



UKRAINE MISSION REPORT

Kyivan-Rus' Orthodoxy

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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
EDMONTON EAST



JANUARY 2015

UKRAINE



RUSSIAN FEDERATION

BELARUS

- Golden Gate
- Saint Sophia's Cathedral
- Mother Motherland
- Kiev Pechersk Lavra
- Ukrainian National Chornobyl Museum
- Pinchuk Art Centre
- Kiev Zoo

- LEGEND**
- Country Boundary
 - Major Road
 - River
 - Major City
 - Sea Port
 - Country Capital
 - Airport
 - Point of Interest
 - Waterbodies
 - National Park
 - Mt. Peak

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UKRAINE MISSION REPORT

Part Two: Kyivan-Rus' Orthodoxy

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GLOSSARY

BAOC EP	Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarch
CROC EP	Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
GOC EP	Georgian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
GrOC EP	Greek Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
GOCA EP	Greek Orthodox Church of America of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
ROC EP	Romanian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
ROC MP	Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
ROCOR MP	Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia of the Moscow Patriarchate
(R) BOC MP	(Russian) Belarusian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
(R) OCA MP	(Russian) Orthodox Church of America of the Moscow Patriarchate
(R) MOC MP	(Russian) Moldovan Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
UAOC EP	Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
UGCC Rome	Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Rome)
UOC KP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate
UOC MP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
UOCC EP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
UOC USA EP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Primary Mandate:** As an envoy for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, my Mission was to evaluate, through broad based consultations in Ukraine, the cultural and religious situation as it concerns Orthodox Christianity in Ukraine, and assess whether a recognized, historic, and unified Kyivan-Patriarchate church based on the legacy of 988 and the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' as well as the Patriarchal proposal of 1686 can provide social and structural benefits in a country that is divided between the major Orthodox Churches: Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP). Each Church differs in its canonical recognition.
- **Secondary Mandate:** Meet with various religious leaders, and community and political leaders to discuss their concerns and opinions on the crisis and the prospect of recognizing the historic Orthodox Patriarchate.
- **Tertiary Mandate:** Meet with cultural and political entities in Ukraine, the United States, and Canada to discuss whether by recommending that a historic Kyivan Patriarchate be recognized, political and social tensions in Ukraine will ease.
- **Primary Conclusion:** There is a strong sense among most Orthodox, Ukrainian Greek Catholics, and other religious leaders that by Constantinople repatriating a historically recognized Kyivan Patriarchate, Ukraine's history as a community will strengthen and a greater sense of unity will form, which will assist in facilitating societal stability.
- **Secondary Conclusion:** After meeting with the leadership from the various Orthodox Churches and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, as well as several religious minorities in Ukraine, support for the project was evident – even from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. The Moscow Patriarchate is perceived by many as being under the influence of Russia's Putin inside of Ukraine to support his desires of Russian expansion.
- **Tertiary Conclusion:** Religious and political leaders, as well as academics, understand the gravity of the situation and have been working to analyze and generate consensus as to the causes of instability. It is thought by many that the Orthodox religious schism has been used as a political wedge to generate unrest and increase Russia's political influence in many parts of Ukraine. A fair and balanced analysis of recent interdenominational conflicts, instances of violence, and vandalism (extreme or otherwise) must be conducted.
- **Of Note:** Former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, who flew in from Austria with the sole purpose of meeting with me, stated that the most important issue facing the Government of Ukraine is Orthodox administrative unity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government of Ukraine might examine and address national importance of a pan-Ukraine Orthodox Church formally recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople to minimize outside influences and re-establish Kyiv's religious recognition as the birthplace of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe after 988.
- It is suggested that a special joint committee of representatives in Ukraine, from the Orthodox communities and neutral third-parties, could be formed to further consider the creation of a national Orthodox Church of Ukraine recognized by Constantinople.
- It is suggested that another round of discussions with political, community, and Church leaders in Ukraine and Turkey for mid-2015 be conducted to further advance efforts and establish a working special joint ecclesial committee in Ukraine for future initiatives.
- It is suggested to meet with officials from world forums and solicit technical support for the introduction of future resolutions/petitions coming out of the special joint committee in Ukraine.
- It is advised that no formal applications be made for recognition until after the 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council. Instead, consultations would be continued, establishing lines of communication, building relationships, and continuing fact-finding work to prepare an in-depth and rational resolution/petition calling for Orthodoxy unity in Ukraine based on historical precedent, and with Ukrainian national and world support.
- It is advised that dialogue be continued between all concerned parties – religious, political, and social – (including civil society organizations) in Ukraine and Turkey, as well as Canada and the United States, which are home to a large portion of the Ukrainian diaspora and several Orthodox and Ukrainian Greek Catholic organizations related to those in Ukraine.
- While a number of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate's (UOC MP) clergy are said to support pro-Russia forces in Eastern Ukraine, the Government of Ukraine could investigate the many claimed activities of the UOC MP as they relate to the ongoing crisis, Russian influence, and the claimed actions of the nationalists as they relate to violent actions against the UOC MP, churches, and clergy.
- The Government must work to counter Russian propaganda influence in Ukraine and in the Western world, in order to counter the propagation of falsehoods from Moscow.
- Concern must be expressed as Russia's President Vladimir Putin seeks to renew the East-West polarization in Europe by expanding Russian influence in former Eastern Bloc states like Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine. It is in these states that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) has strong support and exhibits a great deal of influence on the local populations.
- An emissary or envoy of the Government of Canada should visit with the five Sees of the historic patriarchal pentarchy – Constantinople, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem – to consult and further raise the spectrum of dialogue on the sanctity of Orthodoxy in everyday life and politics.

MISSION PREMISE

Building on my previous and extensive Mission to Ukraine from May to June 2014, and acting upon my recommendations, I was commissioned to be an envoy representing the Minister of Foreign Affairs to continue evaluating circumstances in Ukraine, identify specific societal concerns in the country, and make recommendations on my findings

It is well known that in areas where the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) – formerly known as the ‘Ukrainian exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church’ – is dominant, notably in eastern and southern Ukraine, the level of unrest and violence is higher. It is important to note that a number of UOC MP clergy are opposed to Russia’s current intrusion, but some also support it. The support, or lack thereof, seemed to be impacted by the media and institutional reporting of the ‘facts’, which vary and are in many cases highly questionable. The relationship between the UOC MP and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), in recent years, is very close and has become questionable. The ROC MP under both current Patriarch Kirill and his predecessor, Patriarch Alexy II, is said to have grown increasingly close to the Kremlin under Russia’s President Vladimir Putin.

I felt that it would be helpful to meet with religious leaders to help determine the nature of the relationship between the ROC MP, and the UOC MP. These meetings also enhanced my understanding of Ukrainian society and its religious foundation. Given the intrinsic ties between Ukrainian identity and the Church, I supposed that religion could better help ease tensions nationwide if unified in intent and distanced from foreign influence. Unlike other administrative problems, such as the economy and corruption, which fall directly into the hands of politicians, religion in Ukraine is linked to national identity and national consciousness. Indeed, a fragmented Ukrainian identity, firmly intertwined with Orthodox Christianity, poses a significant sociological risk to the stability and life of a Christian-majority state, as exemplified in Ukraine today.

The impetus for my Mission was my priest, Father Sergey Kipryanovich, at St. Barbara Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, who asked for a meeting at my office. He was concerned about the nature of our government’s involvement in the Ukrainian crisis and he inquired about what our government was doing to help the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian state. He also asked if our government was not concerned about the actions of the ultra-nationalists. I told him about my observations in Ukraine during EuroMaidan, as well as on my many previous missions to Ukraine, telling him that I was concerned about the Right Sektor and Svoboda Party, whose actions were being minimized in the Western press.

Father Sergey immediately brought Bishop Job to my office where we discussed the crisis. Father Sergey and his parish, of which I am a member, belong to the (Patriarchal Parishes of) the ROC MP in Canada, directly related to Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, Kirill. When the two were leaving my office, Bishop Job pleaded with me, in broken English, to ‘please help my Ukraine!’ Bishop Job is Ukrainian and sought my help. Father Sergey recommended that I speak with Father Stan Dubanenko of St.

John's Chrysostom All Saints Russian Orthodox Church in Calgary and with Metropolitan Soterios of the Greek Orthodox Church (GrOC) in Toronto.

When I returned to Ottawa, Archbishop Gabriel of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR MP) visited my office for a wholesome discussion. I then met with Father Stan Dubanenko in Calgary who was able to elucidate more fully on the structure of the ROC MP. All share an equally deep concern for what was happening in Ukraine and how our government has addressed these concerns. The claim that there have been over 30 attacks or takeover of churches in the past six months had to be investigated to determine the motivation, as each religious organization blames the other.

The rift between Orthodoxy in Ukraine is visceral and must be nullified by fair and impartial investigation into the accusations of both sides in order for amicable negotiations. These are necessary for all efforts aimed Orthodox unity in Ukraine.

When I met with Metropolitan Sotirios, head of the Greek Orthodox Church in Canada, he explained that there has been a desire to unite the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine under its own recognized Kyivan Patriarch. This was first attempted in 1686, after which the Ukrainian Church was subsequently transferred to the jurisdiction of the ROC MP, where it was forced to embark on a path of Russification and maintained a severely restricted set of rights and values for some 250 years. Prior to this, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was recognized solely by Constantinople. The Russian absorption marks the beginning of a period of Russia's cultural imperialism in the Ukrainian lands. We agreed that if a historic Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate was recognized, the event might be viewed as returning (or repatriating) a traditional Patriarchal seat to Ukraine, adding an element to Ukrainian national cohesion.

Further to my previous Mission of some 30 meetings – and, indeed, my 50-plus meetings since – each religious, political, and cultural leader stressed that before the unrest, there were no linguistic concerns. The issue of language has been continually overlaid by politicians, especially by the new Ukrainian parliamentary administration since early 2014, which attempted to remove the Russian language provisions recently legislated in some jurisdictions. Language was politicized and became a problem when accusations of provocation against Russian speaking populations were propagated in Crimea and east Ukraine. The other major concern, corruption, is being dealt with at the political core under the leadership of Viktor Chumak, MP, and Chair of the Ukraine Chapter of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).

Certainly, in addition to corruption and religion, the far-right constitutes a concern in Ukraine (in relation to nationalism and its affiliation with religion) as well as an important part of the political spectrum in Eastern Europe. Far-right politics in countries like Ukraine are said to be not as radical as we view them here. This is a claim made by some, including Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). But, extremists are reportedly acting independently with impunity throughout Ukraine against various religious bodies.

The religious authorities in Ukraine – Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish, or others – have a strong connection with their faith communities, allowing them to be an influencing factor for politics and community relations, and – with the exception of Moscow Patriarchate Orthodoxy – coexist harmoniously. Administrative religious unity will provide continuity and grassroots social consciousness, allowing for social cohesiveness.

It is important to recognize that the current mindset of Russia is not new. Beginning in the fifteenth century, Muscovy, later called the Russian Empire, and (later still) the Soviet Union, has wanted to assume its position as the centre of the Slavic world. This means that the lands, known since 988 as Kyivan Rus', according to the Russian narrative, belonged to Russia at the apex of its power. In the new Russian world there is no place for a distinct Ukraine unless it is part of an indivisible and greater 'Mother Russia'.¹ The annexation of Crimea, despite being the traditional land of the Turkic Crimean Tatars and not the Ukrainians or Russians, was strategically important to the first stage of Russia's most recent imperial endeavour, under President Putin. It involves instituting a systematic process of rebuilding the Soviet Empire based on Pan-Slavism.

Clearly evident in Russia's foreign policy is the inclusion of the ROC MP. The two – Russia's foreign ministry and the ROC MP – do not act as mutually exclusive entities. Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, today, plays a key role in both formulating and advancing Russian interests abroad. Indeed, the Moscow Patriarchate, like the Russian government, is actively concerned with developments outside of Russia and the potential implications these developments could have at home. This concern includes the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchate – including Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Moldova – and extends to all other states where Orthodox Christians are part of organizations under the ROC MP.²

Of course, Russia's imperial ambitions to reassert its authority over former Soviet and imperial Russian (Tsarist) states, seek to honour later-day perceived historical truisms. However, prior to 1287, Russia and Muscovy did not exist. Moscow's ambitions based on the stated belief that they were part of the founding of the legacy of 988, Kyivan-Rus', and its conversion to Orthodoxy are completely unfounded.

Most religious leaders agree that it is Ukraine and Kyiv that were home to the cradle of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe and stress the need for spiritual Orthodox unity in Ukraine, in one form or another. This is seen as a means of achieving greater national cohesiveness, completely distancing themselves from Moscow's self-serving sense of entitlement.

INTRODUCTION

The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), for some time, has been determined to expand its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe – as is the case in states like Moldova and Belarus. Russia has also been exerting influence on the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian state vis-à-vis the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, an organization with ties to the Kremlin and, despite supposedly being given ‘autonomous’ status by Moscow, it still reports directly to Patriarch Kirill and the ROC MP in Moscow. It must be noted, however, that while Russia’s President Vladimir Putin has considerable influence over the ROC MP and Moscow’s Patriarch, Kirill, there are a considerable number of clergy in Ukraine who disagree with the influence being exerted and the intrusion of state politics into Church life for political purposes. Two such clerics are Father Michael and Father Serge of Kharkiv.

The purpose of this report is to argue for administrative and spiritual Orthodox unity in Ukraine within a newly formed organization, recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch, and independent from Moscow. This body will draw direct links to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, established in 988 with the conversion of Kyivan-Rus’ – the defining moment of Ukrainian nationalism and unity. Orthodoxy in Ukraine has gone through many manifestations throughout the centuries – it has fragmented, constricted, and been restored by many forces – yet it remains part of Ukraine’s soul. Today, when that soul is being challenged by external forces, something is needed to help mend Ukrainian society. A unified Orthodox Church, based on historical precedent, can provide that mastic to solidify the collective Ukrainian spiritual soul.

According to contemporary Russian rhetoric, and backed by Russia’s international propaganda and policies, the Kremlin does not view Ukraine as a separate entity outside of Russia-proper, but as a component of a larger pan-Slavic state. This has been a long-standing movement seeking the unity of all Slavic peoples, previously achieved through Soviet communism and intended to be resurrected again under the flag of the Russian Federation. However, Russia’s claim as the historic seat of the Slavic world, predicated on the wrongful assertion that Russia is the progenitor of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe, seeks to supplant Ukraine’s national heritage. It matters not to Moscow’s propagandists that history has been determined by the fact that Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe was established in 988 in Kyiv, by Prince Vladimir of Kyivan-Rus’, and grew outwards. Muscovy, at this time, had not yet been established. In fact, the foundation for what is today Moscow was laid in 1147, while the earlier conversion is deemed to be the foundation of Ukrainian identity and nationalism.

The seat of Orthodoxy and the Patriarchate of Kyiv were transferred to Muscovy in 1299CE, then on the borderland of Kyivan-Rus’, due to security concerns brought about by the encroaching Mongols. At the time, the move was thought to be a temporary arrangement.



In recent history, Ukraine's political awakening began in 2004's Orange Revolution when issues of democratic legitimacy during a falsified presidential election were of question. The two competitors, at the time were Viktor Yushchenko, and, backed by the outgoing and corrupt regime of President Leonid Kuchma, Viktor Yanukovich. When it became obvious that the election had been stolen through voting fraud, hundreds of thousands of people went to the streets.

Later, in 2013, amid the trend towards heightened national sovereignty and national self determination, the EuroMaidan revolution seemed spontaneous. In-fact, the revolution was a continuation of a much larger trend, since 2004, that has sought to emphasize Ukrainian national autonomy beyond the constant corruption and meddling of Moscow. The chief protagonist in 2004 and 2014, both times under Moscow's direct influence, was Viktor Yanukovich.

The Orange Revolution exhibited something unprecedented and is indicative of changing demographics. While Yanukovich, who advocated ideological and political links to Russia, retained broad support among the older generations, younger Ukrainians, who had no memory of the Soviet Union and embraced Western ideals of democratic freedom and equality, protested the presidential contest. Hundreds of thousands poured into the streets. I was in Ukraine for the election in October 2004, and stayed for the entire revolutionary period and spoke encouragingly to the crowd from the main stage in Maidan (Independence) Square. My message resonated with the crowd and waves of applause followed. I told them that Canada was with them as they stood up for their rights and freedoms as they demanded that their vote and their voices be heard. After ten days, the regime finally gave in and fireworks were set off in Maidan Square in celebration. New elections were called and Viktor Yushchenko was declared President in January of 2005. According to Greg Satell, a journalist for *Korrespondent*, 'The normally docile Ukrainian populace had risen up and finally demanded accountability from their leaders.'

The Orange Revolution did bring what was desired: a clear break from the past. But, as has become evident in recent months that the optimism for the country's new direction the country was misplaced. There was, too, no clear vision for the future. Bureaucratic and government infighting burgeoned, corruption became widespread, and economic and social growth sputtered. The 'Great Recession' of 2008-2009, sealed Ukraine's fate. Ukraine's currency dropped by more than 40 percent and much of the country's assets were sold off, including KP Media, owner of *Kyiv Post* and *Korrespondent*. The World Bank reported that Ukraine's economy shrank by 15 percent in 2009, and inflation rose to 16.4 percent the same year. There were fears that the decentralization

of state authority and regulation would lead to economic destabilization and heightened outside influence.

In 2011, after President Yanukovich's 2010 electoral victory, which was ironically based on a pro-European platform, the regime tightened its grip on the country and the constitution was amended to instill greater powers to the office of the President. Indeed, President Yanukovich was allowed to consolidate more power than any other Ukrainian President before him, ultimately leading to a gross erosion of political competition. Marginalizing all opposition parties, the 2004 constitutional reforms promised by President Yanukovich, changed the federal system from a Presidency to a Parliamentary-President, weakened Ukraine substantially. Coalitions in the Rada were disallowed and the President could now choose the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Many people in Ukraine accused the President of embellishing authoritarianism, even though the move was supported by the Constitutional Court. What followed was Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's loss of political power and subsequent jailing on charges of abuse of power and embezzlement, concerning a natural gas imports contract signed with Gazprom of Russia. President Yanukovich argued that her jailing was a part of an ongoing process to fight corruption. Prime Minister Tymoshenko was the most powerful figure outside of the Yanukovich regime. The 2012 parliamentary election – condemned by the OSCE and other international monitors – gave President Yanukovich's party, the Party of Regions, a firm majority in the Rada.

By 2013, President Yanukovich had consolidated his political power. Corruption rose dramatically as tens of billions of dollars were being syphoned by corrupt political officials. According to Ukraine's acting chief prosecutor, General Oleh Makhnitsky, Yanukovich and his 'cronies' stole up to \$100 billion between 2010 and his exit from political office on February 22, 2014. The dismantling of a fledging democratic and representative system of governance was near complete by the end of 2013, resulting in the destabilization of Ukraine.

Yanukovich's pro-Russia stance created divisions among the various demographic enclaves in Ukraine: Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish, Tatar, and otherwise. This was especially true for the Orthodox communities. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) moved closer to its parent organization in Moscow, the ROC MP, and the government encouraged improved relations with Russia's President Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin. In recent years, the Kremlin and the ROC MP have been working together with common purpose, as both seek to expand their sphere of influence outside Russia's borders. The Ukrainian population is divided, religiously, between four major Churches, with several smaller ones existing: the UOC MP, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Rome) (UGCC Rome). Only the UOC MP is recognized canonically and retains ties to the ROC MP, which is seeking to exert its influence on the Ukrainian people.

While it seemed that President Yanukovich's political effort, supported by Moscow, would eventually prove successful in moving Ukraine further under Russia's influence, and later, speculatively, absorption, failure to adhere to previously made campaign commitments led to the end of his reign. His commitment was to work towards a European Union (EU) trade agreement that he pledged during his 2010 campaign. Rather, President Yanukovich tried to move Ukraine towards inclusion in the Eurasian Economic Unit that Russia's President Vladimir Putin was creating to reunite former Soviet states like Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Ukraine.

President Yanukovich abruptly ended talks with the EU and rejected a pending EU association agreement in November 2013, effectively upsetting the pro-Western portion of the population, and inciting the EuroMaidan movement at Maidan Square in Kyiv. These peaceful protests grew exponentially and were only met with violence when civil authorities encouraged Soviet Army veterans from the War in Afghanistan to turn-out in numbers to 'support and protect' the children of the protestors. This action would later lead to separatist violence in the eastern Ukraine, the shootings in Maidan (Independence) Square, and, of course, the fall of President Yanukovich. Indeed, while I was at EuroMaidan (at my own expense), from December 12 to 18, 2013, it was reported that President Yanukovich's motorcade en route to the airport was met with by demonstrators protesting his flight to Moscow, where he was scheduled to meet with Russia's President Vladimir Putin and sign a deal declaring closer relations. Under current President Petro Poroshenko, political corruption is being addressed, and in the recent election the support for the far right or ultra-nationalist parties have significantly diminished, although some say that is because most political parties today are nationalist in nature. Far-right groups have found another outlet of political influence at a more local level, notably through militias.

