir Rus'^[4], and Muscovite Rus'^[5] were one and the same Rus' at that time; so it is impossible to separate Kievan Rus from Muscovite or Vladimir Rus'.

300 years have passed since then, and Constantinople had never raised the question that it had ecclesiastical authority in Ukraine. He first raised this question just now, and it is absolutely impossible to accept.

I am amazed at how the negative reaction of all the Local Churches did not stop him; the ancient Patriarchates of the East—Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch. The [Patriarch of Antioch was just recently with us](#). I am sure that he will give his assessment.

[The Patriarch of Alexandria] recently visited Odessa, and spoke there, together with the Metropolitan of the Polish Orthodox Church, who also quite clearly expressed his opinion.

In general, all the Local Churches—and our Local Church—expressed at a council, a very documented letter in connection with this issue. Constantinople did not respond to our letter concerning this.

Our Patriarch just met with the Ecumenical Patriarch in Thessaloniki. [Our Patriarch](#) gave him [the position of our Church](#), and unfortunately, Constantinople answered as they answered.

As it is, however, this decision, as I have already said, is catastrophic, including for the resolution of this important issue of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. It does not solve this question, but only complicates it. It creates a radical problem of interference in the life of another Local Church, and not only for the Russian Church, but for absolutely everyone.

This at the same time calls into question the very unity of Orthodoxy. This has already affected Orthodoxy, especially the Orthodox diaspora, after that the conferences of Orthodox Bishops. According to my information, the bishops in Latin America already refuse to participate in pan-Orthodox conferences, and its going the same way in Europe [\[6\]](#). I am sure that this will happen in the USA. It has partially already begun.

But the role of the first among the patriarchs is not to separate the others, but to unite.

By such actions, the Patriarch of Constantinople in fact separates. He does not solve this problem, but only pushes the problem deeper into the Orthodox Church.

Recently, a lot has been said about the interference in the internal affairs of the Orthodox Church by the great world powers. Can you elaborate on which powers people are talking about, and what these power are trying to accomplish?

Now it is seen in Ukraine itself. It is in fact the Ukrainian government that is the main player in the question of granting autocephaly to a Ukrainian church [\[7\]](#). It should not be overlooked that the state would previously intervene—in other words, there was cooperation, the so called “symphonia” of the state and the Church in Orthodoxy.

But in those days, this was with regards to Christian states, and Christian rulers. In those days, the state itself defended the Orthodox Christian faith. Rulers, from the Byzantine

Emperor to the Tsar of Moscow, to our kings were Orthodox Christians. The statutes of Montenegro even prescribed that the successor of King Nikola I would be an Orthodox Christian.

Now, everything is different. These are all secular states, especially those created after the collapse of the Soviet Union. So the Soviet Union gave birth to these contradictions within the Russian nation, within the Slavic peoples of the former Russian Empire. The theme of a so-called Ukrainian Orthodox Church^[8] didn't appear only now. It arose with the creation of Ukraine by the Soviet authorities in the 1920s. It was then that this topic appeared.

Then the so-called “Self-Sanctifiers^[9]” arose, who declared themselves Metropolitans of Kiev.

And the [legitimate] Metropolitan of Kiev—Antony (Khrapovitsky), who was buried in Belgrade, was then a candidate for the position of Patriarch of Moscow. Having fallen asleep in the Lord in 1936, he along with more than thirty bishops were forced to leave Russia, and our Local Church helped them to create what was called the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, which still exists today. This Church recently [reunited with the Moscow Patriarchate](#).

So it's one thing—contemporary states, modern authority—and a totally different thing—the time when Constantinople was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, or when Moscow was the capital of the Russian Empire, as the successor of the Byzantine Empire.

But this epoch, the epoch of the symbiosis of the Church and State, the so-called “Constantinian Age,” began with Emperor St. Constantine the Great, and it ended—in my, and not only in my opinion—with the murder of the Imperial Family in 1918.

In other words, this imperial period of Christianity is dogmatically fixed in the West in the person of the Bishop of Rome—the Supreme Pontiff. In the East, it was and remains a temptation.

However, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, there was no longer a Byzantine Emperor, who previously provided the Bishop of Constantinople with the status that he had possessed since the time of Emperor Constantine.

And then this role of the Byzantine Empire passed through Kiev, and Vladimir, to Moscow—that is to say—to the Russian Tsars. But the Russian Tsar and his family were murdered in 1918. And this completed the epoch of Constantine in the history of the Church. It has ended.

And now the Church must return to the pre-imperial structure, without imitating what was in past centuries, when there was a symbiosis of the state, Church, nation. It must return to the structure that existed before Emperor Constantine, respecting everything that has happened since then, but not being limited to historical experience.

Thus, the first Rome fell away from the faith, the Second Rome fell, disappearing in 1453, and after the murder of the Imperial Family, the Third Rome had already lost that place in the life of the Church it had occupied in past centuries. Therefore, the way the Church lived and functioned in the imperial period should be left to the past.

From this point of view, Constantinople committed what it had no right to do.

First of all, this state—Ukraine—is the fruit of Leninist-Stalinist communist secularism. And this situation for the people of Ukraine, the Christian people is also the result of the unleashing of the *Unia*[\[10\]](#) on Ukrainians of the 16th century, and what happened with these people in the 1920s.

It is necessary to keep in mind the meaning of the name itself—Ukraine (*Ukraina*). It is similar to our word Kraina: a krai / borderland[\[11\]](#). The question is—the edge or border of what? On the one hand, Kiev was the former Mother Church of the Russian Church, then its center moved to Vladimir (during the period of Vladimir Rus’) and then to Moscow.

It is this continuum of the Orthodox Church in Russia, which begins in Kiev, passes through Vladimir, and then ends in Moscow. This is an uninterrupted succession. So what point is there to now appeal to a status that existed in the 15th or 16th century? The Ukrainian question today cannot be resolved on that basis.

In reality, it must be resolved on the basis of the modern structure of this state—a secular state, not dissimilar to all the modern secular states in the West. It’s a fundamentally different relationship between a state and a nation, moreover no longer a “Christian nation;” a similar problem has now manifested itself in Macedonia.

There, the secular authorities, the communists, also created a so-called Macedonian Orthodox Church. The communists, the heirs of the Tito regime, tried here too, in Montenegro, to create a so-called Montenegrin Orthodox Church. The authorities of Montenegro killed 129 priests

here during the communist time; the communist authorities killed the Metropolitan of Montenegro Joanikije.

It was these authorities who were first to raise the question of the so-called autocephalous Montenegrin Orthodox Church. The godless authorities, the atheistic powers, the secular authorities in a secular state, where the Church is separate from the state, are interfering in the internal affairs of the Church. The same thing is happening in Ukraine, and in other countries that emerged after the Bolshevik revolution.

The Church should try to unite society, and thereby solve this painful issue for the Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

There, under the guise of the “Ukrainian Church,” there exist the so-called Uniates—the Greek Catholics—and then the so-called Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church, and the self-proclaimed “church” of the “Kiev Patriarchate.”

For the first time, Constantinople, on the basis of the alleged “right to appeal” (*ekkliton*)^[12], the right to receive appeals in this way is interfering with the life of another Local Church, even over 300 years after Constantinople’s ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Ukraine ended.

Thus, there is talk about these events as being an absolutely incomprehensible phenomenon. Until this very moment I still hope there is an opportunity to refrain from granting this Tomos, which cannot be issued without the consent of the canonical Church.

Constantinople [previously] recognized only the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate as the canonical Church in Ukraine. But now, Constantinople has recognized bishops who were deposed from their positions and excommunicated from one of the Local Orthodox Churches. It’s simply inconceivable that the Ecumenical Patriarch could have gone through with this.

As for these interventions, and I’d like to say that these are not only those from the Ukrainian authorities themselves, but it is clear that these interventions are directed against Russia, and in fact—against Orthodoxy.

They were able to separate everyone in these krajs^[13] (borderlands/marches).^[14] Only the Orthodox Church remained united. Now these forces, the demonic forces of this entire world are striving in the end to divide the Orthodox Church. For this they managed to use the ancient Church of Constantinople to apply a canon that belonged to it back in imperial times.

In the battle for Ukraine—that is to say for undermining the foundation of Russia—the hand of America is visible.