ORTHODOX CHURCHES NEED TO DIALOGUE

Expanding on my Mission to Ukraine in May 2014, where I consulted on the linguistic, cultural, and political components of the ongoing crisis in centres like Kherson and Kyiv, I also met with several key figures in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Rome) (UGCC Rome), Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), politicians, and academics throughout Canada and the United States. From October 20 to October 23, I was in New York City and met with representatives from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (UOC of USA), the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR MP), the Greek Orthodox Church of America, and the (Russian) Orthodox Church of America (OCA MP). Also important in my itinerary were meetings with the United Nations, where I met with Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights Ivan Simonovic, and Inter-Parliamentary Union President, Paddy Torsney, where I discussed human rights issues surrounding religious freedoms and freedoms of association. I furthered my discussions throughout Canada, Ukraine, and Constantinople, generating discussion on a broad international basis. The aim of this visit was to discuss the cultural and religious dynamics of Ukraine's instability. The much reported upon imposition by Russia's Government into the Orthodox Church in Ukraine – indeed in many other countries including the United States and Canada as well – is thought to have been for political influence and gain not necessarily for ecclesial purposes.

In each of my meetings, I noted the historical place of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as organically Kyivan, substantiating the legitimacy that should be repatriated to a united Orthodox Church in Ukraine when re-established. With the predominantly religious population lending support to the four Churches resident in Ukraine – UOC KP, UOC MP, UAOC EP (EP), and UGCC (Rome) – the effects of the recent crisis have proved consequential to national identity and nationalism, effectively partitioning the country on linguistic and religious lines. This is due to the fact that not all of the aforementioned Churches are recognized by either Patriarch Kirill in Moscow or the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, to whom Patriarch Kirill is subject. Unity of Ukraine's Orthodox Christian population – the core common characteristic of those warring – and stability can be better pursued, I advocated, if a Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate is repatriated and recognized. After which, cocommunion between Churches can be achieved. I pointed out that a national Orthodox Church, meaning a Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate, was key to reaffirming the source of Ukrainian national identity with the 'great' conversion to Orthodox Christianity under Vladimir I of Kyiv in 988CE.

However, the act of granting the historic Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate patriarchal recognition has been resisted by both the ROC MP and Russia's Government under President Vladimir Putin, both of whom are seeking to re-establish lost Soviet influence and control. They are also seeking to solidify goals in Eastern Europe using the Church as a vehicle to achieve their aims. While the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew, has recently emphasized that reducing the Church to a means of fulfilling individual political interests and nationalistic expectations deprives the institution of its

spiritual purpose, as well as secularizes and disorients it. Patriarch Kirill, however, is said to have regularly done just that by publically supporting Putin's plans and his political version of Orthodox expansionism. He and Russia's President Vladimir Putin have fostered increasingly close ties in recent years and regularly affirm the need to 'protect Russia'. According to Patriarch Kirill, Russia cannot be a vassal, because Russia is a whole civilisation (not a country), a cultural melting-pot, and an enormous power. 'In order for us to be able to live a sovereign life, we must, if necessary, be able to defend our homeland.'³

Russia, in this interpretation, encompasses all Slavic culture and countries of Slavic heritage, including Ukraine. Patriarch Kirill, while heading a Church of 165 million in 2014, seeks to affirm control and hold all of the Slavic world and Eastern Europe in his congregation. Not only is the ROC MP acting on behalf of 'individual' and 'nationalistic' interests, Patriarch Kirill is directly contradicting the policies established by his All-Holiness Bartholomew at Ukraine's expense, which strengthens the historical revisionist narrative that recognizes Moscow as the cradle of Orthodoxy and not Kyiv.

The consensus is that President Putin intends to use Orthodoxy to institute a measure of control in other countries, as the state apparatus under him extends into the religious realm. For example, in 2007, the Russia's President accomplished the reunification of the ROC MP and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR MP) primarily based in North America, specifically the United States and Canada.

While many of the Churches that I met with were affiliated with the Patriarchate in Moscow, headed by Patriarch Kirill, one question remained: Why would these high-ranking members of the clergy, associated with the ROC MP, be supportive and appreciative of my efforts? The question can be answered, perhaps, in three distinct ways. First, I am viewed as somewhat objective and politically experienced outsider seeking a somewhat political solution through the Orthodox Church. Second, congregations in the United States and Canada have become increasingly multi-national and the Churches in these countries are seeking a much more democratic and egalitarian approach of regional representation. Finally, amongst Russian Orthodox clergy in North America, and, indeed, substantiated in Ukraine as well, there is a desire for the Church to uphold an image of religious pluralism and tolerance.

In each meeting summary throughout this Mission Report, each Orthodox leader – as well as other ecclesia of various ranks – appeared supportive of my proposition to see a historic Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate formally recognized as a means of helping to provide stability in Ukraine. It would seem that they viewed me as an objective outsider with political experience, albeit a congregant of the ROC MP, having some knowledge of the Orthodox faith, and acquainted with the issues that face Ukraine. I have been a Member of the Canadian Parliament since 1997 and have sat on Foreign Affairs Committees for ten years, National Defense Committee for eight years, and the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group for ten years. I have been summarily engaged in the Canadian-Ukrainian community, have visited Ukraine 15 times, and have tackled various issues regarding Orthodox 'identity' and history.

When I met with Father Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs and Inter-Church Relations for the (Russian) Orthodox Church in America of the Moscow Patriarchate (OCA MP), a Church affiliated with and solely recognized by the ROC in Moscow, what was of note was the Father's insistence upon Russian Orthodoxy's multi-nationalism. According to this view, the ROC MP, while being an international organization, would preside solely over the affairs of the Church in Russia. Those affiliated with it in other states, such as the OCA MP, would conduct the affairs of that Church in said country. The relationship between the various Churches would be the ecclesial – and not political – authority of the Patriarch would be directing ecclesiastical teachings. This Second Possibility lends credence to the notion that the ROC MP is not predominantly a Russophilic organization, but only that its religious teachings are of Russian influence. After all, the Patriarch of the ROC MP, currently Kirill, is located in Moscow.

Should this model represent the ROC MP today, its purpose is to extend social democracy and social equality. This is a policy that is aligned with Church values – Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox. With national versions of the ROC MP existing in various countries, each manifestation can best represent the values, morals, and ethics or the country it represents. For example: Patriarch Kirill of Moscow has cited that feminism could destroy Russia 'because feminist organizations proclaim the pseudo-freedom of women, which, in the first place, must appear outside of marriage and outside of the family.' Alternatively, OCA MP, under Archbishop Tikhon, advocates for feminism. In the case of marriage, he stated, feminism does not destroy the home, and, by association, the nation, as is the fear in Russia.

However, most interestingly, Professor Paul Magocsi of the University of Toronto claimed in our meeting together that, in 2007, perhaps President Putin's greatest triumph has been bringing ROCOR MP, headed by Metropolitan Hilarion in New York, back into the fold of the Moscow Patriarchate and Patriarch Kirill, thus strengthening the power and influence of the ROC MP worldwide. The wave also complements existing ROC MP influence in North America. In Ukraine, the ROC MP and the Russian government vis-à-vis the Church, are said to be directly intervening in and influencing the affairs of the UOC MP in order to tactically benefit themselves, politically and economically.

The ROC MP in Canada and the United States wants to uphold an image of religious pluralism and tolerance, despite the (wrongly assumed) opposite being evident overseas, specifically in Ukraine. In fact, the image of pluralism and tolerance is propagandous, and representative of Realpolitik and pan-Slavic idealism. As historian Myroslav Tataryn pointed out, 'The Church is clearly coming to be perceived as a guarantor of a mythical status quo: Russia as truly Russia, unhindered by western/foreign influences,' especially at a time when Russia's great-power credibility continues to slip.

Until 1990, the major Church in Ukraine was the ROC MP, an organization that married nationalist ideals, policy, and Church politics, as it does today albeit under a significant

name change (Russian to Ukrainian) to reflect political sensitivities and reality: UOC MP. Patriarch Kirill's statement regarding the longevity and span of the 'Russian civilization' aligns himself with President Putin in that Russian civilization spans the territory of Eastern Europe that was formerly the Soviet Union and dominated by Russian Orthodoxy (of the Moscow Patriarchate). This premise ignores the historical reality that it was Kyivan-Rus' that begat Muscovy, long before it was identified as Moscow, let alone Russia.

Most recently, Ukraine has struggled to preserve its cultural identity, which has been identified as a religiously pluralistic association with Orthodox Churches. In the 1980s, when Russian Orthodoxy was the only denomination permitted to practice by the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, religious pluralism began to re-emerge for the first time since its disappearance in the 1930s. By 1989, priests defected from the ROC MP reviving the UAOC EP, and, by 1992, UOC KP was once again established under Patriarch Volodymyr who claimed the title 'Patriarch of Kyiv and all Rus-Ukraine'. However, the Kyivan Patriarchate has not been recognized by Moscow or Constantinople.

While Russia, and Russian Orthodoxy, condemns 'foreign interlopers' attempting to create a single Church, Ukraine has revived its religiously pluralistic traditions. This is something Russia has taken an affront to in these past few years. Recently, this has been manifested through Russia's military, political, and religious incursion into Ukraine as a means to divide the country and expand Russia's sphere of influence.

In an effort to accomplish a Pan-Slavic ideal, Russia – in its various manifestations (Tsarism, Communism, and Capitalism) – has consistently worked to incorporate Eastern Europe into its sphere of influence. Ukraine's tradition of religious pluralism, however, stands as a roadblock to progress, in this regard. While Ukraine's various Orthodoxies collectively constitute the essence Ukraine's primary religious identity. It prevents the religious uniformity that the ROC MP and Russia's government's desire. Moscow's premise is that it has historical legitimacy on its side, noting that it is the only recognized Church – and the originator of Kyivan-Rus' Orthodoxy – and propagates the notion that the ROC MP is the only 'true' Church while others are mere pretenders of the faith. What is apparent, however, is that – as the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, cautioned – Russian Orthodoxy, under Patriarch Kirill, has strayed from its religious path to the detriment of the Ukrainian nation and the Orthodox world.

HISTORY OF RUS' AND UKRAINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

HISTORICAL ATLAS OF UKRAINE

Kievan Rus' in the 11th century



Today, Ukrainian national identity hinges on history, culture, and religion, all of which surround the Orthodox faith. Ukraine's modern boundaries were established in 1991, at the end of the Soviet Union (USSR) and communism in Europe. Ukraine has 44 million people with two major ethno-linguistic groups – Ukrainian and Russian – living in geographically specific areas, split between pro-Russia and pro-European Union factions, and divided religiously. This religious schism is political and linguistic, and can be found between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church (UAOC EP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Rome) (UGCC Rome). Many other minority ethnic groups live in Ukraine, such as Tatars, Muslims, and Jews; Ukraine is also home to 18 recognized linguistic minorities and many more ethnic minorities. It must be emphasized, though, that after independence, the wide variety of ethno-linguistic groups co-existed harmoniously until recently when external and internal politics intervened to their detriment.

Ukrainian national identity has been based on cultural and religious lines, and today, is considered a product of organic nationalism.⁴ Although Ukraine's national consciousness is perceived to be relatively new, emerging with the formation of the

current Ukrainian state in 1991, it actually finds its roots as far back as 988 with the introduction of Orthodoxy into Eastern Europe. Orthodoxy has been both a cultural and religious force in the region, adding great depth to Ukrainian historical and national consciousness. While the Kyivan Patriarchate and Autocephalous Church have been trying to maintain a sense of unity as purely 'Ukrainian' Churches, drawing on the legacy of 988, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and UOC MP is thought to have been working to strengthen the Kremlin's influence in Ukraine and align the country's political sphere closer to those in Moscow. The Orthodox religious divide is just part of a greater debate concerning the nature of Ukrainian nationalism, the need for retaining societal links to Russia, and the possibility of further Ukrainian-national fragmentation if both are not addressed.

Perhaps the best known cultural connectivity between the future countries of Ukraine and Russia is the legacy of Orthodoxy's introduction into Kyivan-Rus' in Eastern Europe in 988. According to medieval chronicles, Vladimir the Great, Prince of Kyiv, ordered all of his subjects to convert to Orthodoxy based on his personal sympathies and the prospect of political gains by unifying his subjects under one religious order. He rejected the recently established pantheon of pagan gods in favour of a more complex Orthodoxy from Byzantium, the most powerful trading partner in the region. In 988, Vladimir ordered the conversion of all his subjects to Orthodoxy. As one contemporary wrote, '*Some of Vladimir's subjects stood up to their necks, others to their breasts, and the younger nearer the bank, some of them holding children in their arms...There was joy in heaven and upon the earth to behold so many souls saved,*' wrote one contemporary. Arguably, the event came after Vladimir provided military aid to the Byzantine Emperor following an internal revolt in 987, and the Prince's subsequent marriage to the Emperor's sister. It happened after Vladimir captured Korsun (or Chersonesus) immediately before his baptism as a show of political strength. This event was one of the single most important and impactful events in Ukrainian and European history. Indeed, as historian of Eastern Europe Serhii Plokhy noted, 'For all the salient differences between post-Soviet nations, they have much in common when it comes to their culture and history, which goes back to Kievan Rus', the medieval East Slavic state based in the capital of present-day Ukraine.'⁵ This is specifically true for Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine; the three major Slavic states that draw their national lineage back to 988 and connect directly to the legacy of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe.

Historically, Ukraine was known as Kyivan-Rus'. In 750, it spanned a relatively small area known as Rus', localized immediately in the present day Kyiv area. By the eleventh century, it had grown to be the largest state in Europe. By the 12th century, the area had expanded greatly and comprised the northern part of Ukraine, and parts of Russia, Belarus, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, and Slovakia. Kyivan-Rus' was a sovereign land ruled from Kyiv and lasted, formally, from 882 to 1240. At its greatest extent in the mid-eleventh century, it stretched from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the south and from the headwaters of the Vistula River in the west, to the Taman Peninsula in the east, uniting the majority of east Slavic tribes. 'From the tenth century to the thirteenth century Kyiv was the capital of the eastern Slavs' first great civilization, Kyivan Rus'.⁶ In 988, at the ancient Greek port-city of Korsun (also known

as Chersonesus) in Crimea, Prince Vladimir was baptized into the Orthodox faith by Patriarch Basil of Constantinople, ushering in a new era for the region, notably because of the expanse of Vladimir's political jurisdiction as ruler of Kyiv, the number of people who lived in its borders, and the mandatory conversion of all Vladimir's subjects after his own baptism. According to regional mythology, this event signalled the beginning of ethnic similarity, a common language, common elements of their material culture, a common territory, and a nascent common economy and government, Christianity was a powerful spiritual unifying force that helped involve various tribes and tribal unions of the vast Eastern Slavic world.⁷

Beginning first in the fifteenth century following Muscovy's rise to prominence after a period of rapid trade expansion, both the former frontier-establishment dubbed the Grand Duchy of Muscovy, the Russian Empire, and the Soviet Union have each worked to regain the lands that they felt rightfully belonged to them – the traditional areas of Kyivan Rus'. This ignores the historical truism that Kyivan-Rus' begat Muscovy, which under Kyivan-Rus' was a small frontier trading post that only rose to prominence after Kyivan-Rus' was found under the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Even at this point, it was not yet called the Tsardom of Muscovy. In this *Russian* 'world' there is no place for a truly independent Ukraine unless it is subjugated by Mother Russia or 'Great Russia'. Both 'Little Rus' or Ukraine, and 'White Russia' or Belarus are generally regarded as Russia's little brothers in Moscow's version of historical and political rhetoric, while Great Russia is considered to be the cradle of Slavic Orthodox life.⁸ As one popular Russian proverb goes, 'If Moscow is Russia's heart, and St. Petersburg its head, Kyiv is its Mother.' As I have said before, if Kyiv mothered anyone, it was not Russia but the Ukrainians themselves.⁹ Indeed, Ukrainian culture and Orthodoxy were so strong by the seventeenth century that there was even a plan to form a Ukrainian patriarchate independent of Constantinople; an idea heavily supported by Metropolitan Petro Mohyla of Kyiv, and nominal head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC). Opposition in conservative circles of Ukrainian Orthodoxy prevented the realization of this plan.¹⁰

In 1686, despite opposition from the Kyivan Metropolitans, the Tsarist government in Russia successfully subordinated the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Patriarch of Moscow, at the time Patriarch Joachim. The guaranteed rights of autonomy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church were violated; rights guaranteed by Constantinople. What followed was 250 years of Russification and the destruction and uprooting of all signs of independence of the Ukrainian Church.¹¹



Russia claims a direct line to the people of Kyivan-Rus'. Understandably, this is because Kyivan-Rus' established Russia's progenitor, Muscovy, during a wave of economic expansion in the twelfth century.¹² By 1200, Muscovy was merely an

insignificant trading post and small timber fort in central-Rus'. It only grew under the rule of Grand Duke Ivan I (1325-1340) at a time when Muscovy cooperated closely with the invading Mongols during the fourteenth century. Muscovy then capitalized on the Mongol invasion of Kyivan-Rus', generating alliances and expanding the state; imposing its own monarchy and forming its own Orthodox Church. Most political scientists today claim that today Ukraine and Russia should remain distinct from each other as they were then and for hundreds of years thereafter. Russia's power and seeming sense of entitlement to its historic lands based on revived ideals of Pan-Slavism.

Etymologically, the unity of 'Kyivan' and 'Rus' to designate the area of Kyivan-Rus' presupposes two things. Firstly, given the placement of the term 'Kyivan' it is assumed that because the polity was based out of Kyiv the city's influence was the dominant force in the overall power dynamic. Secondly, the hyphenated suffix 'Rus' signifies that Rus' is generally agreed to be the area under Kyiv's authority and to an extent characterizes the people living within the borders of Kyivan-Rus'. Indeed, the state was ruled from Kyiv, and, as the name suggests, Kyiv was the center of influence and policy, and ultimately decided the direction of the state as a whole.

It is also important to note the origins of the word 'Rus' as they pertain to Kyivan-Rus', thus establishing the Ukrainian character of the historic state. According to the father of Ukrainian historiography, Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, 'foreigners of the ninth and tenth centuries, as well as people living in and about Kyiv, called the Ukrainian princes and their armed followers Rus or Ruski, and their country Rus.'¹³ Some historians – such as Nikolai Karamzin, Sergei Solovev, and Mikhail Pogodin – popularly known as 'Normanists', because of their predisposition towards the notion that the founders of Kyivan-Rus' were neither Ukrainian nor Russian, agree that Kyivan-Rus' was established by Scandinavians – Varangians, Norsemen and Normans – in the ninth century. They are said to have conquered the tribal areas and established Kyivan-Rus' as a monarchy run by a Grand Prince.¹⁴ Normanists draw these conclusions based on the last redaction of the Rus' *Primary Chronicle* of 1118, as well as linguistic data, to establish their case.¹⁵ According to the most prominent theory, the name Rus' derives from the Old Norse term *rods* meaning 'the men who row'. Rowing was the main method of navigating the rivers of Eastern Europe, and could be linked to the Swedish coastal area of Roslagen or Roden, as it was known in earlier times.