They speak about the supposed “Russian intervention,” but how can Russia intervene if Russia itself was born there? Kievan Rus’ was born there, and continuously developed for

1030 years. The fact that the Western powers, the EU, and above all, America are fueling and supporting fratricidal wars, as they did against us Serbs in Kosovo, reveals that what is happening in Ukraine is the second act of the tragedy of Kosovo: A group of evil-doers and criminals, who dishonor the worthy Albanian folk, have been made the rulers of Kosovo, and they recognized the so-called independent Kosovo—and the Orthodox Church of God, our age-old culture, and the Serbian people were expelled from there.

What the communists began[15], the NATO block continued with their bombings of Serbia and Montenegro.

What began in Russia with the arrival of the Bolsheviks and the assassination of the Imperial Family now brings such bitter fruit. I regret that the Patriarch of Constantinople did not understand how deep and serious these problems are.

He went forth with good intentions—to unite—only this isn't the road of unification, but only the deepening of the difficulties that seized Ukraine, as well as the creation of a deep schism in the Orthodox Church—which undoubtedly will not bring forth any good fruits if these efforts are continued.

And this applies not only to Russians and Ukrainians, but also to us [Serbs]. After all, Denisenko[16] was the only one to recognize our Miraš Dedeić,[17] whom the Patriarch of Constantinople deposed and anathematized.

We relayed this to the Patriarch of Constantinople, but he has of yet not answered this question. Of course, he does not recognize Dedeić, but by this act—by accepting as a canonical organization those who support all kinds of schisms in other locations—it involuntarily strengthens schisms that undermine the unity of the Orthodox Church.[18]

And furthermore, this is all based on ethnophyletism,[19] which was previously condemned by the Church. Even the Cretan Council (it's a pity that the Moscow Patriarchate wasn't present, but despite this, it's decisions remain valid) confirmed the decisions of this great council in 1872, condemning ethnophyletism as heresy and serpentine venom, destroying the unity of the Church.

Constantinople confirmed and signed this decision of a large synod, and now a church is created on the basis of the demands of those formed under the influence of Bolshevism (like Macarius[20]), and now worshipers of Bandera[21]—Ukrainian fascists and former Nazis.

Is this normal? Of course not! Not to mention the fact that Denisenko strove, when he was Ukrainian Metropolitan, for the position of Patriarch of Moscow, and [when he was not elected, he declared himself Patriarch \[of Kiev\]](#).

Such is his madness. How can this be declared normal, without the consent of the Mother Church? And the Mother Church of Ukraine is not the Patriarchate of Constantinople, but for more than 300 years the Moscow Patriarchate.[\[22\]](#)

Not long ago, Milo Đukanović (The President of Montenegro) said that the Russian Orthodox Church is the striking fist of Russian Imperial interests. What did he mean by this?

You'll have to ask him. He probably assumed that the Metropolis of Montenegro, which has existed here for over 800 years, still has connections to the Russian Church and to Russia, as it had for centuries, and especially during the time of Metropolitan Danil.

Were it not for this “Imperial Russia,” as he puts it, there would be no Montenegro, neither in 1878, nor later. Russian Emperor Nicholas II saved Serbia and Montenegro in 1915 and 1916, when Montenegro was forced to capitulate, and King Petro with the entire Serbian army retreated through Kosovo to the Albanian coast. Then the Russian Tsar gave an ultimatum to the allies, threatening that if they did not help save the Serbian army (the Austro-Hungarian army was in pursuit of the Serbs), then Russia would conclude a separate peace treaty with Germany and Austro-Hungary. So the allies had to send ships for the Serbs.

If Nicholas II had signed a separate peace treaty, he would not have been assassinated nor would his family have been murdered. The German Kaiser sent Lenin, who conducted a revolution in Petrograd in 1916-17. The Emperor and his family were murdered by the hands of the Bolsheviks, but in fact they were murdered by the Germans. The Imperial Family and tsarist Russia paid with their lives to save their brothers—Serbia and Montenegro.

So what is this all about; what is this “Imperialist Russia?”

Montenegro, since 1700 and to this moment, was created through the efforts of Russia—it's education, and the entire structure before King Nikola in 1918. The metropolia only continues the tradition. And no form of “Imperialist Russia” is interfering here. Russian

Bishops visit us, with whom we recently erected a monument to the Royal Passion-Bearers at Duklevo monastery, on which their faces are carved. This may be the most beautiful monument to the Imperial Family. Is this what he calls imperialism?

I sometimes say these are sanctions of the metropolia against Russia. Mr. Đukanović, in his fight against “Russian imperialism” has become a pawn in the hands of the Western European and American Empires, and the NATO bloc—those who bombed Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo, which was part of Montenegro when it was an independent Kingdom.

Now Đukanović recognizes Kosovo, while the Russians tried to save the unity of our nation and state. Unfortunately, Russia was then ruled not by the one who rules today, but by his predecessor, who did not understand this.

Therefore, I do not know what Đukanović implies when speaking of “imperialism.” If it’s about what I said, then yes.

I would also add further about the decision of Constantinople: This decision is a catastrophe for the Constantinople Patriarchate and for the unity of the Orthodox Church. Therefore, we hope that in the near future, as called for by the Moscow Patriarchate and other Local Churches, which have the full right to do so, we will resolve this issue in a pan-Orthodox format.

The Ukrainian Question cannot be resolved by any single Local Church, because this issue is so extensive that it requires the participation of all Local Churches. This question is more important than all that was discussed at Crete. Therefore, the position of Constantinople is shocking, as he had always turned to other Local Churches (for example, during the schism in the Bulgarian Church in 1994, Constantinople appealed to the representatives of other Local Churches to solve the issue of schism in a canonical way).

And now there has been discussion that based on the Ukrainian precedent—invading the canonical territory of another Local Church—the issue with the Macedonian Orthodox Church could be resolved.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is prevented from doing so only because of his demand that they abandon the name “Macedonian Orthodox Church” (In Ukraine, the name “Ukrainian Orthodox Church” does not trouble him.[\[23\]](#) He is still a Greek, and I fear that this is how Hellenic ethnophyletism has manifested itself in light of the Macedonian issue.

There is talk that this Macedonia goes back to the time of Alexander the Great and King Philip; that is to say, we are going back to the issue of communist myths. Just like in Montenegro, the neo-communists continue to develop them. They demanded that the

Montenegrin Metropolis, that is to say, the Serbian Orthodox Church be re-registered, as if we existed only since yesterday.

A 1987 law requires the registration of only new religious organizations, and not the registration of traditional Churches and religious organizations. But now our neo-communists have begun to demand this, and almost begun persecutions. Russian monks and nuns live among us, and priests from the Republika Srpska^[24], and from Serbia, and as they are not citizens of Montenegro they do not grant them residence permits. The same approach has been implemented in Macedonia.

The so-called Metropolitan of Montenegro, who was created by the neo-communists—Dedeić—who was deposed by Constantinople, was recognized only by Philaret. For many years he served with him. And what will Constantinople do now if he recognizes Philaret who was deposed for violating the resolutions of the Moscow Patriarchate? Would it not follow that he would have to recognize someone who serves with Philaret, whom Constantinople himself had previously deposed from his position?

This is how poorly our brothers in Constantinople have reasoned.

I pray to the Lord, that He will help them.

And we also pray that the Moscow Patriarchate and our brothers in Ukraine can overcome an unhealthy schism with patience and humility—a schism that is nothing but the fruit of all those political circumstances of the past, especially in the 1920s.

The Church is the only force that united the nations created there, and now the demonic powers of this whole world, and destructive forces inside the Church, and the rulers of the world are carrying out the real imperialistic plans.

The war in Ukraine is already underway, and now Constantinople must confirm that this is in fact a war continuing against the Church, and the unity of the People of God—and against Russia as the largest-ever Orthodox country.

This is not good, and there is nothing good here for Constantinople as well. He had no right to take such a step. There is still hope that people will still turn to reason and to the true canonical order.

As I have already said, by such actions, Constantinople calls into question its primacy.

I reiterate that he justifies his actions by saying that he is in the imperial capital, but that capital ceased to exist after the fifteenth century. It is no longer in Russia nor in

Constantinople, and therefore there is no longer a Russian or Eastern Roman Empire, but the Church has remained, and it must function on a healthy evangelical foundation—just as it functioned prior to Emperor St.f Constantine.

Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radovich)

Translation by Matfey Shaheen

Interview by Rusky Express for Channel 1

10/20/2018

[1] Constantinople refers to the ekkliton, meaning their alleged right of appeal, [as explained here](#), and found in their [original statement here](#).