Some historians and contemporary chroniclers might be overstating the Scandinavian influence, however. They attribute the establishing of Rus' as being much earlier than the arrival of the Scandinavian invaders. Because the lands of Kyivan-Rus' are found along the Dnieper River which indirectly links the Baltic and Black Seas, a multi-ethnic demographic was simply unavoidable. However, Anti-Normanists, those who refute the Normanist theory, such as Hrushevskiy, argue that because of a high concentration of Scandinavians around the royal palace in Kyiv, 'writers conceived the idea of this Norse band, known in Kyiv as Varangians, had been the first princes.' Hrushevskiy claims that one chronicler went so far as to alter records to support a new theory that not only the dynasty of Kyivan princes but even the name Rus' had originated from these Scandinavians.¹⁶ For them, the name Rus' was first applied to the lands occupied by

Polians, but later to the whole territory ruled by Kyiv.¹⁷ Aptly, one chronicler wrote that ‘the Varangians who accompanied the princes of Kyiv were called ‘Rus’ (people of Rus’) and that for the same reason the name Rus came to be applied to Kyiv and to the Polian districts.’¹⁸

According to Anti-Normanists, the name Rus’ was originally associated with the Dnieper region just around Kyiv or alternatively, according to one author, Vernadsky, west of the Sea of Azov in Ukraine’s southeast by the Black Sea. In the middle of the Dnieper region – the area surrounding the Dnieper River in Ukraine’s north – a Slavic tribe known as the Ros resided around the area of Kyiv. From their center, the Ros are said to have united the Slavic peoples into a tribal alliance in the sixth century. The union was subsequently enlarged and strengthened when the Ros merged with the Polanians of the Kyiv region, and the Siverians of the Chernihiv region, to form a new tribal union at the center of the Dnieper valley known as Rus’.¹⁹

The peoples neighboring Kyivan-Rus’ described it as a state of merchants and soldiers, and that there was a close connection between war and trade. ‘The merchant was a warrior, and the warrior was a merchant who brought his spoils of war to the market to sell.’ The main commodities sold and traded were land, slaves, and goods. After the tribes were unified and Rus’ established, further expansion and unity was understandable. Indeed, it was the expansion of Rus’ northwards from Kyiv, and the commonwealth’s increasing control over the area’s Slavic tribes, that formed the backbone for Kyivan-Rus’ in the ninth and tenth centuries.²⁰ The breadth of the state’s lands, found around the Black Sea and ruled by Kyiv, legitimize the notion that Ukraine is not Russian,²¹ but that Russian culture was an expansion of Kyivan-Rus later on. In fact, the foundation for what is today Moscow (literally translating to ‘the city by the Moskva River’) was only laid in 1147, when Grand Prince Yuri Dolgorukiy of Kyiv first mentioned the small trading post. Prince Yuri is also credited with being the founder of Moscow and Muscovy.²²

Into the late nineteenth century, however, because of the power of the Russian Empire, historians tended to regard ‘Russianness’ as a broad concept that included Great Russians, Little Russians (Ukrainians), and White Russians (Belarusians). While Ukraine held particular importance within the general narrative, it was not always included. As Serhii Plokhy points out: ‘Depending on the dominance of the statist or nationalist elements in the *Russian narrative* at any given time, certain segments of Ukrainian history were either included in it or excluded from it.’ And, for a time, portions of Kyivan-Rus’ history were forgotten as well, such as the centrality of Kyiv to Slavic civilization. A great deal was included, however. When Kyiv and the surrounding areas were incorporated into the Russian Empire in the second half of the seventeenth century, the role of Kyivan-Rus’ was further emphasized in the Russian narrative. It was in 1674 that the Kyivan *Synopsis*, written by an unidentified author, identified Kyiv as the *first* capital of the Russian state, subsequently noting that Russia and Ukraine were one ‘Slavic-Russian’ people. Stark cultural differences between the two suggest otherwise.

It was not until Nikolai Karamzin's *History of the Russian State* (written 1816-24) that Kyivan-Rus' was officially treated as part of Russia's past. The historian, however, only recognized the parts of Ukraine's past that were considered pertinent to Russian history and the legacy of the Russian 'fatherland'. Karamzin is considered the founding father of Russia's historiography, and examined the history of the Russian monarchy and the Russian state almost exclusively.²³ He set the precedent for future historians in the field, such as Vasilii Kliuchevsky who focused on Great Russian history with the usual exception of Kyivan-Rus'.²⁴

The idea that the realm of Rus' as a whole formed a single entity formed during the reign of Vladimir I the Great, especially among the princely, military, and commercial elite of Kyivan society. The very term Rus' came to mean the territories and their inhabitants living under the rule of Vladimir and his filial representatives. Overall, Vladimir was able to extend the territorial sphere of Kyivan-Rus' and enhance its internal cohesion. He did this by concentrating on the lands of the Eastern Slavs, subduing the Viaticians and Radimichians, as opposed to his father, Sviatoslav I of Kyiv, who focused on expanding southwards towards the Balkans.²⁵



Today, Ukrainian nationalism revolves around the 988 event and the legacy of Orthodox Christianity. In an effort to recognize the uniqueness of Ukraine and the importance of the conversion of Kyivan-Rus', even Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has publically acknowledged the centrality of the event and Kyiv to the unity of the Ukrainian people and their identity, as well as the spiritual birthplace of Eastern Europe.²⁶ As historian Mark von Hagen has cited, 'as a result of deficient state traditions in the

modern period, Ukrainians have turned to the cultural sphere to locate a distinctive Ukrainian identity.'²⁷ Most Ukrainians even posit that 'Soviet' Ukraine became their homeland because many residents felt they belonged in some political and geographical manifestation of *Ukraine*, Soviet or otherwise. Indeed, as Kathleen Burk points out, nations can exist within larger empires²⁸ like the Soviet Union, as was the case with Ukraine for the better part of 70 years, and, even before, under Russian and Hapsburg control. For many, Ukraine has always existed in recent historical memory – Soviet or capitalist.

Ukraine, by the 1910s, was identified by ethno-nationalism,²⁹ marked by Ukrainian-Orthodox Christianity, cultural traditions, folk dress, ways-of-living, and a language that differed from traditional Russian.³⁰ Indeed, Ukrainian culture was Slavic, though it was identified as Little Russian as opposed to Great Russian found in the empire to the east. Any attempts to create a sovereign Ukrainian state or express national self-determination had been continuously thwarted by the 'Other', meaning larger imperial forces like the Austrians, Russians, Poles, and Lithuanians.³¹ With the Russian defeat in

the First World War (1914-19) and Bolshevik Revolution in 1917,³² nationalism amongst Ukrainians had become a dominant socio-political theme during a brief period of reawakening. As historian Robert Conquest pointed out, the Bolsheviks hated Ukrainian peasants, and most Ukrainians were peasants, because they stood at the center of nationalism and, during the Ukrainian War of Independence (1917-1921), actively opposed Soviet rule. Instead, they opted for a Ukrainian nation-state.³³

The 'nation' as defined by Anthony Smith is a primordial element, reliant upon preexisting kinship notions that are continually reinterpreted. In accordance with Karl Deutsch's notion that in order for national consciousness to arise there needs to be an existing foundation of consciousness, the idea that intellectuals can 'invent' national communities amidst existing objective preconditions is substantiated.³⁴ For political scientist Miroslav Hroch, these preconditions are economic, political, linguistic, cultural, religious, geographical, and historical,³⁵ all of which uphold the Ukrainian national link to Kyivan-Rus' as well as combine with the linguistic, economic, and political circumstances present since the country's independence. According to anthropologist Catherine Wanner, nationalism is when a national culture becomes second nature after the values and patterns of behaviour that stem from national culture structure individual feeling and patterns of thinking. 'When a nationalized culture becomes internalized, violence against the culture, its practices, and customs are often equated with violence against the self.'³⁶ Nationality is based on two components: citizenship and cultural similarity.³⁷ As Benedict Anderson suggests, nations are, indeed, 'imagined communities' constructed as both limited and sovereign political communities; nationalism and nationality are corresponding attributes.³⁸ The conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988 is considered to be the crux of Ukrainian national identity.

Previously, under Russia's rule, the central authority in Moscow attempted to alter the overall sense of Ukrainian nationalism, placing it in the hands of the intelligentsia to reshape through language and culture (which overtly included religion). They, in turn, sought to redefine the Ukrainian community or 'ethnie' (ethnic community), ultimately altering critical discourse and national understanding. For Smith, ethnies are determined by a population sharing: a common name, myths of historical ancestry, historical memories, distinctive elements of culture, association with a given territory, and a sense of social solidarity.³⁹ Even with the linguistic differences present inside of Ukraine, the country still maintains a sense of common purpose and cohesion. Outside influence, notably from Russia – most recently and prior to 1991 – has been intended to upset this balance, whether economic, political, or religious.

The Ukrainian government has tried to remain neutral in Church affairs since the country gained independence. Former-President, Leonid Kuchma (1994-2005), maintained this neutrality by becoming much more active in attempting to ease inter-confessional tensions through engaging Church leaders in constructive dialogue. It appeared that the three Churches that emerged with prominence in Ukraine after 1991 – UOC MP, UOC KP, and UAOC EP – were each vying for a direct claim to the legacy of 988, and in turn to be the national Church of Ukraine.⁴⁰ In order to maintain internal stability and ensure democracy, dialogue was needed. Unlike Russia, whose

patriarchate aspires to be the official spiritual voice of the nation, in a state with only one Orthodox Church, Ukraine has introduced juridical provisions that prevent religious monopolies.⁴¹ In 1995, President Kuchma established the Council for Religious Affairs, an organization meant solely to encourage dialogue amongst religious denominations. Although Patriarch Filaret, head of the UOC KP, viewed Kuchma's policies as favouring the UOC MP, it seemed as though the government achieved the elusive balance between Church and state, but not Western inspired secularism.⁴² Indeed, Ukraine is a religiously pluralist state both legally and socially, though the UOC MP was still the largest Church body at this time.

Priest, former ROC MP Chair of Inter-Church Relations, and Yale University researcher, Cyril Hovorun has explained that since the end of the Soviet Union, none of Ukraine's Orthodox Churches have encouraged civil society, and in recent years all of them, to one extent or another, have collaborated with the progressively pro-Russia regime of former-President Viktor Yanukovich (2010-2014). None of them have abandoned the ideal of post-imperial Orthodoxy, a situation where the Church and state work together. Certainly, each institution has managed some degree of leverage. The power-dynamic in place allows for incentives from the Churches based on their societal influence. Before the EuroMaidan, under President Yanukovich, a cooperative deal-making mentality existed over the heads of the people. As Hovorun puts it, the Churches arranged so that 'if we support your political ambitions, you'll support our church-building projects and other spiritual ambitions for the nation.' The Moscow Patriarchate and individual clergy in the Church body have been more aligned with the state than those of the other two Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, thus retaining a great deal of influence in society today.⁴³

It is well known that in areas where the UOC MP is dominant, instances of unrest and violence were higher, notably in eastern and southern Ukraine. Most significant, however, was the proximity of these areas to Russia's border and the strong relationship between the UOC MP and the ROC MP based in Moscow. In recent years, the ROC MP has grown exceptionally close to the Kremlin under Russia's President Vladimir Putin. Through this relationship Russia has been exerting influence on the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian state through the UOC MP, an organization with ties to the Kremlin and, despite being 'autonomous', reports directly to Patriarch Kirill and the ROC MP in Moscow. It must be noted that while President Putin has considerable influence over the ROC MP and Moscow's Patriarch, Kirill, there are a number of clergy that I have spoken to who disagree with the influence being exerted and the intrusion of state politics into Church life.

The ROC MP and Russia's central government seek to maintain influence in Ukraine because of the country's historical and demographic importance. The high concentration of Orthodox adherents in the country, as well as the historic importance of Kyiv in Russian history vis-à-vis Kyivan-Rus' makes Ukraine of value to Pan-Slavic-oriented Putin administration. As President Putin stated after the illegal annexation of Crimea, 'As for the rest of Ukraine, of course it must not be partitioned.'⁴⁴ It is fearful that in addition to the ongoing offensive in Ukraine's east, violence supported by the

Russia's government and including Russia's troops will one day mean the annexation of Ukraine to Russia. Indeed, on the grounds of religion, the ROC MP fears that if Russia loses its political domination over Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarchate will lose its religious domination over the more vibrant Ukrainian Orthodox Church.⁴⁵ Ukraine and Russia are intrinsically linked yet historically distinct. However, based on historical precedent Ukraine should have greater symbolic Orthodox and historical recognition as the mother of today's Russia.

THE CONVERSION OF KYIVAN-RUS' TO ORTHODOXY IN 988

Accepted Russian thought proposes that the history of the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe, and its cultural influence there, is organically Russian. In fact, it was not. Rather, for this region – which includes the Balkans, western-Russia, Belo-Russia, Poland, and Ukraine – the Orthodox Church originated in Kyivan-Rus', home to modern Ukraine. This early geopolitical depiction of Kyivan-Rus', lasting as late as the twelfth century, suggests most definitively that Muscovy, merely a remote frontier town at the time, was not the cradle of Kyivan-Rus' Orthodoxy. Before 1054, Moscow did not exist.



In 988, Grand Prince Vladimir I of Kyiv declared that an official religion was necessary for his country. Although he was unsure which religion he was to choose, he recognized that religion was a fundamental component in facilitating unity and stability. Kyivan-Rus' was geographically divided on the grounds of religion. The Volga-Bulgars (modern Bulgaria) was home to Islam, Jews populated the Khazars of the lower-Volga, and Latin Christianity and Greek Orthodoxy in the South spanned the whole area under his rule. Etymologically, 'Rus' has also been historically regarded as the area around the Black

Sea, where the Rusyn people of Kyivan-Rus' were localized. Kyivans were those centred around the cultural city of Kyiv on the banks of the Dnieper River.

Accordingly, Vladimir sent envoys to the various regions to inquire of his subjects' faith and report back to him. While his envoys did not favour the Islamic traditions of Bulgaria, they appreciated the Orthodox traditions of the Greeks in the south-west. The envoys admired the edifices of the various churches and the manner in which the laity worshipped their God. Reporting back to Kyiv the envoys are recorded as saying, 'We know only that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations.'

After returning to his capital, Kyiv, Vladimir ordered that all of his empire be purged of paganism and that all idols be destroyed. It was then, in 988, that Kyivan-Rus' embraced the Orthodox faith and received its baptism. From this date, Kyivan-Rus' was officially Orthodox Christian – as mandated by the monarch in Kyiv.

In 1051, the first monastery, the Monastery of the Caves, was established in Kyiv by St. Anthony, who has since been officially recognized as the founder of monastic traditions in all Kyivan-Rus'. Historically, all but two Metropolitans who followed were Greek – Hilarion in 1051 and Clement in 1147 – both of whom were Kyivan. To this day, the Orthodox Church in Ukraine still sings in Greek when bishops are welcomed because of the debt owed by the Orthodox Church to Greek Byzantium. Both the religious and cultural impact that Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox conversion and missionary work - locally and across the region - was profound.

With the Mongol invasion of 1237, unrest plagued Kyiv until 1480, and, during this period, only the Church is credited with keeping national consciousness in Kyivan-Rus' alive. In the wake of occupation, the primary See of the Orthodox Church was temporarily moved from Kyiv to Muscovy, by then a small principality on the outer regions of Kyivan-Rus', by St. Peter, Metropolitan of Kyiv. At the time, the Duchy of Muscovy was no larger than 3,000km². Missionaries and monks soon spread throughout Eurasia as Rusyn influence expanded.

In 1440, Constantinople accepted union with the Roman Catholic Church, a prospect that the Orthodox Church, now in Muscovy, could not accept. Finally, in 1448, a council of Muscovite Bishops elected their own Metropolitan. Muscovy began to be seen as a Third Rome, and the Grand Duke of Muscovy assumed the titles of 'Byzantine Emperors Autocrat' and 'Tsar' – a term meaning 'Caesar' that was used to designate Slavic monarchs as supreme rulers - the earthly protector of Orthodoxy. By 1530, the Rusyn influence in Muscovy the area was soon designated 'Russia' – translating to the 'people of Rus' – despite not having control over Kyiv, the majority of Kyivan-Rus' lands, and, by association, the traditional Rusyn areas around the Black Sea.



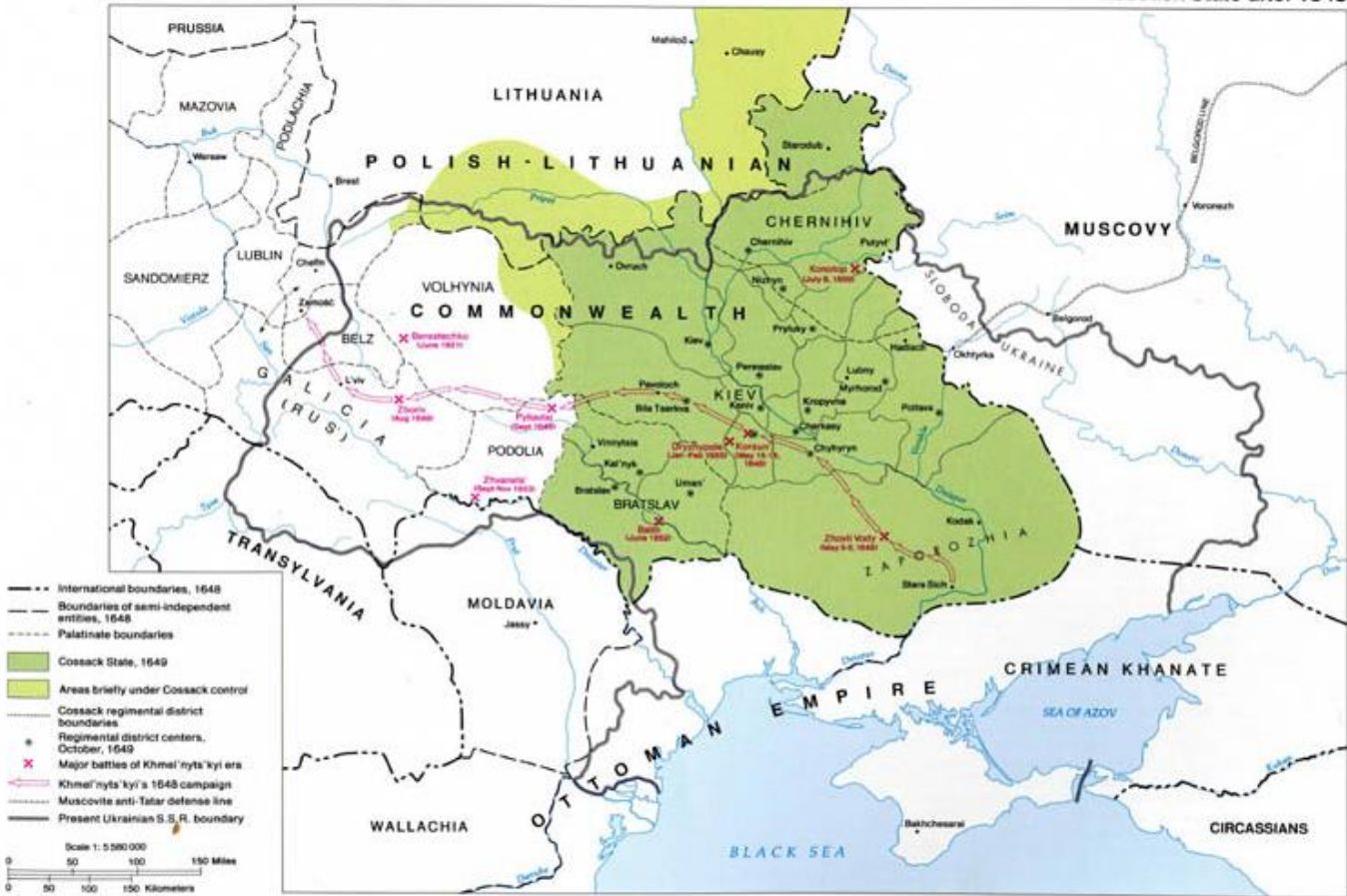
In 1589, the head of the Church in Moscow was elevated to the rank of Patriarch by a Synod of Bishops. However, in the traditional area of Kyivan-Rus', Kyiv was under the control of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and not under the jurisdiction of Tsarist Muscovy. While Muscovy was thought to be the seat of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe, Slavic-Orthodoxy did not originate there, rather deriving its historical beginnings from Kyivan-Rus' (Ukraine today). Even while the Ecumenical Patriarch presided over all Orthodoxy vis-à-vis Constantinople, Russian Orthodoxy was declaring itself as the first among equals, the title reserved exclusively for the Ecumenical Patriarch. For Kyiv, this meant that Moscow's declaration of authority placed itself higher than Churches in other lands, like Kyiv, despite none of the territory around Kyiv, or any Ukrainian lands, being under Moscow's control.

In 1721, Tsar Peter I abolished the Patriarchate in an effort to consolidate international relations and strengthen Russia's connection to Western Europe's great empires – Spain, France, and England. The Church in Tsarist Russia was placed under an uncanonical Synodal System, a congress of bishops and clergy that was not recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch. This was a Church that was integral in expanding Russia's borders over the centuries to encompass much of the area the Russian Federation does today. Here, a Synod of twelve members, drawn from the Bishops, Abbots and secular clergy⁴⁶ - referring to deacons and priests who are not monastics or members of a religious institute – was appointed by the government to rule the Church. However,

while this was meant to move the Church away from government, all meetings were attended by a government functionary who represented the Tsar, the Chief Procurator. All decisions had to be approved by the resident Sovereign, much as it is today under Russia's President Vladimir Putin. The power of the Church in influencing popular opinion and national identity, and enabling stability within national borders, was too important to completely let go.

HISTORICAL ATLAS OF UKRAINE

Cossack State after 1649



The Synodal period lasted until 1917. Missionary activity was always a strong feature of the Orthodox Church and expanded Church jurisdiction throughout Siberia and Central Tsarist Russia. In the early 1800s, missionaries eventually reached Alaska, Russia's Crown possession until its sale to the United States of America in 1867. Certain monasteries were revitalized, including the Valaam Monastery in north-west Russia, as well as the spiritual traditions of Mount Athos in Greece. By 1913, Tsarist Russia extended far into Europe, though Ukrainian national identity remained distinctly non-Russian. Control of Ukraine remained purely a geostrategic affair, not a locally-political one aside from enforcing law and order, as it provided buffer lands between Europe's great empires, vast agricultural resources, and added prestige to the Russian crown.



In 1917, with the First World War (1914-1919), the Russian Revolution, and the fall of the Tsarist monarchy, the Patriarchate was restored by the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church and Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). The Local Council was an assembly of bishops, other clergy, and laity; also known as the All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Russian Church. Tikhon, Metropolitan of Moscow, was elected Patriarch by the All-Russian Council the same year. Since the rise of Marxist-Leninism and its subsequent manifestations in Communism, and through the fall of the USSR, the ROC MP has endured great suffering.

While the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe originated in Kyivan-Rus' in 988, it has since undergone major changes. Certainly, the Orthodox Church has played an expansive role in ensuring stability and influencing social consciousness throughout the centuries. However, it has fragmented over the centuries amidst vast political tumult. Today, in Ukraine, three Orthodox Churches exist: the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the unrecognized Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). The UOC KP, established in 1992, has not been recognized by the other canonical Orthodox Churches, despite 31 percent of Ukraine's population identifying as being members of its congregation. The UOC MP is recognized by Moscow. Today, it remains under influence from Moscow, which opposes an independent Orthodox Church in Ukraine. And, the UAOC EP has

been recognized by Constantinople, the body which first granted the Church independence in 1924, three years after its establishment as a 'Ukrainian' Church free of Russian influence.



Recognition of a repatriated Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate by Bartholomew would both legitimize the Kyivan-Rus' heritage of the Orthodox Church, national identity, and provide stability. It would give recognition not only to Orthodoxy's roots in Europe, but also the historic roots of Orthodoxy in Kyiv. Much less external political and cultural influence would be exerted on the Ukrainian people by reasserting the place of Kyivan-Rus'.

Of great concern is the Moscow Patriarchate's present policy of walling-off the free ROC MP from Orthodoxy worldwide. In Ukraine, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) is prohibited from conducting coconsecration (forming an association with the Sacred, and sharing liturgy) with other Orthodoxies, thus creating divisions and instilling notions of exclusivity. Edicts from Moscow impede on every Orthodox adherent's religious freedom and right, which runs counter to universal Orthodox principles.

The modern Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe has its patriarchal roots in Kyivan-Rus', not Moscow, and from this Ukrainian national consciousness has also derived. It

is important that this distinction is formerly recognized, and by restoring the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's founding status in Kyiv, the prospect of stability and reconciliation can be achieved in Ukrainian and further the movement for a cohesive identity amid an ongoing crisis.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF ORTHODOX CHURCH

The following charts represent the organizational structure of the Orthodox Church under the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople (with the exception of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate). The Orthodox church is a fellowship of administratively independent, or autocephalous (self-governing) local churches, united in faith, sacraments, and canonical discipline, each enjoying the right to elect its own head and its bishops. Traditionally, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul) is recognized as the 'first among equals' of all Orthodox bishops. He possesses privileges of chairmanship and initiative but no direct doctrinal or administrative authority.

Other autocephalous Churches exist with a high degree of authority over lesser Orthodox branches. Thus these larger bodies are seen as 'recognizing' the lesser entities by virtue of their gift of autocephaly (administrative independence). The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) is one example, having precedence over various Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, and Kazakhstan.

Each greater Church designated in the chart is recognized by Constantinople. The authority granted to the greater autocephalous Churches allows them in turn to give autocephaly to lesser Churches, thus placing them under the greater Church's administration and not (directly) Constantinople's. By virtue of hierarchy, however, all autocephalous Churches are recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch.

In the case of Ukraine, there are three national Orthodox Churches: the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). The UAOC EP is recognized by Constantinople and the UOC MP is recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church (and higher up the hierarchy, Constantinople as well), while the UOC KP is completely independent and deemed uncannonical. In other words, the UOC KP is not recognized by any higher administrative authority.

The heads of the autocephalous (or greater Churches) Churches under the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, the first among equals, in order of administrative precedence, are:

- The Patriarch of Alexandria, Egypt (with jurisdiction over Africa).
- The Patriarch of Antioch (now in Damascus, Syria, and heading Arab - speaking Orthodox Christians in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq).
- The Patriarch of Jerusalem (with jurisdiction over the historic lands of Palestine).
- The Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.
- The Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church.
- The Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church.
- The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church.
- The Patriarch of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

- The Archbishop of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus.
- The Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church.
- The Metropolitan of the Polish Orthodox Church.
- The Metropolitan of the Czech and Slovak Orthodox Church.
- The Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church of America.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Constantinople
His All-Holliness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch.
Independence 330

Ancient Patriarchates	Junior Patriarchates	Autocephalous Archbishoprics
<p>Alexandria His Beatitude, Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa 1st Century</p>	<p>Russian Orthodox Church His Beatitude Kyrill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. Established 988 Kyiv; Independent 1589</p>	<p>Church of Cyprus His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of New Justiniana and All Cyprus. Independence 431; Recognized 478</p>
<p>Antioch His Beatitude, John X, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East 1st Century</p>	<p>Georgian Orthodox and Apostolic Church His Holiness Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi. Independence 486</p>	<p>Church of Greece His Beatitude Ieronymos II, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece. Independence 1833; Recognized 1850</p>
<p>Jerusalem His Holiness, Theophilus III, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine 1st Century</p>	<p>Bulgarian Orthodox Church His Holiness Neophyte, Patriarch of Bulgaria, Metropolitan of Sofia. Independence 870</p>	<p>Albanian Orthodox Church His Beatitude Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania. Independence 1922; Recognized 1937</p>
<p>Rome His Holiness, Francis, Catholic Pope and Bishop of Rome, Absolute Sovereign of the Vatican City State. 1st Century</p>	<p>Serbian Orthodox Church His Holiness Irinej (Gavrilovic), Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci, Patriarch of Serbia. Independence 1219</p>	<p>Polish Orthodox Church His Beatitude Sawa, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland. Independence 1924</p>
	<p>Romanian Orthodox Church His Beatitude, Daniel, Patriarch of All Romania, Metropolitan of Ungro-Vlachia, Archbishop of Bucharest. Independence 1219</p>	<p>Czech and Slovak Orthodox Church Currently vacant, Archbishop Simeon (Jakovljević) locum tenens. Independence 1951</p>
		<p>Orthodox Church in America* His Beatitude Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada. Independence 1970</p>

*Autocephaly recognized only by Moscow, Bulgaria, Georgia, Poland, and the Czech Lands and Slovakia

Recognized by Constantinople

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada EP (Winnipeg)

His Eminence Metropolitan Yurij (Kalistchuk)
Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy
Metropolitan of Canada
Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

**Ukrainian Orthodox Church of
Canada EP (Edmonton)**

His Grace Bishop Ilarion (Roman
Rudnik)
Bishop of Edmonton and the
Western Eparchy

**Ukrainian Orthodox Church of
Canada EP (Montreal)**

The Rt. Rev. Mitred Archpriest Dr.
Ihor G. Kutash
St. Mary the Protectress
Ukrainian Orthodox Church

PATRIARCHAL PARISHES OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN CANADA

Recognized by Moscow

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

His Holiness, Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

The Right Reverend Bishop John
Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA
New York City

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

Bishop Job
Bishop of Kashira, Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in Canada
Edmonton

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

Father Sergey Kipriyanovich
St. Barbara Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Edmonton

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH (GrOC EP)

Recognized by Constantinople

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Greek Orthodox Church EP

His Beatitude Ieronymos II
Archbishop of Athens and All Greece

|

|

Greek Orthodox Church EP

The Most Reverend,
Archbishop Demetrios
Greek Orthodox Archdioceses
New York City of America

Greek Orthodox Church EP

Metropolitn Sotirios
Athanassoulas
Toronto

(RUSSIAN) ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA (OCA MP)
Recognized by Moscow Patriarchate

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP_.

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

His Holiness, Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

|

(Russian) Orthodox Church in America MP

His Beatitude Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada
Represented by Father Leonid Kishkovsky, Chair of External and Inter-
Church Relations

|

(Russian) Orthodox Church in America MP

Bishop Irénée
Bishop of Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Canada

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE RUSSIA (ROCOR MP) - A.K.A. THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD
Recognized by Moscow Patriarchate

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

His Holiness, Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

|

Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia MP

The Most Rev. Metropolitan Hilarion
Eastern America and New York Diocese,
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

|

Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia MP

Archbishop Gabriel Chemodakov
Archbishop of Montreal and Canada.

|

**Russian Orthodox Church
Outside Russia MP**

Father Peter Sashkoff
All Saints Russian Orthodox
Church, Calgary

Father Stan Dubanenko
St. John Chrysostom Russian
Orthodox Church, Calgary

|

**Russian Orthodox Church
Outside Russia MP**

Father Viatcheslav Davidenko
Archpriest Vladimir Malchenko
Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox
Church, Toronto

UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH (UGCC Rome)
Recognized by Constantinople

Roman Catholic Church

His Holiness, Pope Francis
Bishop of Rome

|

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk,
Archbishop of Kyiv

|

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Metropolitan Lawrence Huculak
Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg

|

|

|

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Most Rev. David Motiuk
Eparch of Edmonton

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Most Rev. Stephen V. Chmilar
The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy
of Toronto and Eastern Canada

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Father Cyril Mykytiuk
Saint John the Baptist
Ukrainian Catholic Shrine,
Ottawa

|

|

|

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Reverend Father Peter
Babej
Priest – Cathedral Rector of
St. Josaphat Cathedral,
Edmonton

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Rt. Rev. Mitered Archpriest
Dr. Roman Pankiw
Dormition of the Mother of
God Ukrainian Catholic
Church, Toronto

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Father Ihor Okhrymchouk
Assumption of the Blessed
Virgin Cathedral, Ottawa

CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (CROC EP)

Recognized by Constantinople

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Greek Orthodox Archdioceses of America EP

The Most Reverend, Archbishop Demetrios
New York City

|

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church of the USA EP

Bishop Gregory
Johnstown, PA

|

Carpatho-Russian Orthodox EP

Reverend Maxym Lysack
Ottawa

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP)

Recognized by Constantinople

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church EP

Metropolitan Mefodiy (Kudriakov) – Deceased (2015)
Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

|

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church EP

Metropolitan Mykhayil
Archbishop of New York
of North and South America & the Diaspora

|

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church EP

His Eminence Stephan
Archbishop of Toronto and Ohio
Metropolitan of All Canada
Primate-Emeritus

(Russian) Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP)

Recognized by Moscow Patriarchate

(Eastern) Orthodox Church

His All-Holiness, Bartholomew I
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch (EP).

|

Russian Orthodox Church MP

His Holiness, Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

|

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate

His Holiness, Metropolitan Onuphrius
Archbishop and Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow
Patriarchate

|

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate

Metropolitan Antony
Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate

|

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate

Bishop Onuphrius Bogodukhiv
Bishop of Kharkiv

|

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate

Father Michael Kit and Father Serge Kit
Kharkov Diocesan Administration, Secretary
Assumption Cathedral, Kharkiv

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP)
Unrecognized

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate

His Holiness, Metropolitan Filaret
Patriarch of Kyiv and All Rus' – Ukraine
Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate

|

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate

Bishop Mitrophan
Bishop of Kharkiv

THE FOUR MAJOR UKRAINIAN CHURCHES

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome)

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome) is the largest Eastern Rite Catholic Church in full communion with the Holy See at the Vatican. The Primate of the Church holds the office of Archbishop of Kyiv-Halych and all Rus', though the hierarchs of the Church have acclaimed their primate 'Patriarch' and have requested Papal recognition of, and elevation to, this title. The Church is one of the successor Churches to the acceptance of Christianity by Grand Prince Vladimir of Kyiv, in 988. The UGCC Rome split from Orthodoxy with the Treaty of Brest in 1595 and joined with the Vatican. The Church has followed the spread of the Ukrainian diaspora, and now has some 40 hierarchs in over a dozen countries on four continents, including three other Metropolitans in Poland, the United States, and Canada. The head of the Church is Major Archbishop Svoatoslav Shevchuk, who ascended in March 2011.



Within Ukraine itself, the UGCC Rome is a substantial part of the religious population, being second to the majority Eastern Orthodox faith in terms of the number of communities. In terms of the number of faithful, the UGCC Rome ranks third, after the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC MP). Currently, the UGCC Rome predominates in three western oblasts, but constitutes a minority elsewhere in Ukraine.



Founder	Pope Clement VIII, Sigismund III Vasa
Independence	1595 (claimed 988) in Brest, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
Recognition	Holy See at the Vatican - Rome
Primate	Sviatoslav Shevchuk (Major Archbishop)
Headquarters	Kyiv, Ukraine
Members	14.1 percent of Ukraine's population
International Affiliations	Ukrainian Catholic Church of Canada
Language	Ukrainian, Slavonic
Other Names	Ukrainian Catholic Church, Uniate Church

Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP)

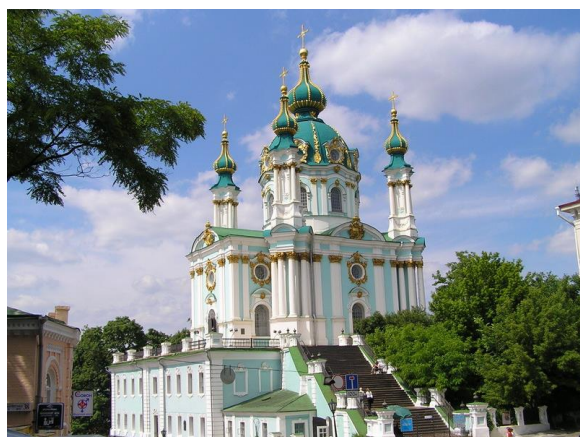
The Ukraine Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC EP) is one of the three major Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. It was established again as the UAOC EP in 1990, right before the fall of the Soviet Union. In its contemporary form, the Church has its origins in the Sobor of 1921 in Kyiv, shortly after Ukraine's declaration of and (failed) bid for independence from the Soviet Union. Close to ten percent of the Orthodox population claim to be members of the Church. The other Churches are the UOC KP and the UOC MP.



As leader of the UAOC EP, Metropolitan Mefodiy was very welcoming of our discussion, as he truly believed in the future of a unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

With independence in 1991, many Ukrainians felt the need for an indigenous autocephalous Orthodox Church free of Russia's influence. Although there have been three different 'resurrections' of the Church in Ukraine, each following a period of political, cultural, and religious persecution, all Church bishops in the last two have had a direct line of succession to the first proclaimed UAOC EP.

Founder	1 st All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Assembly
Independence	October 1921 – Recognized 1924, EP
Recognition	By historical precedent, Constantinople
Primate	Metropolitan Mefodiy (Kudriakov)
Headquarters	Kyiv, Ukraine
Members	2.8 percent of Ukraine's population
International Affiliations	Western Europe, United States (UAOC EP in the USA)
Language	Ukrainian, Slavonic



We learned on February 25, that Metropolitan Mefodiy had passed away one day earlier at the age of 65. I am extremely privileged to have met with this great man.

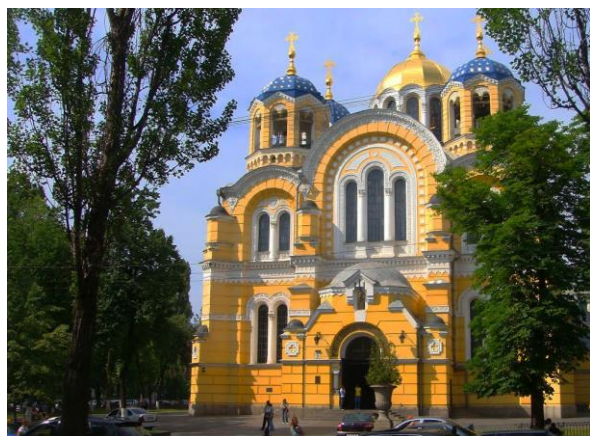
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP)

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) is one of the three major Churches in Ukraine, alongside the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (AUOC EP). The Church is unrecognized by other canonical Eastern Orthodox Churches.



The Kyivan Patriarchate's mother church is St. Volodymyr's Cathedral in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine. The head of the Church is Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko), formerly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), who was enthroned in 1995, succeeding Patriarch Volodymyr. He was subsequently excommunicated by the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in 1997, however the Synod and Sobor of the Kyivan Patriarchate, understandably, do not recognize this action. According to a poll conducted by the Razumkov Centre in 2006, 14.9 percent of the Ukrainian population responded as belonging to the Kyivan Patriarchate. That number has since gone up, and the Church is now the largest in the country.

Founder	Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko)
Independence	1922
Recognition	Unrecognized by other canonical Orthodox Churches
Primate	Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko)
Headquarters	Kyiv, Ukraine
Members	39.8 percent of Ukraine's population
Members	21.8 percent out of 41.2 percent that clearly defined their church allegiance
International Affiliations	Western Europe, North America (The Vicariate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kyivan Patriarchate in the United States and Canada)
Language	Ukrainian, Slavonic



My visit was very warmly received by Patriarch Filaret and was viewed as being constructive in the purpose of working towards Ukrainian Orthodox unity.

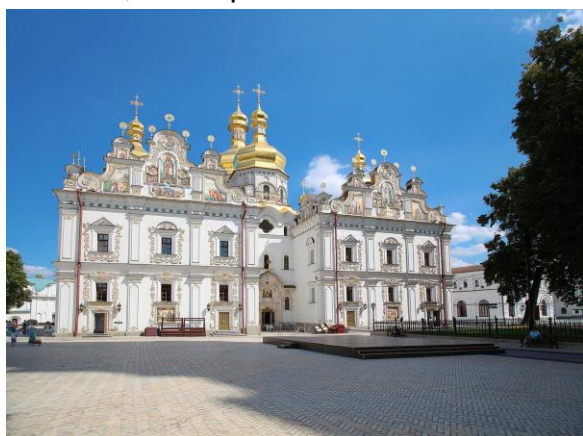
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP)



The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) is an autonomous Church of Eastern Orthodoxy in Ukraine, under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). It is the only Orthodox Church in Ukraine that has its canonical status recognized by the whole Eastern Orthodox communion, albeit directly under Russia's Moscow Patriarchate.

Under Soviet control it was called the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, only separating on October 27, 1990. It claims a direct line to the baptism of Kyivan-Rus' by St. Vladimir (Volodymyr) in 988. The first head of the Church was Metropolitan Volodymyr (Viktor Sabodan), enthroned in 1992 in Kyiv.

The Church has full canonical standing within Eastern Orthodoxy through its Patriarch in Moscow, and operates in full communion with others Churches under the Ecumenical Patriarch.



The UOC MP claims to be the largest religious body in Ukraine with the greatest number of parishes, churches, and communities, counting up to half of the total of Ukraine and totaling over 10,000. Also, the geographical factor plays a major role in the number of adherents, as the Ukrainian population tends to be more church going in the western part of the country rather than in the Moscow Patriarchate's heartland in eastern and southern Ukraine.

Founder	Saint Andrew, Vladimir the Great
Independence	1990
Recognition	1990 (Under Moscow Patriarchate)
Primate	Metropolitan Onuphrius
Headquarters	Kyiv, Ukraine
Territory	Ukraine
Members	29.4 percent of Ukraine's population
International Affiliations	None
Language	Ukrainian, Slavonic

ORTHODOXY IN RUSSIA



Religion in Russia

- Russian Orthodox - 50 plus percent
- Muslim – 6.5 percent
- Unaffiliated Christian – 4.1 percent
- Other (ancient) Orthodox – 1.5 percent
- Tibetan Buddhist – 0.5 percent
- Atheist – 13 percent

Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP)

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and after a wave of privatization and ‘Shock Therapy’⁴⁷ under President Boris Yeltsin, a renewed Russia sought to separate itself from its ideological past. At the turn of the Millennium, President Yeltsin stepped down after eight years in power, from 1991 to 1999. Only hours before this announcement, President Yeltsin’s hand-picked successor, Vladimir Putin, published a document outlining his first rudimentary political program and his vision for Russia. He laid out a three-point strategy for renewal: a strong state, an effective economy, and a ‘Russian idea’. Certainly, initially, President Putin distanced himself from imposing a new mandatory state-supported ideology on Russian society. He maintained that it would leave no room for intellectual or spiritual liberty, pluralism of ideas, or freedom of expression. At the same time, in a country divided by a plethora of social and cultural

schisms, a new national consensus had to be found. President Putin noted that, in contradistinction from the Communist ideal of atheistic regulated life under Communism, this new system should be voluntary and build upon the unconstrained response of the population.⁴⁸ This system, of course, would expand the value systems already embraced by the majority of Russia's population. Most recently, Russia's values have been vested in Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) lead by Moscow Patriarch Kirill, a dynamic that has been represented aptly by the central administration in Moscow.

In 2012, between 69 percent and 77 percent of Russia's population was Christian, predominantly Orthodox.⁴⁹ No firm statistics are available, but – speculatively – numbers would be on the lower side, as inflated numbers would mask the true (limited) power of the ROC MP. Over the 15 years that Putin has been either President or Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, the resilient ROC MP, which survived the atheistic period of Soviet Communism, has been fully resurrected. In fact, President Putin, in an effort to bolster support for the Church, oversaw the reconstruction of 23,000 parishes that had been destroyed or fallen into disuse. The ROC MP, an organization that is charged to abstain from political dialogue and action, maintains a congregation of over 90 million in Russia alone.