[2] From Greek οἰκονομία, also spelled oikonomia, having literally the same semantic meaning and spelling as the word Economy (the running of the house); *Economia* is simply put the process by which Church Hierarchs and spiritual fathers apply dispensation and keen, realistic handling of the circumstances of ecclesiastical life. Contrasted with *Akrivia ακριβεία*, in which Church canons and disciplines are applied strictly, literally, and exactly without exceptions. This does NOT mean that church canons are not followed.—Trans.

[3] The first state of Rus' peoples (modern Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Rusyns (Carpatho-Russians) was centered in Kiev, and was thus called Kievan Rus'.

[4] The city of Vladimir grew to eclipse Kiev as a de facto capital of Rus' by the end of the 12th century, and thus Vladimir Rus' can refer to the period between the 12th and the 13th centuries in which Vladimir played a preeminent role. It was in this time, that Prince Andrei Bogolyubsky transferred the Vladimir Icon from Kiev to Vladimir, giving it the common name, before it eventually was moved to Moscow. See below.

[5] Moscow Rus', in the same light of Kievan Rus' and Vladimir Rus', was the period during which Moscow was the dominant Rus' city and capital, rising to power at the beginning of the 14th century. It also carries another meaning, in that by the middle of the 14th century, there were only two real powers in the former lands of Kievan Rus'—Moscow Rus' and Lithuanian Rus', the later having absorbed the Kievan and Belarusian lands, and would later develop under a certain western or foreign captivity until it formed the nucleus of modern Belarus and Ukraine. Moscow Rus' would become the heart what developed into Russia, which would later reunite with most of Ukraine after 1654.—trans.

[6] This possibly refers to Western Europe in particular, as is the Eastern European habit of referring to the E.U. or the Western part of the continent as simply Europe.

[7] The Ukrainian government is not attempting to gain autocephaly for The Ukrainian Orthodox Church—the only canonical Orthodox church of Ukraine, led by Metropolitan Onufry. Rather, they are attempting to gain autocephaly for a Ukrainian “church” of their own making, either out of the existing schismatics, or by merging the schismatics into one church. It must be understood that the actual Orthodox Church of Ukraine remains united, and while this new move threatens it, this does not actually change the status for the canonical church, as the Orthodox Church is not seeking autocephaly in Ukraine. This is entirely a political move having nothing to do with the actual church life of Ukraine.—Trans.

[8] This most likely does not refer to the specific entity now called the Ukrainian Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Onufry, but the idea and concept of their being a church with the name “Ukrainian Orthodox Church”. While to outsiders, it may seem obvious Ukraine should have its own Church, Ukraine did not exist as a nation in the Russian Empire, and what is now the Ukrainian Church emerged from the same baptismal font as the Russian. Even during the period when the Churches were separated under Polish rule, the “Ukrainian Church” was not called “Ukrainian”, but simply the Kievan Metropolia. As result, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church would probably not exist distinct from the Russian in any way, had the Soviets themselves not divided the Russian Empire into several nations, including the creation for the first time of a lasting state called “Ukraine”.—Trans.

[9] This refers to someone who consecrates themselves into Holy Orders as Bishops or Priests. As a result, these people are not canonical clergy, but self-declared and self-ordained.

[10] Union of Brest

[11] A Krai or a variant thereof is the Slavic form of the Germanic mark or march, as in Denmark (March of the Danes). A March or Mark refers to a territory which is on the edge or border, therefore, a translation is borderland. Rulers who ruled these strategically important territories were often given the title Margrave, Marquis, or some form thereof. The word Ukraine essentially means “On/At the borderland”, as it was not historically used for a nation, but rather the ever changing borders between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian Empire, the Ottoman occupied territories, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a result, what was and wasn’t considered to be *the* Ukraine changed from period to period, and the people went by various names “Western Russians, Little Russians, Ruthenians [Latin for Russians]”. The term Ukrainian could be applied in the sense of those living at the current border, however this was originally a regional, not national term, like “Highlanders” can refer to the Verkhovintsi, the Rusyn people of Western Ukraine, or just those from the mountains in general. The term Ukrainian was eventually forced on Western Ukrainians by the Austro-Hungarians in an attempt to divide and conquer them, making them easier to rule, as opposed to them referring to themselves as Rusyns or Ruthenians, which would remind them of their common origin with Russians. Eventually, the name Ukraine “stuck”, and while of course it is now okay and even normative to refer to modern inhabitants of Ukraine as Ukrainians, it

must be understood this original term Ukraine was not a historical term for these people, but rather something that was recently adopted.—Trans.