Since taking office for his third-term as President, Putin has embraced the Church's position on sensitive issues like abortion and gay rights. Indeed, the Orthodox Church in Russia is a powerful institution and has become, for many, the 'Russian idea' that Putin first advocated in 1999. It is well known, according to Father Alexey Kulberg of Yekaterinburg, that 'There are no conflicts between the church and the state...The President's ideology for developing Russia coincides with the direction of the ROC MP.'⁵⁰ Orthodoxy has once again become a powerful symbol in Russian national mythology. In particular, the Moscow Patriarchate is the largest officially recognized entity, with some 200 million adherents in Russia and former possessions of the USSR, which includes Ukraine.

Not long after arriving in office, President Putin identified 'social solidarity' as a central and typical Russian value not shared by all of humankind. This value, he said, was undeniably strengthened during the Soviet era and existed even beforehand, and is premised on the idea of a strong state based on the preconditions of a gradual and natural development of the population's identity.⁵¹ There has been, however, an ongoing debate over whether Russia's and Ukraine's history should be separated, and whether the Kyivan-Rus' period should be assigned exclusively to the history of Ukraine.⁵² History is layered and multifaceted, and this is something that has become blatantly apparent in the recent crisis in Ukraine. When we arrive at the question of Orthodoxy, however, it is impossible to deny Kyivan-Rus' the position of progenitor of Eastern European Orthodoxy, despite Orthodoxy leadership in Russia today desiring this status for political influence in Russia and beyond.

Kyiv is a historically important city in Eastern Europe. Both the Polish Commonwealth and the Tsarist Russian Empire have claimed rule over the city at various points. The

Poles even described the 'Southerners' or Ukrainians as *Rusiny*, meaning 'Under Poland', when Poland ruled between 1340 and 1650.⁵³ But, as one nineteenth century observer noted, when inhabitants from all over Kyivan-Rus' – separated by distance, foreign governments, different administrative systems, civic customs, speech, and even (in some cases) religion – came together in Kyiv 'They regarded each other not as a people speaking a foreign language but their own kin...*all wished to preserve a filial or fraternal* respect for the mother of their ancient homes, the city of Kyiv.'⁵⁴ Only the Church is credited with keeping national consciousness alive in the whole of Kyivan-Rus'. As political scientist Michael Radu pointed out, 'The Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe has always seen itself and is widely perceived as the historic repository of nationhood, national values, and, quite often, as the savior of a nation's very existence.'⁵⁵ This 'filial respect' and acknowledgement of Kyiv as the centre of Eastern European Orthodoxy also affirms the notion that Putin's 'social solidarity' is not a purely Russian phenomenon but has existed elsewhere in the form of nationalism.

When Orthodoxy was introduced into Kyiv by Prince Vladimir I in 988, Kyiv had a population of 100,000 and was considered one of Europe's great cities. Muscovy, on the other hand, was not even recognized in any official record until 1147, 110 years after the first Metropolitan was appointed in Kyiv. Indeed, in 1147, the year universally recognized as Muscovy's founding, it remained of minimal importance, surrounded by wooden walls, and known simply as the 'Kremlin'.⁵⁶ After the economic decline of Kyivan-Rus', in the wake of the Mongol and Tatar invasions of the thirteenth century, the seat of the Orthodox Church temporarily moved to Muscovy in 1299 for security concerns. In 1240, Kyiv itself was sacked during a Tatar invasion, and as a whole the Kyivan-Rus' territory was no longer stable.⁵⁷

After the Council of Florence in 1439, Moscow broke with the Patriarch of Constantinople and future metropolitans in Moscow were chosen by a council of bishops. At the same time, the Patriarch of Constantinople chose a new Metropolitan for Kyiv, which still remained separate from a burgeoning Tsarist Russian Empire. After the Byzantine Empire and Constantinople fell to the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmet II, in 1453, Moscow began to regard itself as the true centre of the Orthodox faith and the third Rome. In 1589, the Metropolitanate of Moscow was raised to Patriarchal status by a Synod or council of bishops. Thus, while still officially part of the Greek Orthodox Church under Constantinople, it was now an official and fully-national Church: The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.⁵⁸ Currents of solidarity were strengthened when, in 1686, an act was passed by the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate transferring the Kyivan Metropolitanate established by Constantinople in the 15th century from Kyiv to Moscow. This act was annulled by a *Sobor*, or assembly of bishops, in 1993 in Ukraine, and later the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew.⁵⁹ Currently, Constantinople views Russian Orthodox authority over the UOC MP as being uncanonical due to the forcible nature of the Metropolitanate's transfer.⁶⁰ Ukrainians today see this act as the first intrusion by the ROC MP into the internal affairs of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, specifically as a means to delegitimize the lineage held by the old Kyivan Patriarchate to the establishment of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe. Peter the Great of Russia abolished the Patriarchate in 1721 and replaced it with the Most Holy

Synod – a council of Russian Orthodox bishops who looked over the ROC MP in place of a Patriarch – yet it still remained a powerful force in regulating a cohesive identity and expanding influence.

When, in 1921, a Church council accredited by Constantinople restored the Moscow Patriarchate after the fall of the monarchy, the influence of the Church in Russia began its fast decline. After the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925, Soviet authorities refused to allow the election of a new Patriarch until 1943, at which time the central government severely limited Church authority and influence.⁶¹ Historian Athanasius McVay, Paul Magocsi, and Marta Dyczok, attested that the Churches in Russia were decimated by the Soviets.⁶²

When the Warsaw Pact, binding Eastern Bloc states together, ended in 1991 a new era for Russia arrived, however Orthodoxy, after nearly 70 years of repression, did not hold the same authority that it had before 1917. In an attempt to protect Russia's heritage and the ROC MP's links to the historic Kyivan Patriarchate, in 1997, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin signed into law an act protecting the ROC from competition with other Christian faiths.⁶³ However, while Russia's central authority attempted to restore the influence of the Church, market turmoil, internal instability, and a wave of pluralism surrounding Russian identity prevented any progress during the 1990s.

When Vladimir Putin took office, first as acting-President on December 31, 1999, Russia's relationship with the ROC MP took a great leap forward. The ROC MP has had a huge revival under Vladimir Putin. As Russia began to recuperate from the chaotic 1990s and began to move towards domestic and international power resurgence, the Church was seen as a key asset. Russia's government has since invested a great deal of effort and money into restoring the church physically and psychologically. Bringing people back into the Church fold has been a significant endeavour by the Kremlin. Encouraging the different Orthodox Churches back within the ROC MP's direct influence has been a priority for expanding Russian prestige, which legitimizes the country's place atop the Orthodox-Slavic world. In 2008, President Putin organized the reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR MP), which is based in New York and is headed by Metropolitan Hilarion, with the ROC MP and its Patriarch in Moscow after 81 years of separation, a feat considered by some to be President Putin's greatest accomplishment. Today, the Moscow Patriarchate and Kirill feel that legitimacy for Ukrainian Orthodoxy can only come from Moscow.

The ROC MP rejects any claims by Constantinople over Ukraine and describes the religious division – between the Constantinople recognized Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) and the Moscow influenced UOC MP – as schismatic, and demands that the Autocephalous Church be returned to the only 'canonical' Church, the ROC MP. To do so would not only affirm Moscow as the world's largest Orthodox Church, but also deny recognition of an autonomous Ukrainian nation of people, and institute large-scale Russian influence in a sovereign state.⁶⁴ As Athanasius McVay has pointed out, 'The ROC MP is fearful that if Russia loses its political domination over Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarchate will lose its

religious domination over the more vibrant Ukrainian Orthodox Church.’ President Putin, too, knows that it would drastically limit Russia’s influence and reduce the notion of Russia’s ‘social solidarity’, something he has been advocating since before being elected President.

The ROC MP is a both an opportunistic and necessary vehicle for Putin and Russia’s in reclaiming Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe, as we have seen in Ukraine since late 2013.

ORTHODOXY IN (UKRAINIAN) CRIMEA



Religion in Crimea

- Orthodox – 84 percent
- Muslim – 10.2 percent
- Jewish – 0.2 percent

Orthodoxy in Crimea

Crimea, currently Ukrainian territory occupied by Russia, is perhaps the Holiest area in all of Eastern Europe. It was in the ancient Greek port-city of Korsun (also known as Chersonesus) just outside modern Sevastopol in southern Crimea that Grand Prince Vladimir of Kyiv was baptised Orthodox by Patriarch Basil of Constantinople. After, he called on all his subjects to undergo the same baptismal ritual in the Dnieper River, on which Kyiv is located. According to Russia's President Vladimir Putin, who also holds significantly close ties Patriarch Kirill of the nationalistic Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), Patriarch Kirill stated that this event signalled the beginning of

Ethnic similarity, a common language, common elements of their material culture, a common territory, and a nascent common economy and government, Christianity was a powerful spiritual unifying force that helped involve various

tribes and tribal unions of the vast Eastern Slavic world in the creation of a Russian nation and Russian state.⁶⁵

Previously a member of the infamous KGB (*Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti* or Committee for State Security), Russia's main security agency from 1954-1991, an organization that espoused atheism, it is quite remarkable that President Putin has now found God. He enlists him in his Holy Mission or Crusade to rewrite Slavic history and reestablish a Slavic Eastern European empire based on the revisionist theory that Moscow begat Orthodoxy in Slavic Europe.

President Putin went on to grossly exaggerate historic facts by claiming that it was thanks to this conversion that for the first time Russia's forefathers saw themselves as a united nation. Kyivan-Rus' was an economic confederation before its conversion in 988,⁶⁶ and, true, the event did facilitate the beginning of Slavic cultural identity, Muscovy, however, was a small trading-post community at the outer frontier limits of Kyivan-Rus' and was not established until 1147. While today the bulk of Crimea's population is Russian (in ethnicity and language), with a majority Orthodox Christian population, the indigenous inhabitants of the area are certainly not Slavic, but Tatar and Muslim.

President Putin is known for his Pinocchio nose when it comes to political and international commitments to peace. His proclivity towards ordering Russia's military aggression, and subsequent denial of it, shows this. Ecclesiastically, President Putin's next target, to solidify his military endeavours, is to bring the birthplace of Eastern European Orthodoxy, Ukraine, into Russia's fold.

Etymologically, 'Rus' has been historically regarded as the area around the Black Sea, where the Rusyn people of Kyivan-Rus' were localized. Kyivans were those centred around the cultural city of Kyiv on the banks of the Dnieper River, which runs down the centre of modern Ukraine. Indeed, for many historians and social scientists (including political scientists), the name 'Rus' was originally associated with the Dnieper region just around or the lands to the east of the Sea of Azov – characterized as being most of modern Ukraine, stretching from the Black Sea northwards.⁶⁷

Kyiv Kyivan-Rus' was a sovereign land ruled from Kyiv and lasted, formally, from 882 to 1240. At its greatest extent in the mid-eleventh century, it stretched from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the south. The peoples neighboring Kyivan-Rus' described it as a state of merchants and soldiers, and that there was a close connection between war and trade. After the region's Slavic tribes were unified and Rus' established, further expansion and unity was understandable. Indeed, it was the expansion of Rus' northwards from Kyiv, and the commonwealth's increasing control over the area's Slavic tribes, that formed the backbone for Kyivan-Rus' in the ninth and tenth centuries. By the 12th century, the area comprised the northern part of Ukraine, the northwestern part of Russia, Belarus, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, and Slovakia.⁶⁸

Crimea was first annexed by the Tsarist Russian Empire from the Ottoman Empire in 1783, remaining as a part of Russia's core until 1954 when it was gifted to Ukraine as a show of 'brotherhood' by Soviet Chairman Nikita Khrushchev immediately after Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's death. Until March 11, 2014, when the Supreme Council of Crimea and Sevastopol City Council adopted the Declaration of independence of Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, Crimea remained under Ukrainian rule. Revisionists through Russia's media have advertised that Crimea is really 'a historic Russian land', ignoring the historical truism of the 988 baptism of Grand Prince Vladimir of Kyiv by Patriarch Basil of Constantinople in the Crimean port-city of Korsun, and that Kyivan Rus' begat Muscovy, not vice versa. Historically Crimea is the major religious site of Slavic world.

According to religion professor, Dr. Mark Silk, if one allows that Kyivan Prince Vladimir's baptism in Crimea, just over 1,000 years ago, was a real spiritual and historical event, that might make the peninsula a starting point for all of the Slavic world's journey of faith, comparable to the role in Judaism of Mount Sinai or Ur. However, no one suggests that these places be under Jewish control. 'Crimea was at most a way-station, rather than the epicenter, of the religion of the eastern Slavs. The epicenter, as it happens, was Kyiv.'⁶⁹ Crimea may not be Slavic, and it certainly is not Orthodox originally, it still retains significance as the site of Orthodox conversion. When considering the legitimate seat of Eastern European Orthodoxy, however, according to historian Paul Magocsi, 'Crimea *is* the historic land of the Crimean Tatars,'⁷⁰ while Kyiv is the historic root of Kyivan-Rus'. After all, Vladimir I was Kyivan and not a Muscovite.

The indigenous people of Crimea are Crimean Tatars, a Muslim Turkic speaking people similar to the Volga Tatars of the Volga Steppe in mainland southeastern Ukraine and Russia. As of 2001, of the two million inhabitants of Crimea only 12 percent or 300,000 were Tatar, a significant number considering Stalin deported the entire Tatar population in 1944, some 220,000 people, known as the Black Day (Qara Kun). The Tatars were forced into railcars and ships, and forcibly transported to Soviet Central Asia to what is today Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The few who escaped were shot or drowned. Within months half had died of cold, hunger, exhaustion and disease. Many were re-located to toil as indentured workers in the Soviet GULAG system.⁷¹ For the Soviet Union this was a significant time. Russia had taken control of its historic identity and could now claim control of the birth site of Eastern European Orthodoxy, legitimizing its own national mythology.

Only in the early 1990s, after the fall of Soviet communism, did the Crimean Tatars make their way back to their traditional homeland of Crimea. Today, 150,000 still reside in Uzbekistan. Despite their small numbers in the disputed area, Crimean Tatars represent a highly mobilized and unified constituency that has consistently been pro-Ukrainian and opposed to pro-Russia separatism on the peninsula. In 1991, when the vote for Ukrainian political independence arrived, the Tatar population swung the Crimean vote in favour of Ukraine. Whatever the Tatar grievances against the Ukrainian state may be, when faced with the choice of being under either part of Russia or part of

Ukraine's control, the Crimean Tatar leadership has consistently and unequivocally chosen Ukraine.⁷²

Since the fifteenth century, it has been the mindset of the Tsarist Russian Empire, Muscovy, the Soviet Union, and now the Russian Federation to regain the lands that they consider their own: Kyivan-Rus'. Chairman of the Soviet Union Josef Stalin, in 1944 and with the expulsion of the Tatars from Crimea, was the first to achieve this feat. This expansive Pan-Slavic view of the 'Russian World' is deeply embedded in the mindset of every person in Russia, which Russia's media proudly pointed out as being proven by the reported overwhelming 'success' of the Crimean annexation referendum. As historian and political scientist Marta Dyczok explained, after the expulsion, Russia invited wealthy and important citizens and members of the KGB to settle in Crimea, effectively Russifying the area. Crimea is the most tropical region of Eastern Europe outside of the Balkans and Greece. The 'snowbirds of Moscow/Russia' have truly had an effect in altering the population composition of Crimea. Today the population of Crimea of 2.367 million is divided between Russian speakers (1.45 million or 58 percent), Ukrainian speakers (600,000 or 24 percent), and Crimean Tatars (300,000 or 12 percent).⁷³ Combined with its perceived nationalistic and religious importance, Crimea remains important as a symbol and justification for Russia's expansion further into Eastern Europe.

It has been said that since the Russia's occupation of Crimea that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate utilized intimidation tactics against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). In one instance, on the day of the Crimean referendum, a Russian-speaking Orthodox priest, flanked by two soldiers in unmarked uniforms, walked into a Kyivan Patriarchate parish in Perevalnoye. Thousands of Russia's unmarked irregular forces first appeared in Crimea in early 2014, known as 'Little Green Men'.⁷⁴ The Russian priest asked for proof that the parish, presided over by Father Ivan Protoirey, was properly registered. Father Ivan's his message was clear: that his Church was aligned with the Kyivan Patriarch, Filaret, rather than the Moscow Patriarch, Kirill. Three days later, one of Father Ivan's sons found a video clip of Ivan standing in front of his church, saying Russia's soldiers should be shot. Ivan said he never uttered those words.⁷⁵ Instead, the video – blurry at best – was said to be fabricated and aimed to turn opinion against the UOC KP and its clergy.

In another instance, in March 2013, armed militia were said to have attacked a UOC KP church in Crimea, beating up a priest and church-goers including a pregnant woman. Police who arrived at the scene three hours after the attack 'took the side of the assailants, explaining that the patriarchate of Kyiv was carrying out anti-Russia activities in Crimea.'⁷⁶

I have met with officials at Russia's Embassy in Ottawa on numerous occasions. When approached on this topic, they claimed not to have known who the Little Green Men were. I pointed out, having myself been in the military that the pictures being shown were of Russia's military license plates and Russia's military vehicles and that no

military on earth would loan out hundreds of vehicles to people that they did not know. The response is always an uncomfortable half-smile.

Overall, there is general understanding that the (Russia's) Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, now the *de facto* Church in Crimea, is siding with the Russian government to enhance the influence of the Moscow Patriarch in the region. This phenomenon is understandable. It has been a policy of President Putin's throughout his fourteen years in power. His government in Moscow has invested heavily into the construction and renovation of ROC MP parishes in Russia, growing their leadership and support and is now encouraging their complicity to take-over vacated UOC KP and Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church parishes. The UOC KP has been allowed to remain in Crimea but only for the time being. It has been allowed to rebuild some parishes destroyed by violence in the area, though – according to regulation – they need to conform to Byzantine architectural traditions, which is very limiting.⁷⁷

The UOC KP has been administratively and bureaucratically marginalized in Crimea by Russian authorities. A deal signed with the Ukrainian government in 1965, stipulating that Ukrainian Churches only pay 1 Ukrainian Hryvnia (Ukraine's currency) per year in taxes, has been repealed in Crimea, directly affecting only the UOC KP. The UOC KP, according to Russia's authorities, must now pay 600,000 Ukrainian Hryvnia (or \$35,000 Canadian) yearly in taxes. This repressive and coercive taxation policy will reduce the total number of UOC KP parishes from 20 to 3 by March 2015.⁷⁸ Russia's governance in Crimea has drastically reduced religious freedom through bureaucratic measures, especially for Ukrainians belonging to the UOC KP.

Moscow's historical claim to Crimea is groundless. The indigenous Tatar population of Crimea is not Orthodox. They are Turkic Muslims and have lived harmoniously with other populations throughout the rest of Ukraine, and under several rulers, for centuries. The peninsula was only gifted to Ukraine by Russia in 1954 as a show of 'brotherhood'.

Similar to the course Russia is taking now, it was the 'right' of Hitler and Germany to the Sudetenland, of Mussolini to Libya and Abyssinia, of Emperor Hirohito to China and Korea. The true right to Crimea lies with the Tatars who want to remain with Ukraine, as Ukraine protects their freedoms. They know too well the Russian bear that deported the majority of the Tatar population in 1944. Russia has returned once again, and the Tatars do not want to go back under Russia's rule.

ORTHODOXY IN ROMANIA



Religion in Romania

- Orthodox Christian - 86.7% (All Romanian Orthodox Church)
- Protestantism - 5.2%
- Roman Catholicism - 4.7%
- Greek Catholicism - 0.9%

Romanian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (ROC EP)

The Romanian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (ROC EP) is an autocephalous Eastern Orthodox church recognized by Constantinople and headed by Patriarch Daniel. It is in full communion with other Eastern Orthodox churches, and ranked seventh in order of precedence from the Ecumenical Patriarch. Its Primate has the title of Patriarch, and its Patriarchal Office was established in 1925. However, the Church itself gained independence in 1872 when the Metropolis of Ungro-Wallachia and the Metropolis of Moldavia, merged to form the Romanian Orthodox Church. It gained full autocephalous status in 1885 after years of negotiation with Constantinople.

Its jurisdiction covers the territory of Romania, with additional dioceses for Romanians living in nearby Moldova, Serbia, and Hungary.

The majority of Romania's population (16 million or 86.5% according to the 2011 census data), as well as 720,000 Moldovans, belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Romanian Orthodox Church is in contest with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (11 to 16 million) to be the second-largest in size, behind the Russian Orthodox Church.

Romanian Orthodox Church Under Communism

Nevertheless, the activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church under communist rule was more-or-less tolerated by the Marxist–Leninist atheist regime, although it was controlled through ‘special delegates’ and its access to the public sphere was severely limited. The regime's attempts at repression generally focused on individual believers as opposed to the Church as a whole. The attitudes of the Church's members towards the regime ranged broadly from opposition and martyrdom, silent consent, collaboration, and subservience to ensure survival.

Marxism-Leninism argues that religion is an instrument of exploitation and, as such, it is to be discouraged, hence the anti-religious campaigns in the Soviet Union. In Romania, under Patriarch Justinian (Primate from 1948 to 1977), the ROC EP adjusted itself to support the Communist government's ‘social justice’ goals. The ROC EP did not protest or even acknowledge the existence of hundreds of thousands of Romanians in prisons and labour camps, some of whom were sentenced for religious reasons.

In exchange for their support, the Romanian government disbanded non-Orthodox churches and forcefully integrated their believers, and properties into the ROC EP. Despite the compliance with the government, the Church also underwent a purge when Soviet troops retreated from Romania. The government cracked-down on possible dissidence among the religious population: between 1958 and 1963, about 2500 priests, monks and nuns were arrested, with a tacit approval by the ROC EP hierarchy.

It is said that, under dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, Orthodox priests not only complied with the requests of the government, many collaborated with the secret police, the *Securitate*, giving it information received during confessions, and that as many as 80% of the priests were informers.

ORTHODOXY IN MOLDOVA



Religion in Moldova

Eastern Orthodoxy - 93.2 percent

Catholicism - 0.5 percent

Other (Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Protestant) – 4.8 percent

Church in Moldova

On November 30, 2014, Moldova, which gained independence in 1991, held a regular parliamentary election, in which pro-European Union parties edged their pro-Russia rivals for political control. Pro-European parties – Democratic Party of Moldova (19 seats), Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (21 seats), and the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (23 seats)⁷⁹ – won a majority of Moldova's 101 parliamentary seats and have formed a coalition government. Only one Pro-Russia party was elected with 25 seats, Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova.⁸⁰

Significant of a national internal divide between pro-Russia and pro-European national sentiments, the outcome of the election was unprecedented. Moldovan heritage has been shaped by Russian influence since Romania's loss in its War of Independence in 1881, when the area became administered by the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). Moldovan literature shifted away from the phonetic alphabet to the Cyrillic alphabet and Slavonic was introduced as the liturgical language in a period of intense Russification, as facilitated by the ROC MP.⁸¹

The situation of the Moldovan Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (MOC MP) is not unlike the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and it demonstrates the approved hegemony of the ROC MP over Orthodox churches in former Soviet republics.⁸² However, as in Ukraine, political influence exerted by Russia is not done primarily through the Church, but through the media.⁸³ In the wake of this recent election, however, as political scientist Lucian Leustean has noted, 'Predicting future developments of Orthodox Christian life in the Republic of Moldova is doomed to remain in speculative.'⁸⁴

Moldova is a central-eastern land-locked European state nestled between Romania and Ukraine. Traditionally Russo-centric, the November 2014 parliamentary election showed that attitudes may be shifting towards the European Union (EU). The lack of visibly active military support towards pro-Russia rebels in Ukraine and the emerging news that Russia will experience a recession in 2015 – due to falling oil prices and Russia's involvement in Ukraine – could both be contributing factors to this changing attitude. Indeed, Russia's geopolitical aims of re-establishing an Eastern European bloc, once again, are being compromised, as Moldova sets on a course of European integration. And, to avoid contestation of the new coalition government's mandate, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights labelled the election as generally well administered, democratic, and free.⁸⁵

Historically, Moldova's political ties with Russia have been strong. The Metropolitanate of Moldova, under Metropolitan Iosif Muşat, was originally established by Constantinople in the 15th century. However, in 1812, following the Bucharest Treaty that ended the Russian-Turkish War, the ROC MP set up the Eparchy of Chisinau and Hotin, greatly challenging the monopoly of the Metropolitanate of Moldova. In 1856, Moldova renewed its independence after the Crimean War, and, in 1881, the country, again, found itself under Russia's control. This transition marked the beginning of an intense period of Russification.

Originally, Moldova had been Romanian, but when control shifted to Russia the national make-up was dramatically altered so as to generate a 'Moldovan' national-identity. Bishop Pavel Lebedev (1871-1882), of the ROC MP, collected and destroyed all Romanian prayer books and religious materials found in Orthodox Churches under Moscow's control, further limiting the authority of the Metropolitanate of Moldova of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Pro-Romanian clergy were driven into exile and 340 parishes where liturgies were held in Romanian were shut down. While bitterly opposed

by the Romanian section of the population, Bishop Lebedev was clearly acting as Moscow's arm. The Eparchy of Chisinau and Hotin was effectively Russianized. After the First World War, Moldova was found within the borders of Greater Romania. The geopolitical absorption of Moldova also meant that the Orthodox Church was incorporated into the Romanian Orthodox Church (ROC EP), which is recognized by Constantinople, and that authority was moved away from Moscow and to Bucharest. However, later, under Soviet atheistic control, Romanian Orthodox clergy were persecuted and religious freedom was curtailed in an attempt to ramp-up the Russification process.

Under Soviet control, known as Moldova SSR, First Secretary of the Moldovan Communist Party from 1950 to 1952, Leonid Brezhnev deported thousands of ethnic Romanians and instituted forced collectivization. Church schools, seminaries, university programs, and printing presses were closed. Church publications were discontinued, and the Chisinau Museum of Church History and the Noul Neamt Monastery Library were destroyed. No religious texts were published or circulated in Moldova between 1944 and 1990. The number of parishes decreased to 193 by 1990. The importance of the Church in political life, even the ROC MP, was greatly reduced, despite the heavy influence of the Church in early Russification efforts. Russia's media and propaganda efforts in this coercively secularized period effectively shaped Moldovan national identity as distinctly non-Romanian, although Moldovan culture was, in fact, originally organically Romanian. Through linguistic policy – shifting linguistics towards Slavonic and mandating that Cyrillic be the alphabet used – and forceful Russification, Russia was able to shape Moldova into the pro- Russia state it is today.

Overall, since the fall of Communism and the independence of Moldova in 1991, the central government has constantly favored the Metropolitanate of Chisinau and All Moldova, also known as the MOC MP, which belongs to the Moscow Patriarchate. In fact, the Religious Denominations Act of 1992 restricts the activities of some religious groups, including the freedom of religious practice, the protected confidentiality of confessional, and the guarantee that the government will not interfere in religious activity. This legislation has drastically limited the activities of other denominations like the Metropolitanate of Bessarabia, a Bishopric of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the other major Churches in Moldova with 720,000 congregants.

According to the country's 1994 Constitution, religious freedom is protected as a fundamental human right. Nonetheless, the Metropolitanate of Bessarabia was not recognized until 2002 because of the dominance of the (Russian) Moldovan Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in society and state politics. This occurred after the Bessarabian Church lodged a formal human rights complaint with the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg to correct this injustice. In Crimea, and even Ukraine, human rights complaints can be lodged against the Moscow Patriarchate based on its exclusive and dominant position. After all, 98.5 percent of Moldovan citizens are nominal Orthodox Christians and the Moldovan Orthodox Church claims exclusive jurisdiction over the Orthodox Church in Moldova.⁸⁶ While the Church is a strong cultural

institution, it has remained weak in political affairs. It still retains strong links to Patriarch Kirill of the ROC MP.

Transnistria

One area that remains precarious is the region of Transnistria, a Moldovan breakaway state located mostly on a strip of land between the River Dniester and the eastern Moldovan border with Ukraine. After having declared independence in 1990, and especially after the War of Transnistria in 1992, the area has been formally governed as the 'Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic', a state with limited recognition that claims territory in the historical region of Bessarabia. Unrecognized by United Nations member state, Transnistria is designated by Moldova as the 'Transnistria autonomous territorial unit with special legal status' or *Stînga Nistrului* ('Left Bank of the Dniester').

After the dissolution of the USSR, tensions between Moldova and the self-declared sovereign state of Transnistria (also known as 'Pridnestrovia', which did not wish to separate from the Soviet Union) escalated into a military conflict in March 1992 and was concluded by a ceasefire in July 1992. As part of that agreement, a three-party (Russia, Moldova, Transnistria) Joint Control Commission supervises the security arrangements in the demilitarized zone, comprising twenty localities on both sides of the Dniester River. Although the ceasefire has held, the territory's political status remains



unresolved: Transnistria is unrecognized by other states, and is an independent presidential republic with its own government, parliament, military, police, postal system, currency. As of 2014, it has a population of 505,000.⁸⁷ Its authorities have even adopted a constitution, flag, national anthem, and coat of arms. However, after a 2005 agreement between Moldova and Ukraine, all Transnistrian companies that seek to export goods to Ukraine must be registered with the Moldovan authorities. Most Transnistrians have Moldovan citizenship, with many having Russian and Ukrainian citizenship as well. What makes the situation difficult is that because of Russia's extensive military contingent present in Transnistria, the European Court of Human Rights considers Transnistria 'under the effective authority or at least decisive influence of Russia', ultimately expanding Russia's formal influence once

again outside its borders.

According to official statistics, 91 percent of the Transnistrian population is Orthodox Christian. And, with the region's strong affiliation, Russia's position and influence in the area is determinately strengthened by the authority of the ROC MP there. Indeed, as the ROC MP is the main Church in Moldova. Transnistria's government has recently supported the restoration and construction of new Orthodox churches. While the area's 2005 constitution affirms freedom of religion, some religious groups, notably the Jehovah's Witnesses and Protestants, were met with registration hurdles and actively persecuted juridically and violently (though only in isolated cases).

Moldova and Conclusion

When the OSCE reported on the 2014 Moldovan Parliamentary election, it noted that the main problem was 'media independence' and that the concentration of media ownership and political influence affected editorial freedom and investigative reporting.⁸⁸ What this translated to was excessive influence by Russia, advocating for a pro-Russia's electorate. Indeed, under Russia's President Vladimir Putin, Russia's foreign policy has become increasingly aggressive and forceful, notably since his initial election in 2000. According to the Eurasian Foundation of Moldova's European Integration, 67.5 percent have confidence only in Russia's TV channels, and almost half of Moldovans receives their information about the EU from Russia's television networks. TV is the primary source of information for 80 percent of the population, while only 15 percent regularly read printed media. The abundance of Russian language material, and the overwhelmingly high percentage of Russian-literate population, enhancing Moscow's influence – both through television and print media like *Kommersant* and *Timpul* – especially in the area of Transnistria a pro-Russia multi-ethnic – composed of peoples from with many different ethnic make-ups - breakaway state bordering Ukraine home to Moldovans (32.1 percent), Russians (30.4 percent), Ukrainians (28.8 percent), and Bulgarians (2.5 percent).⁸⁹

The (Russian) Moldovan Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (MOC MP) retains some of the political and cultural influence it had in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It may yet become a strong political force, albeit with the exception of Transnistria where Russia's Church and political influence remains strong. There remains a strong geopolitical orientation of political and economic elites towards Moscow in the country, as well as an apparently indissoluble link between religion and the identity of the young Eastern European state.⁹⁰ Russian Orthodoxy is the basis of Moldova's Russified culture, as it is today, and the factor which made Moldova distinct from Romania.

ORTHODOXY IN GEORGIA



Religion in Georgia

- Georgian Orthodox - 83.8 percent
- Muslim - 9.9 percent
- Armenian Orthodox - 3.9 percent
- Roman Catholic - 0.8 percent
- Russian Orthodox - less than 0.5 percent
- Jewish - less than 0.5 percent

Georgia

The Republic of Georgia, established in 1991, is a predominantly Orthodox Christian country located in the Caucasus region of Eurasia, at the crossroads of Western Asia and Eastern Europe. It is bounded to the west by the Black Sea, to the north by Russia, to the south by Turkey and Armenia, and to the southeast by Azerbaijan. The capital and largest city is Tbilisi, and the country as a whole has a population of almost 5 million.

Having visited Georgia twice, I am very aware of the depth of Orthodox belief in the country.

Georgian Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarch (GOC EP)

Against all odds, and with so many enemies throughout the centuries, the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church, or just simply the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC EP), has retained its independence and continues to thrive today.

As with most historic Orthodox churches, seating is limited and the majority of parishioners are required to stand. Even with the large number of churches, there is simply not enough room for all the Orthodox who wish to worship to be able to do so. For special occasions, many people gather *en masse* outside to listen to service projected over loudspeaker. Georgians pride themselves on their reputation for being hospitable and tolerant, while a great majority are Orthodox Christian.

The current primate of the GOC EP is Patriarch Ilia, who presides over 3.5 million Orthodox adherents in Georgia and abroad. The GOC EP itself is independent, being autocephalous, and is recognized as canonical by all other Churches of the same status.



Georgia was an early adopter of Christianity making it a state religion in 337AD. Georgians maintained their faith over the centuries despite the waves of invading hordes. The active history of Christianity in Georgia begins in 303. By 317, Christianity spanned nearly the entire breadth of modern Georgia. The Christianization of Georgia progressed over the next several centuries.

As part of the late Roman (Byzantine) Empire, Georgian Christianity was heavily influenced by Byzantine Orthodox liturgy and practice. Initially, the churches in Georgia were part of the Apostolic See of Antioch. The Church of Georgia became autocephalous when the Patriarch of Antioch, which is distinct from Constantinople, elevated the Bishop of Mtskheta to the honor of Catholicos of Kastli in 466, an elevation recognized by the rest of the Church. Subsequently, the Catholicos was given the added title of Patriarch in 1010, making the title of the primate of the Georgian Church the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia.



The invasions of the tartars in the 13th and 15th centuries greatly disrupted Christianity and the government of Georgia. The state and the churches were divided into two separate parts; two separate Patriarchs governed the churches. In 1801, Eastern Georgia, was annexed by the Czar of Russia. By 1811, the Church in Georgia was absorbed into the Synodal Church of Russia, ending autocephaly for the Georgian church.

As Russia's Tsarist Empire began to dissolve in 1917, after the abdication of Czar Nicholas II, the Georgian hierarchs unilaterally announced restoration of autocephaly. While not accepted by the Church of Russia, the Soviet forces went further, regarding all Orthodox in Soviet territory to be subjected to their rule. Thus, the GOC EP was harassed and churches and other church activities were closed. Clergy and Christians, in general, were killed in the ensuing purges of the next several decades. Although the Soviets permitted religion to be practiced, its reach was severely limited. In 1917, there were 2,455 working churches in Georgia, but by the mid-1980s there were only 80, along with a few monasteries and a seminary.

After Stalin recognized the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in 1941 with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, to gain support of the Church for repulsing the invasion, the autocephalous status of the GOC EP was formally recognized in 1943 by the ROC MP. In 1989, autocephaly was recognized by the Patriarch of Constantinople; thus approving the *de facto* autocephaly exercised by the GOC EP since the fifth century.

After independence in 1991, when the elected President, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, espoused a philosophy of ethnic nationalism, the notion was soon embraced by the GOC EP. During the Georgia's national movement, the concept that real Georgians are Orthodox Christians spread swiftly.

With the downfall of the Soviet Union and Georgia's independence, a great revival took place for the GOC EP. As of 2002, more than eighty percent of the population of Georgia has identified themselves as Orthodox Christians. The Church itself was organized into 33 dioceses, with 512 churches and 730 priests. Today, the Orthodox Church remains the most trusted institution in Georgia. As of February 2015, 95% of respondents had a favourable opinion of its work.

The Church is recognized for maintaining a neutral political stance and Patriarch Ilia is renowned for playing a significant role as mediator in political confrontations, which in Georgia have at times turned violent. However, Professor Iago Kachkachishvili, head of Tbilisi State University's sociology department, says the Church's political neutrality is a myth. The Church's influence comes from public opinion. It uses the trust of the people as a source of strength. And every government and politician uses the GOC EP as a source of legitimacy.

While the constitution stipulates a separation between church and state, a 2002 concordat (an agreement between a Holy See and a sovereign state) defined this relationship by granting the Church official recognition in Georgia and a special consultative role in the government, particularly in education.

Many conservative elements within the Church, who are pro-Russia, openly voiced their displeasure with the Georgian President. They saw his pro-Western orientation as a threat to Georgian traditions and the Church's influence on the people.

The clash of ideologies came to head in July 2011, when parliament passed a law allowing religious minority groups in Georgia to be registered as legal entities in public law giving them legal protection previously only enjoyed by the GOC EP. The move was applauded in the West, but the GOC EP saw this as an infringement on its special status. Orthodoxy, indeed the GOC EP, is seen as a part of Georgian culture

Abkhazia

In Abkhazia, a region within Georgia which has declared itself an independent state (recognized by Russia), the GOC EP has largely been prevented from exercising any authority. The Abkhazian leadership has exiled the Bishop appointed by the GOC EP. Functioning in the area is the Abkhazian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (AOC MP), which is as yet unrecognized by any other Orthodox church, although it has been given some practical support by the ROC MP. The breakaway diocese is now seeking to become a self-governed church under the ROC MP. Today, the Abkhazian Orthodox Church has 2 bishops, 2 monasteries, and 144 parishes. Religious freedom in this area has also been restricted. On 9 February 9, 2011, the Abkhazian government transferred 38 GOC EP parishes, cathedrals, and monasteries into the care of the Abkhazian Orthodox Church.

ORTHODOXY IN BELARUS



Religion in Belarus

- Orthodox - 90 percent
- Catholic - 7.1 percent
- Muslim - 0.2 percent
- Other (Jews, Pagans, Protestants) - 3.3 percent

Church in Belarus

On December 31, 2014, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), Kirill, issued a statement wishing God's blessing for all of those in 'parts of historic Rus', which today embraces Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.⁹¹ Between Ukraine and Belarus, Belarus maintains the strongest formal links to Russia – politically and religiously. Having received formal independence in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union, Belarus, a state of nearly 9.5 million people located north of Ukraine on Russia's border, has remained distinctly Russophilic to the point that the Russian language is the primary language used. Because of the government's intimate ties to Russia it has been dubbed a 'puppet Parliament'.⁹² Accompanying this, the Belarusian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (BOC MP), headed by Metropolitan Pavel, remains an eparchy of the ROC MP with even less autonomy than the Ukrainian

Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). Today, the BOC MP receives considerable support from the state, which recognizes the Church as the main ideological force of the nation, according to President Lukashenka.⁹³

Belarus' national consciousness is tied to the understanding that because Belarus entered modernity as a Soviet state, the price to be paid for its modern condition was traditional Belarusian culture. Previously it was an unnamed province in Imperial Russia where 97 percent of the population was peasantry. In other words, Belarussian progressively and passively exchanged culture for industrial modernization. The state became highly industrialized with universal education under Soviet rule,⁹⁴ and the cultural environment of Belarus was largely Russified. While during the 1920s Belarusian national and cultural development prospered, with the rise of Soviet leader Josef Stalin after Vladimir Lenin's death and a brief struggle for power, Belarusian national identity was subsequently rewritten as Russian-language media, owned by Russia, replaced national and local outlets. The Russian language became the most prominent. Even today 60 percent of the population prefer to use the Russian language in daily interactions, while 75 percent favour bilingualism in state institutions. 32 percent of ethnic Belarusians consider the histories of Belarus and Russia to be the same and 37.6 percent had no knowledge of Belarusian culture.⁹⁵ As political scientist Stephen Burant pointed out, 'In view of the low level of national identity, the opposition - and it was small, even during the *perestroika* period - lacked a constituency for nationally based resistance to Soviet rule.'⁹⁶

At the same time that the Russification process began in Belarus, as it did in the rest of the Soviet Union, causing Orthodoxy and religion to forcefully disappear, when the Soviet Union fell the ROC MP asserted itself through the BOC MP (associated with the Moscow Patriarchate). While overall some 90 percent of Belarusians are Orthodox, 7.1 percent are Catholic, 0.2 percent are Islamic, and 3.3 percent are 'Other' (Jews, Pagans, etc.). Religious divisions in Belarus correspond to national differences.⁹⁷ Ethnic Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians adhere to Orthodoxy, while ethnic Poles adhere to Catholicism.⁹⁸ With 83.7 percent of the population of being ethnic Belarusians, 8.3 percent ethnic Russian, 3.1 percent ethnic Polish, and 1.7 percent are ethnic Ukrainian, the power of the (Russian) Belarus Orthodox Church is understandable. But as has been suggested by several pundits, including Political Scientist Siarhei Bohdan, the numbers of the Belarusian Orthodox Church are inflated by the state mainly because the state uses the Church as social capital.⁹⁹

Belarusian President Lukashenko has stated that the Church and state have never been separated 'because the state and the church are committed to the same goals.' Following independence, the BOC MP became the *de facto* state church. The Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (BAOC EP), has an unknown number of members, and has remained in exile in Canada and the United States since its founding in 1942, having no major bearing inside Belarus. Two other Churches - the Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox (People's) Church (unrecognized) and the True Orthodox Church (unrecognized) - also exist in North America and Western Europe in exile, opposing Russian Orthodox hegemony, but have

been classified as 'catacomb churches' and bear almost no significance.¹⁰⁰ The BOC MP, on the other hand, yields great influence. Its state cooperation has brought material benefits and limited influence. For example, during the 1990s the government allowed the Church to earn money through its merchant role in the tobacco and alcohol trade, in which it was involved directly. As scholar Valiancin Akudovich has noted, 'The (Russian) *Belarusian* Orthodox Church is Moscow's fifth wheel in Belarus...the President is constantly balancing relations with the ROC MP (*through the Belarusian Orthodox Church*). If the Church displays too much initiative and independence, the President and Belarus's government 'discipline it, and when necessary *they* earns political capital on it.'¹⁰¹

In the early 1990s, however, there was a movement towards a European identity for Belarus based on historical memories of the Grand Duchy of Belarus in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the successor state to Kievan-Rus' and a European state. Nationalist intellectuals, who began to rise in the 1970s and 1980s, see the Grand Duchy as one of the foundations for Belarusian national identity. Former Popular Front leader, Zianon Pazniak, has contended that Belarus – because it was historically part of the Grand Duchy – constitutes the 'eastern edge of European civilization', and has advocated for protection against Russian hegemony.¹⁰² Though the government has taken small steps towards a uniquely Belarusian identity, like pressing for a more independent Belarusian Orthodox Church, it is hard to consider this a long term strategy.