[12] See footnote 1

[13] The plural form of Krai (borderland/edge/march/marks), see above.

[14] The Bolsheviks successfully did with the overthrow of the Russian Empire, what centuries of Uniate and Austro-Hungarian occupation failed to do in full—competently separate Ukraine from Russia, away from the spiritual unity of Holy Rus', and fully form a separate nationalistic-secular Ukraine, and Ukrainian state.—Trans.

[15] The dividing of ancient Orthodox empires and kingdoms based on nationalistic boundaries.—Trans.

[16] Philaret Denisenko, the self-proclaimed “Patriarch of Kiev”

[17] A schismatic leader from Montenegro, the leader of another schismatic church.

[18] It is worth pointing out how convoluted this situation has become: If Constantinople recognizes Philaret Denisenko, and Philaret, recognizes and is in communion with those whom the Constantinople Patriarch himself anathematized, then Constantinople is in effect in *de facto* union with people whom it excommunicated. This is the mess that happens when Orthodoxy and common sense are collectively abandoned.—Trans.

[19] Religious nationalism—the forming of churches based on nationalistic boundaries, and not ecclesiastical ones, and the idea that every ethnic group should have its own church, as opposed to each particular territory having a canonical church for all of the ethnic groups within that territory.

[20] Probably referring to the leader of the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church.

[21] Referring to Stepan Bandera, the WW2 era Nazi war criminal who is now lionized by the post-Maidan coup authorities and contemporary nationalist political parties in Ukraine, including by descendants of those who fought in Bandera's organization of Ukrainian nationalists, which provided manpower for the Nazi SS.—Trans.

[22] This point has also been made by [Archbishop Feodosy of Boyarka, who explained](#) that by the logic that Constantinople is the Mother Church of Ukraine, then “Jerusalem would be the Mother Church of the entire Orthodox world”. Vladika Feodosy explains that, “In Church-legal terminology, the “Mother Church” (or Kyriarchal Church), is the Patriarchate or Local Church which currently encompasses or includes a given canonical and administrative Church territory. This does not mean the Church from which another [Church or nation.—

Trans.] received the Orthodox faith.” The Canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church as the rest of the Orthodox world recognizes it today, was formed by the Russian Orthodox Church giving autonomy to its church within the modern secular state of Ukraine. For hundreds of years, there was no such entity called “Ukrainian Orthodox Church”, and the Church which Constantinople helped baptize in 988 simply existed on the territory of what is now Ukraine. But it was not the baptism of Ukraine, but the Baptism of Rus’, as [Saint Lavrenty of Chernigov explains](#). The legal Ukrainian Orthodox Church however, in terms of its charter, was not created in 988, after the fall of the Soviet Union, when the Russian Church gave it autonomy. As a result, the Russian Church is the Mother Church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, not the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has the same spiritual connection to the Baptism of Rus’ as the Russian, but it has no separate lineage from this event. The Kievan Metropolia which was transferred in the 17th century was not even the original Kathedra of the Kievan Metropolitan of the era of the Baptism of Rus’, as this Cathedra moved to Vladimir and subsequently to Moscow. Likewise, the Kievan Metropolia was completely (but legally) absorbed into the regular Russian Church in the next several centuries, and it was no longer possible to speak of a separate “Kievan” Church. Philaret Denisenko, the self-proclaimed Patriarch of Kiev, is not part of some independent Kievan lineage, but he was in fact a regular Russian bishop, born in a highly Russified part of Ukraine (Donbass), who [even condemned schismatics a few years before becoming one himself, all due to envy, because although he was Locum Tenens of the Moscow Patriarchate, he failed to be elected Patriarch of Moscow](#). He has no more connection to any Ukrainian Church than a modern citizen of Italy has a claim to the throne of the Roman Empire. Likewise, Constantinople claiming Ukrainian territory is in layman’s terms, is no different than if the United Kingdom today declared that the USA belonged to the British Crown, because it was a former position. This argument has no bearing on modern reality.—Trans.

[23] In other words, he could do the same thing as in Ukraine, in Macedonia, but whereas Ukrainian nationalism does not bother him, or causing issues for Rus’ people, as a Greek, Macedonian nationalism bothers him.—Trans.

[24] Part of Bosnia and Herzegovina