The government's mood, however, has been inconsistent. In 2002, it passed a new law prohibiting all religious groups from importing or distributing religious materials without prior approval from the government, as did Russia. This move strengthened central control over Russian influence through the national Church. However, the new law also set a more complex registration system that prohibited the operations of any unregistered group,¹⁰³ bolstering Russia's influence through the Orthodox Church.

In accordance with the strong relations between Belarus and Russia – social, economic, cultural, and religious – customs union and defense agreements signed in 1995 require Russia to make substantial defense contributions to the Eastern European state. In fact, less than one percent of Belarus' budget goes towards defense.¹⁰⁴ When, in 2014, Russia announced that it would be establishing an airbase in Babruysk, in Belarus' east, in 2016 much speculation arrived over Russia's intentions. But, the strategic position of the airbase, distant from any NATO members, serves only to threaten Belarus' sovereignty should relations with Russia go sour.¹⁰⁵ Given the strong presence of the ROC MP in Belarus, the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, and Russia's renewed territorial claim over historic Kyivan-Rus', Belarus feels vulnerable. The fear of potential Russian aggression by Russia has forced Belarus not only to strengthen the state's ideological framework (vis-à-vis a more independent Belarusian Orthodox Church), but it has also began a program of counter-insurgency and anti-sabotage training manoeuvres during military drills beginning in spring 2014.¹⁰⁶

One example of the state gaining political favourability was when the head of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Pavel, asked for greater autonomy for his denomination,¹⁰⁷ a move directly supported by the government and viewed favourably by the population.¹⁰⁸ The government's policy change is seen as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine and fears that Belarus' dependency - religiously and economically - on Russia makes it vulnerable. By moving towards expanded autonomy for the Belarusian Orthodox Church and the government are asserting Belarus' national sovereignty.¹⁰⁹

Orthodoxy and the authority of Russia's government remains strong in Belarus, and combined with the weakness of a national identity separate from that of Russia, Belarus finds itself inescapably in Russia's sphere of influence. As has been mentioned, the strong relationship between the state and the (Russian) Belarusian Orthodox Church means that Patriarch of the ROC MP Kirill has direct influence over the Belarusian people and power in the central government, as does Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA



Religion in America

- Protestant – 37 percent
- Catholic – 23 percent
- Mormon - 2 percent
- Orthodoxy and Other Christian – 10 percent
- Jewish – 2 percent
- Islam – 0.8 percent
- Other – 6 percent

Orthodox Church in America (OCA MP)

In 1741, the first Orthodox missionaries travelled to America with Vitus Bering, for whom the Bering Strait is named, and Alexie Chirikov. Both men were explorers from Russia. Their activities in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands represent not only non-Western

European exploration in North America, but also a long history of Orthodoxy in the New World. As a component of Russia's exploration and economic development under Tsar Catherine the Great, the first Russian Orthodox mission established the Orthodox faith in North America by converting the aboriginal peoples of the region - including the native Athabascan, Tlingits, Aleuts, and Inuit peoples.



When Gregory Shelikov, leader of the Russian-American Company, approached Father Herman, in 1793, to work as a missionary in Alaska, he and several other monks travelled to Alaska at the behest of the Holy Synod of Russia. They were accompanied by ten Alaskan aboriginals who had been taken to Russia and converted in 1786, beginning a new chapter in the history of Orthodoxy.

The first formal Orthodox Christian Mission to America arrived on September 24, 1794, in the Kodiak Archipelago of Southern Alaska. It was a success, seeing thousands of aboriginals converted and educated on Russian-Orthodox Christian values. The Mission discovered, on Kodiak Island, hundreds of aboriginals who had been taught the basic aspects of Orthodox Christianity and baptized by the laymen who had been left there by parties that had previously visited the region. Ultimately, the Mission proved beneficial to the Tsarist Empire, and provided a strong foundation for the Russian-American Company in the region. Not only did this facilitate expanded colonialism, but, also, established a strong initial foundation for Orthodoxy in North America.

Difficult relations emerged between the Russian-American Company, which controlled the Alaskan colony, and the Mission between 1808 and 1818. This was also a period of tumultuous relations between the Europe states and the Orthodox Church; it was the era of the Napoleonic Wars. Father Herman soon left for Spruce Island, which he dubbed New Valaam after the Valaam Monastery in northwest Russia. Here he built a small faith-based colony and led a simple life, in which he cared for orphans and continued to expand the Orthodox threshold via conversions until his death in 1837. Today, he is remembered for his commitment to expanding the Orthodox Church in North America, and is viewed as one of the founding fathers of Orthodoxy on the continent by the Orthodox Church of America (OCA MP). Together, alongside Father John Veniaminov and Father Jacob Netsvetov, five religious centres were established with more than 10,000 Orthodox Christians by the end of the 1830s.

On December 15, 1840, Bishop Innocent arrived in Sitka, the capital of Russian-America, beginning an even more glorious phase for the American Mission. Innocent was critical in establishing the colony of Unalaska on Aleutian Island, converting the aboriginal population there, and erecting the Cathedral of Ascension in 1826. The expansion of the Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel, in 1845, under Innocent, laid

the foundation for the construction of a seminary. This move further entrenched Orthodoxy into everyday life in an area that now encompassed a great deal of the Alaskan colony, seeing Innocent's diocese converted into an Archdiocese.



When Alaska was sold to the United States of America in 1867, the situation was drastically altered. Corporate financial backing for Orthodoxy ceased to exist after the Russian-American Company - Orthodoxy's chief funding source - was dissolved. However, Moscow continued to fund the Mission until Russia's Revolution in 1917. No longer was Orthodoxy considered to be geographically important, yet it remained religiously relevant to cultural life.

In 1868, Archbishop Innocent was transferred to the See of Moscow as a Metropolitan, and subsequently moved his diocese to Siberia, while the centre of North American Russian Orthodoxy was moved from Alaska to California around the mid-19th century. California maintained direct connection by rail and sea to Alaska, Canada, South America, New York, and, through New York, Europe. Archbishop Innocent maintained control over the Orthodoxy in America by proxy, through a Bishop and the Imperial Russian Missionary Society, which he was President.

In 1881, Bishop Vladimir (Sokolovsky) was appointed Hierarch in North America, subsequently accepted the Holy Virgin Protection Uniate Church in Minneapolis into the Orthodox Church. Uniates are individuals belonging to Eastern Catholic churches that were previously Eastern Orthodox churches. With this event, the American Mission entered into a new phase of its life. A Church almost exclusively concerned with missionary work among aboriginals, mostly in Alaska, now altered its focus to the return of the Uniates, congregants of Eastern Catholic churches which were previously Eastern Orthodox churches, to Orthodoxy. This work, until now centered in the Western provinces of Russia, was directed to those immigrants who had immigrated to America from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Eastern Europe, including Galicians and Carpatho-Rusyns.

Beginning in the 1860s, a massive wave of emigration from Eastern Europe westward began, lasting well into the twentieth century. Those moving included Serbians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Greeks, Russians, Syrians, and Albanians. By 1880 and the surge of persecution in Eastern Europe, immigration increased substantially and with it the Orthodox population in North America expanded.



The Mission had, by this point, extended into Canada - the prairies and the major centres of Ontario and Quebec - where great numbers of Orthodox and Uniate immigrants were arriving. Because of this wave of immigration, a Missionary school was established in Minneapolis, Minnesota, just south of northwest Ontario and Manitoba, and a bilingual (English-Slavonic) publication, *The American Orthodox Messenger*, was established by the Diocese there.

In Western Canada and Edmonton, my home city, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) was the only Orthodox Church available to minister to Ukrainian settlers, from the mid-1800s through to the 1920s. This was a dynamic that lasted through three major waves of Ukrainian immigration: the 1860s, 1880s, and 1910s. After the Russian Revolution and the toppling of the Russian Tsar in 1917, St. Barbara's Russian Orthodox Cathedral, first established in 1902, became the central body for nearly 100 rural Russo-Greek Orthodox parishes in Northern Alberta. Many internees held during the First World War were Ukrainians, and practiced their faith at the Cathedral. In 1927, when the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) was established as separate from the ROC MP, in North America, many left the Russian Orthodox congregation to join other Orthodox Churches like the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC), established in 1918.

In 1898, Bishop Tikhon (Bellavin), who was later Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, arrived to preside over the OCA. For many Orthodox, the Mission was said to have entered into a new stage of maturity. For the first time, the Mission became full diocese, with its presiding Bishop wholly responsible for a Church within continental limits. In 1905, the centre of the Church was transferred to New York City and St. Nicolas Cathedral, and the newly-elevated Archbishop Tikhon was given two Auxiliary Bishops to administer a greatly-expanded Orthodox church in America.

The choice for moving the centre of North American Orthodoxy to New York, where it resides today, is significant. New York is the centre of American cultural life, and, at the time, well connected in a globalizing world. New York, unlike California, Alaska, or Minneapolis, maintained direct connection with all major American centres, as well as those in Europe and Russia. And, America's official immigration centre from 1892 until 1954 was Ellis Island, located in Upper New York Bay. The placement of Ellis Island made New York City and nearby Jersey City a popular destination for Orthodox immigrants, most of whom had moved to suburban areas by the mid-twentieth century when seemingly unrestricted immigration began.

The history of Orthodoxy in America is rich. Today, there are between three and six million Orthodox adherents in North America, around 400,000 of which call Canada home. Although compared to the whole of the continent's population these numbers are small, the place that Orthodoxy holds in religious and cultural life is special. Having settled various regions - such as the Canadian prairies and Alaska - the impact of Orthodoxy has helped advance the cultural status of Canada and the United States, and

helped determine our place in the world through the traditions and values that religions, like Orthodoxy, have brought forward.

ORTHODOXY IN KAZAKHSTAN



Religion in Kazakhstan

- Islam - 70.2 percent
- Orthodoxy - 23.9 percent
- Atheism – 2.8 percent
- Protestant and Other Christian – 2.3 percent

Orthodox Church in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan, the former Soviet Socialist Republic located in central Asia between Russia and China, which gained independence in 1991, claims to be a multi-ethnic state. But, unlike other multi-ethnic states, religion is regulated by law, notably through restrictive legislation such as the Law on Religious Activity and Religious Associations. With the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) being the only Orthodox Church in the country, religion inside here is strictly regulated.

Most Christian citizens in Kazakhstan are of Russian descent, and to a lesser extent Ukrainian and Belarusian. In fact, according to a 2009 national census, approximately 26 percent of the population of Kazakhstan identifies as Christian, with 23 percent identifying as Orthodox. To a lesser extent, 1.5 percent of the population is German,

most of which follow Roman Catholicism or Lutheranism. There are also many Presbyterians, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and Pentecostals. Methodists, Mennonites, and Mormons also have registered churches with the government.

Kazakhstan legislated restrictions on religion, which officials justified by explaining that they were concerned about the spread of radical Islam in the country and the impact it would have. Therefore, the government decided to introduce legislation enforcing control over religious groups.

They are very proud to announce that prior to the law coming in there were 40-odd different faith communities in the country. Now there are only 16 or 17. So there's order. And they are able to sort of have this understanding of freedom of religion by 'we don't want it to be too messy. There are too many groups around. We want to have a clear sense of what religion is in the country.'¹¹⁰

From a Canadian perspective, Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedom, Andrew Bennett says, 'that is not freedom of religion. But, in a country such as Kazakhstan, that is in continuing evolution, we think there might be opportunities there, again to share the Canadian experience of pluralism.'¹¹¹ It is certainly not the position of the Government of Canada to support such a restrictive religious policy or policy program.



While Ukraine's Orthodox situation has proved to be unsettling over the past year, while that of Kazakhstan remains stable. This is mostly because Christianity is the second most practiced religion after Islam in Kazakhstan, with Orthodoxy being the most popular Christian doctrine. Orthodoxy, here, falls under one banner: the ROC MP. That is to say, cohesiveness amongst the Orthodox, with the lack of schism unlike in Ukraine, has meant that Christianity has stayed united amidst the otherwise anti-Christian sentiments growing adversity in the Islam-dominated state.

The Metropolitanate of Kazakhstan is under the jurisdiction of the ROC MP and consists of nine eparchies (or regional jurisdictions). The Metropolitan of Astana and Kazakhstan serves as First Hierarch of the Orthodox in Kazakhstan and ruling hierarch of the Metropolia. The current Metropolitan of Kazakhstan is Metropolitan Alexander Mogilev from Kirov, Russia.

In 2011, shortly after neighbouring Tajikistan modified its religion laws, Kazakhstan adopted the Law on Religious Activity and Religious Association making the training of Christian leaders difficult, and volunteer religious youth work now requires the

permission of both parents. Overall, censorship on religious materials has been imposed. According to a report from the International Christian Concern, the fines against individuals for exercising their religious beliefs without state permission have totaled more than \$118,000. The average fine is the equivalent to approximately two months' salary. There have been 119 individuals who have been fined from all denominations, some of them on multiple occasions, though minority groups like Orthodoxy are more pointedly targeted, ultimately reflecting discriminatory state attitudes.

Spokesman for the Slavic Gospel Association Joel Griffith says the shift is causing some consternation among congregants of the ROC MP, the sole Orthodox Church in the country. 'It used to be [that] in Kazakhstan, you were relatively free to minister and proclaim the Gospel there. But as we've seen with the other Central Asian countries, Kazakhstan in recent years has really been *clamping* down on this.' One of the more recent incidents involved a group of 16 police officers and journalists, led by the local religious affairs official who raided a Sunday worship service at an unspecified Orthodox Church in West Kazakhstan. As a result of the arrests, '10 of the church members now are facing a court date, and they could get possible fines of one or two months' average salary.' Reasons for such raids range from illegal religious activities to lack of government permit.

Assistant Prosecutor Talap Usnadin has defended the policy, noting that those arrested often have no registration and are not given official permission to hold meetings. He has indicated that they are not targeting Christians alone. The law, while those of the Orthodox Church are being regularly persecuted, also pertains to Islam.

The crackdown against Christianity, in this case Orthodox Christianity, coincides with the rise of traditional Islam in the Middle East. This phenomenon is taking place in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan. Kazakhstan, as a result, has seen a great number of Islamic missionaries working inside its borders in recent years.

Most notably, the law has been very effective in helping Kazakhstani authorities curtail the recruitment of its citizens by Islamic extremists in Syria, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Currently, it is estimated that 100 Kazaks are fighting in Syria and Iraq, according to the National Security Committee (KNB). State officials noted that the law has been inspired by the earliest recorded instances of a Kazakh being involved with foreign extremist and terrorist groups in the 1990s and early 2000s, though security officials would not provide details of these cases. In fact, young Kazakhs started seeking religious education in countries like Turkey, Pakistan, and Egypt in the 1990s, exposing them to extremist ideology and militant recruitment.¹¹²

Kazakhstan's law has been described by insiders as an efficient and modern response to challenges and threats of modern realia. Overall, it aims to establish state control the delicate sphere of religion, neither restricting democratic rights of the people nor turning this process into inquisition, according to President of the Sana Information and Advisory Centre, OSCE's religious regulatory component, Gulnara Orazbayeva. The

new bill is a response to security challenges, and is popular amongst the Muslim demographic. However, enforcement of the law has increasingly thought to be targeting religious minority denominations in the country including Orthodoxy.

In 2012, the country instituted a new censorship regulation effectively halting illegally functioning places of worship, limiting the distribution of religious literature, and restricting missionary activity. Christian converts commonly face harassment from authorities, devout Muslims, and family members.¹¹³

Orthodoxy in Kazakhstan, while maintaining the second greatest number of congregants after Islam, is also a relatively new religion to the area, emerging first in military settlements close to the Russian border in 1866. In 1871, the Turkestani diocese was formed, and, in 1872, the first Kazakhstani bishop was appointed. After 1917, and during the Soviet period, state policy, as a whole, kept the atheistic character, and religious activity was rigidly supervised by the country's central authority. However, Kazakhstan continued to accept refugees from Russia and Eastern Europe, notably Ukraine, who were members of the clergy or affiliated with the Orthodox Church in some way. There is a strong link between Eastern European Orthodoxy and Kazakhstan today.

The revival of religious life, including that of the Orthodox Church, began after Kazakhstan achieved independence from the USSR in 1991. Islam and Orthodoxy became important pillars of spirituality under President Nursultan Nazarbayev (1991 to present). However, in 2012, according to the Law on Religious Activity and Religious Associations, re-registration of religious associations was required. As of October 25, 2012, there were 271 Orthodox religious associations – including 9 dioceses and 261 parishes – representing 23 percent of Kazakhstan's population of 17 million, all of which were greatly restricted by the new law.

Whereas previously the ROC MP had direct control of Orthodox parishes in Kazakhstan, in July 2010, the ROC MP established the (Russian) Orthodox Church of Kazakhstan as a new Jurisdiction under the control of the Moscow Patriarch, Kirill, and the ROC MP. As of July 26, 2010, this new structure was headed by Metropolitan Alexander I.

ORTHODOXY IN TURKEY



Religion in Turkey

- Muslim – 99.8 percent
- Christian (Oriental Orthodoxy, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Apostolic) and Jews - 0.2 percent

Orthodoxy in Turkey

Orthodox Christianity in Turkey today is far less represented than what it used to be, with approximately 3,000 Orthodox adherents in the country, compared to hundreds of thousands just a century ago. The rapid decline in the Orthodox population is a result of the nationalist attitudes of the Muslim population in Turkey at the beginning of the First World War (1914-1919), and during the latter stages of Turkey's progenitor, the Ottoman Empire, which lasted until 1919. Conditions are similar to Kazakhstan's current and legally sanctioned restrictions towards Orthodox Christians and other non-Muslims. Orthodox Christians are a very small minority with Turkey's population of 80 million and routinely face discrimination. Despite the Ecumenical Patriarch's leadership of the local Orthodox congregation, Constantinople (Istanbul) is the founding site of world Orthodoxy, which accounts for approximately 300 million today. It is traditionally the most powerful See, but recently this claim has been considerably challenged by

Russia's government, Moscow's Patriarch Kirill, and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP).

According to religious tradition, by the fifth century, ecclesia had grown to involve a 'pentarchy' or system of five Sees (Patriarchates), with precedence over one another determined by the size of the city in which the See was located. Rome, as the ancient center and largest city, was given the primacy of honor within the pentarchy. This system of patriarchs and metropolitans was exclusively the result of ecclesiastical legislation; there was nothing inherently divine in its origin. In short, none of the five Sees possessed its authority by divine right, though it was and is still held that the patriarch of Rome was the first among equals. These five Sees were located in Rome, Constantinople (or Byzantium), Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Rome and Constantinople remain the two major Sees, since the East-West Schism of 1054, effectively dividing Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. The primary contestant for Constantinople's seat, Moscow, was not included in the pentarchy.¹¹⁴ Russia's capital today, Moscow, was not even established nor conceived of at the time the Patriarchates were formed.

Moscow's challenge towards the Ecumenical Patriarch, by definition the spiritual head of the whole Orthodox world, hinges on a revisionist, to say the least, and politically motivated demographic argument. The ROC MP's congregation, as of 2014, numbers upwards of 165 million if the national and autocephalous Churches influenced by Moscow are included. Worldwide, Orthodox adherents number some 300 million. A Church deemed 'canonical' is one recognized by Constantinople, either directly or indirectly through the ROC MP (which ensures that all Churches under its jurisdiction are components of the Russian Church rather than independent bodies).

The Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Bartholomew, leads the world's Orthodox as First Among Equals, as well as a congregation of 3,000 in Turkey. Most of the Orthodox in Turkey reside in the ancient city of Constantinople (Istanbul), but many are also dispersed throughout the Aegean Islands and former mainland Greek colonies on the Aegean Sea. Turkey's discriminatory laws against religions other than Islam have encouraged the spiritual consolidation of Orthodoxy generating a close religious unity. The Moscow Patriarchate, on the other hand, is largely situated in the Slavic lands that began as Kyivan-Rus' and over the centuries spread throughout today's states of Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, and other former-Soviet states including Russia. The Metropolitanate of Kyiv was moved, supposedly temporarily, to Muscovy in 1299. Moscow grew in prominence following the fall of the Byzantine Empire, and Constantinople, in 1453 to Mehmet II and the Ottoman Empire. However, today, the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople leads a Church that includes all Orthodox Churches.

Turkey was established as a modernization project that aimed to create a 'new nation' and a 'new state', different than the preceding Ottoman Empire, which was characterized as a 'mosaic of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups.' Ironically, in the latter years of the Ottoman Empire - traditionally home to Turks, Hungarians, Serbs,

Bosnians, Albanians, Greeks, Romanians, Tatars, Kurds, Jews, Arabs, and Armenians - policies of national consolidation set in, and much of the Christian and non-Muslim population was forcefully relocated or killed *en masse*.¹¹⁵ This was the case with the Armenian 'atrocities' or Armenian Genocide beginning in 1915, as well as the forceful relocation or 'population exchange' of the Greek population in 1923 as stipulated in the Treaty of Lausanne. This Treaty was based on the religious identity surrounding Greek Orthodox citizens of Turkey and the Muslim citizens of Greece, and involved nearly two million persons following the Turkish-Greek War (1919-1923) - 1.5 million Anatolian Greeks and 356,000 Muslims in Greece. The Armenian Genocide remains controversial, as Greeks, Assyrians, and Armenians were systematically targeted, leading to over 2.5 million deaths, and countless more forceful deportations.¹¹⁶ Overshadowed by the First World War, these cataclysmic events were the first major phenomenon that saw a reduction of the Orthodox population in Turkey during the twentieth century. However, they were not historically unprecedented but preceded by several waves of ethnic and religious struggles partially due to religious reasoning.

For Moscow, the question of the Ecumenical Orthodox seat has always been a question of population. In 1920, Moscow, the capital of Russia, had a population of just over one million with an overall Orthodox majority. This still did not supersede the Orthodox population of Constantinople, the capital of Orthodoxy, before the forceful relocation or 'population exchange' in 1923. However, after the Republic of Turkey was established in 1919, the Turkish government did not legally recognize the Ecumenical Patriarchate, effectively assisting Moscow's crusade to become 'first among equals' in the Orthodox Church. Archdeacon of the Ecumenical Throne, John Chryssavgis, has pointed out that the 'ecumenical status' is a spiritual and religious jurisdiction, not a legal and secular one.¹¹⁷ So, even considering the declining Orthodox population in Turkey after the First World War, and continuing into the twentieth century, because 'ecumenical' was a status bestowed upon the See at Constantinople over a millennium and a half before, demographics can hardly be considered an factor in transferring the title elsewhere. 'Ecumenical' is an administrative and spiritual title denoting precedence over all others. Indeed, what has been made clear by the Ecumenical Patriarch and a Synod of Bishops from many states is that change in the Orthodox Church is not impossible, though changes to tradition – including the location of the See at Constantinople – has to be agreed upon by the Ecumenical Synaxis, a meeting of all Church leaders of the Orthodox Faith.¹¹⁸ Certainly, according to His All-Holiness Bartholomew I, 'A traditional Church does not mean a fossilized Church, one that is indifferent to the ongoing challenges of history.'¹¹⁹

In Turkey, there has been a sustained exodus of Orthodox Christians. In September 1955, a Turkish mob destroyed much of the Greek business quarter of Istanbul, Greek churches, cemeteries, schools and historical monuments. Shops and warehouses were looted and burnt to the ground. In 1964, Orthodox priests were forbidden to teach religion or conduct morning prayers in minority schools. Students were obliged to enrol in their nearest school rather than in a school of their choice, and, in 1971, the Turkish government closed down the Department of Advanced Religious Studies of Chalki, impeding preparation for Church office. The Orthodox population reduced from its pre-

1955 level of approximately 200,000 to 7,000 by 1978. By 2008, the Turkish Foreign Ministry estimated that these levels have been halved to between 3,000 and 4,000. Again, numbers, when it comes to the 'Ecumenical' title, seem not to matter.

The current fighting in Ukraine and Russia with (suggested) ROC MP support for pro-Russia rebels only serves to better substantiate claims that Patriarch Kirill is challenging the position of the Ecumenical Patriarch as first-among-equals. Of course, Russia's incursion into Ukraine serves two purposes: to geopolitically regain nominal Russian political and spiritual influence over former Soviet countries, ostensibly to create a buffer zone between NATO and Russia, and to pragmatically increase the status of the ROC MP in the Orthodox world. Indeed, Russia's 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Association officially recognizes Orthodoxy's role in the history, spirituality, and culture of Russia.¹²⁰ Many commentators, including Sevinc Alkan Ozcan, have noted that the ROC MP is the greatest impediment towards religious pluralism in the post-Communist era. This has proved especially true when in the early 1990s the national Orthodox Churches of Ukraine, Estonia, and Moldova sought separation from the Moscow Patriarchate.¹²¹

The support of the ROC MP and Russia's government towards pro-Russia forces in Ukraine is accompanied by the desire of Russia's President Vladimir Putin to support revisionist Russian inspired ecclesiastical purity and political uniformity in Eastern Europe, brought in only through the ROC MP and Moscow Patriarchate. The growing constituency of Patriarch Kirill and the ROC MP has compelled the Moscow Patriarchate to pursue ecumenical status, which affronts the most basic of Orthodox religious tenants.



Based on historical precedent and ecclesiastical tradition, the See will remain at Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarch will stay head of all Orthodoxy. Given the role that Orthodoxy has played in Ukraine throughout history, as the foundation of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe and the origin of various national identities, it is undeniable that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has a role to play in one form or another in the future of Ukraine as a nation.

RUSSO-GREEK ORTHODOX IN EARLY CANADA

The First Orthodox Church for Ukrainians was from Russia

It's a historical injustice for which the government of Canada has apologized, but then there were questions being raised about how the event was being commemorated. On August 22, 2014, across Canada, The Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation marked the 100th anniversary of the First World War (1914-1919) internment of about 8,600 Canadians (mostly of Ukrainian origin) who were classified as 'enemy aliens' and held in camps across the country 100 years ago. The 100 plaques were to be installed primarily at some 60 churches but also at community halls, city halls and museums from coast to coast. These were centres of Ukrainian-Canadian culture and community. There was however a glaring omission. Whoever chose the sites for placing these plaques neglected to include the very places that would have been the hub of the Ukrainian-Canadian community in 1914.



There is a justifiable suspicion and fear in the Ukrainian community of the word 'Russia,' given the 20th century history of the Soviet Union and recent events in Ukraine. However, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in Canada, where mostly those of Ukrainian ethnic descent worship, pre-dates the Soviet Union and Russia's current government and ministered, practically solely, to early Ukrainian settlers, not settlers from Russia.

For many of the newly arrived Orthodox Ukrainian settlers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly in northern Alberta and Saskatchewan, the only representative Church available was the Russo-Greek Orthodox Church, which began in 1897 and had established a number of mission churches in Western Canada, with missionaries coming from Alaska, where the Russian Orthodox Church was established long before Alaska was purchased from Russia by the United States in 1867. When a new Ukrainian (Greek) Orthodox church was formed in the 1920s, after the First World War and Russia's Revolution (1917), not all worshipping Ukrainians chose to join the new Church. Some stayed, especially in the rural communities where the congregants saw no need to switch. Their descendants still attend those now century-old churches which are Russian in name but Ukrainian in congregation and in character.

Of note, today's Russo-Greek Orthodox Bishop Job of Edmonton is Ukrainian. Today's Russo-Greek Orthodox Archbishop, Archbishop Gabriel, in Montreal, is Ukrainian. The name on the building may say 'Russo' or 'Russian' but for most of the congregations, their ethnicity and their hearts are Ukrainian.

Historically, it was those churches that would have been attended by most of those Ukrainian interned during the war (and some of their descendants may still worship there) and it would seem appropriate that some of the plaques be situated in those buildings. For some inexplicable reason, that had not been designated. For example, St. Barbara's Russo-Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton was constituted in 1902. Many members of St. Barbara's were interned. Even the internment camp at Spirit Lake, Quebec had a Russo-Greek Orthodox Church.



An anti-Russia sentiment is held by many members of the Ukrainian-Canadian community. In their minds, church and state are so entwined that they cannot conceive that those who attend a ROC MP may be just as staunchly Ukrainian as they are. This anti-Russia sentiment is totally understandable as a historical phenomenon brought about by the brutal actions of the Soviet regime in the Holodomor of the 1930s through the Cold War following World War II. However, in the early 1900s Russia was an ally.

Certainly, recent events in Ukraine have not helped dispel this prejudice. Critics of the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill in Moscow have been quick to point out a very close working relationship between the President of Russia and Patriarch. To some it does seem as if the church has become an arm of the state. This is a valid concern - but it is not fair or right to assume the sometimes-regrettable actions of church leaders in Ukraine and Moscow are endorsed wholeheartedly by their congregants in Canada, Ukraine, or even Russia. However, it does appear that is exactly what has happened when the decision was being made as to where these plaques should be situated.

As Canadians, we should do better and lead by example. Old disagreements are just that: old. If my ancestors disagreed with yours, there is no reason why that cannot remain in the past and we can find common ground today. There is nothing to be gained by re-fighting old battles.

It would make sense that as we remember the 100th anniversary of a sad time in Canadian history that all of the religious traditions of the community are honoured and have the opportunity to take part. Religion has been perhaps the mastic that holds the communities together, ensuring the preservation of the Ukrainian language and cultural traditions in Canada. By bringing together the different strands of Ukrainian religious heritage we will set an example not



only for other Canadians but perhaps more importantly for Ukraine. If we can bridge our religious (and political) differences perhaps it will inspire the churches in Ukraine to make the same effort.

It certainly does appear that the differences are more political than religious. Those who choose to worship in an Orthodox church will find more similarities than differences when comparing Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox churches. If the form of worship and theology is basically the same, then where is the dispute? Does it come down to the use of the word 'Russian' (or in Ukraine to the difference between 'Kyiv Patriarchy' and 'Moscow Patriarchy')?

Those who practice a religion claim that it is a unifying force, with benefits for both individuals and for society as a whole. That argument is considerably weakened when politics intrudes into religion and religion into politics. Had that happened in the Ukrainian community in Canada as it prepared to remember this important milestone in our history?

In Ukraine, the divisions of language, culture and religion are magnified by politicians who try and manipulate them for political gain. The average Ukrainian does not see what the fuss is all about, is willing to live and let live, to show respect and tolerance to people who may be of a different linguistic or religious culture. Can the average Ukrainian-Canadian who exhibits bias against Russia and in turn against Russian-speaking Ukrainians say that?



When Russian Orthodox parishes (Moscow affiliated or not) in Canada are excluded from an important event such as the commemoration of the First World War internment of Ukrainian Canadians, it sends a message. It says there is a class system at work in the Ukrainian Canadian community, and that those who are actually preserving the traditions of those early Ukrainian immigrants who were interned are themselves second class. Is that the image we want to project to our communities, the country and the world?

Fortunately, after raising awareness of this historical omission to the highest level, a plaque was found and presented to the historic St. Barbara's Cathedral, with Bishop Job and Father Sergey convening services to a crowd of 50-70 elected officials and other guests. The plaque is now placed prominently in the Church's historic display case.

In addition, Shaw Cable TV put together a short documentary, *100th Ukrainian Internment*, on St. Barbara's historical involvement in Alberta as early as the 1900s, to the 1920s and to date. To access the documentary, please visit: <http://www.petergolding.ca>

SUMMARY OF MISSION REPORT, MAY 2014

I visited Ukraine again in May 2014, for the fourteenth time, on a special mission for the Government of Canada to survey the ongoing situation in the Crimean region. My primary mandate was to evaluate the situation of democratic accessibility for Crimeans in the then-upcoming presidential election. In the process, I met with many representatives from various cultural and linguistic communities and discussed their concerns. Not only is Ukraine home to two major linguistic and cultural peoples – Ukrainian and Russian – but Ukraine is also poly-national, multilingual, and derives its identity from a common sense of community. Included in my itinerary was a series of many meetings with local and national religious leaders.



Father Michael Kit, formerly of St. Barbara's Russo-Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, related to me over the phone in May that the only ones interested in fomenting discord are just a few radicals and some 'politicians' for self-serving electoral purposes. Father Kit stated that in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, located in the northeast on Russia's border, problems being reported were being caused by small radical groups of 'outsiders'. These 'outsiders' were generally understood to be from Russia or influenced by Russia.

The religious authorities in Ukraine - Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic, or Jewish – have a strong connection with their faith communities, and had formed an all-religious council that meets regularly; the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) headed by Metropolitan Onuphrius, who was Chair in 2014. While regular church observance is said to be low, almost all Ukrainians attend for special occasions: to baptize children, marriages, funerals, festivals, Christmas, and Easter. The Church is extremely influential in the lives of all Ukrainians and is very much a part of their culture and national identity.

Upon meeting with Metropolitan Onuphrius, of the Ukrainian Orthodoxy Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), in Kyiv, he emphasized that some regions want autonomy from the central government. These are predominantly Russian speaking areas in the northeast. These calls, he noted, were for a some devolution of powers and not political independence, but the later could be desired if the situation is mismanaged. His statement was a fortuitous one, hinting that political independence hinged on the



UOC MP clergy being active during the previous election, he responded, 'Well, some clergy help. The politicians have been generous towards our church.'

While meeting with Nelli Molulenko of Yulia Tymoshenko's presidential campaign in Kherson, she said that with President Yanukovich's abrupt departure from the country, a great number of corrupt political leaders had also been removed. Corruption is a facet of Ukraine's bureaucracy as much as it is the political system. And, when Ukrainians are asked what the main problems are that face them, the majority answered the economy and corruption. When meeting with the Committee of Voters, an anti-corruption group funded by US Aid, the representatives pointedly remarked that the UOC MP was very involved in the invasion of Crimea and the trouble in Eastern Ukraine. They stated that it was by utilizing religious collaboration to motivate Ukraine's Russian-speaking Orthodox religious population politically that allowed for a 'peaceful' Russian invasion.

Ultra-nationalism has been growing in Europe. The nationalist and anti-Russia Svoboda Party, which was a prominent part of the EuroMaidan, had 37 Members elected to the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) in Kyiv in 2011. The Right Sektor, once an almost unknown group working under the Svoboda Leaders in the EuroMaidan, grew in prominence in January and February 2014 during the violence when they were noted for standing up to the snipers, and, by May, formed their own political party running candidates for parliament and for the presidency. Proffering a 'One Ukraine, one language,' Ukrainianization policy fosters linguistic discord. Furthermore, championing Ukraine's future entry into North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and threatening to linguistically Ukrainianize Crimea, too, provoked discord. This linguistic debate was not



to be a welcomed prospect for the predominantly Russian-speaking Crimea, which is home to a Russia's Black Sea naval fleet. However, another interpretation of Svoboda Party's slogan is that it was not meant to restrict Ukraine only to the Ukrainian language, but was attempting to spark more nationalism through the Ukrainian language. The message was interpreted by many as a

growing nationalist movement that was pressing for uni-lingualism. President Putin is taking advantage of the confusingly conceived of message. He ordered his propaganda machine to blow the situation out of proportion by suggesting that violence could have erupted in Sevastopol over linguistic concerns, where Russia's fleet is based, possibly threatening it.

Western Ukraine had been debating Ukrainianization significantly encouraged by the Svoboda Party and Right Sektor prior to the election in 2014. The predominantly Russian-speaking eastern and southern regions are naturally concerned with these discussions while their Russian language media in Ukraine and from Russia extensively reports on the perceived problem.

When meeting with the Jewish community in Kherson, the far-right Ukrainians were very apparent. At the Jewish community charity organization that I visited, the director was explaining that their group attended to concerns of some 2,000 elderly in the region and 7,000 impoverished families and children. He said that of these, 500 persons had survived the Nazi death camps.

The meeting with the director was interrupted by a phone call, upon his return he showed me live television reporting of the Right Sektor, replete with military fatigues, balaclavas, weapons, red and black flag colours, as they say, of the Nazi symbolism were out *en masse* in Kherson – 50 to 60 strong – sending a message to intimidate, if not to attack, a business owned by a mayoral candidate Vladlen Mirin. Mr. Mirin is a prominent and well-liked business person of the Jewish faith.

When asked, 'Does the Right Sektor frighten people?' everyone in the room answered 'yes'. They said that the Right Sektor proclaimed that they would put things 'in order'. Also they said that some 'Self-Defence' citizen organization joined the Right Sektor in late February. Asked if the flag (black and red) scared them, they also answered yes. They said that it intentionally alludes to the symbolism associated with Hitler's Nazis.



The colours are also, however, the colours of Stepan Bandera, a fervent Ukrainian Nationalist hero of the Svoboda Party, and controversial figure today, for his anti-Soviet activities, Bandera was, at one time, a Nazi supporter in Ukraine's fight against the Soviets, then turned to be a Soviet supporter against the Nazis until the end of the Second World War. After 1945, Bandera shifted allegiance once again to lead an anti-Soviet guerilla force that sought freedom for Ukraine.

While visiting with a German cultural group in Kherson, I was informed that a Lutheran group in Odessa wanted to meet, assuming I could travel to the city. The evening before

I travelled to Odessa, I received a death threat via phone call, and in the morning another in the form of a paper-message. I was warned, in both instances, not to travel to Odessa.

While I was in Odessa, I was told about a tragic incident that recently took place in Odessa when a protesting anti-Maidan group was attacked by pro-Maidan protestors and supporters, forcing them into the labour union building. The pro-Maidan group threw Molotov cocktails into the first and second floors. Anti-Maidan Russia supporters barricaded the building, blocking the entrances with wood, and threw Molotov cocktails from the building, igniting the barricades and entrance. Smoke and fumes rose upwards killing those inside by asphyxiation. There is no official death list, just speculative numbers, between 38 and 46. While no official numbers were released, some Odessa citizens say that 127 died. Among the dead it is estimated that 15 were Jewish.

When the leader of the Russian community and an educator in Kherson, Ms. Tatiana Kuzmich, was asked what the initial source of violence and instability was she answered that it was not persons from Russia but Ukrainians with strong attachments towards the Russian language and Russian heritage that stood up for their linguistic and cultural rights.

Ms. Kuzmich continued to describe ways to strengthen Russian culture in Ukraine and was against the process of Ukrainianization as described by politicians and the Russian speaking media. She agreed with the devolution of some powers advocated by Patriarch Onuphrius, stating that Canada should explain to Kyiv that there is no real danger in implementing a federalist system similar to Canada's, recognizing that a reduced jurisdiction of the central government in areas vying for separation can bring us back together.

Stating that a great deal of concern is linked to language, she noted that schools that teach in Russian devote 80% of their efforts to Russian literature and 20 percent to Ukrainian and international literature. In Ukrainian schools this dynamic is the opposite: with 80 percent of emphasis on Ukrainian and international literature and 20 percent on Russian literature. Considering the importance of Russia's historical place in Ukraine, particularly in the eastern and southern regions, she suggested that literature should be 50 percent Russian and 50 percent Ukrainian. Emphasizing that the link between Russia and Ukraine cannot be severed due to longstanding historic and social ties, Kuzmich stated that the Rada should consider conducting its affairs in two languages to demonstrate respect for both majority linguistic groups. Kuzmich's recommendations inclined towards pressing for more equality, regional diversity, and autonomy as a means to mitigate the ongoing crisis, something that can be found on the religious front as well.

Meeting at the Ukrainian Embassy in Ottawa after my return, Ukraine's foreign diplomats, such as Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko, suggested that the Churches are the institutions best suited to promote a proclamation of linguistic and cultural inclusivity from Ukraine's citizens to the government to ease tensions. While he believes that the

Russian language is not repressed, it is important to create a simple solution that all sides can agree on. At Russia's Embassy, Igor Girenko, head of the Embassy's bilateral section, agreed that the Moscow Patriarch would be a channel to reach President Putin because of its current place in politics and international relations. Both of them want to expand their influence in Ukraine. Both appear to be working together.

Meeting summaries found in the previous report include 30 meetings with representatives from the Islamic, Tatar, Jewish, and Orthodox communities; UOC MP leader, Metropolitan Onuphrios; OSCE; Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko; and, various cultural organizations.

UKRAINE'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION AND THE FAR-RIGHT



It is worth noting the voter support levels for right-wing parties and figures in Ukraine, as well as support among the Ukrainian-Canadians and those of Ukrainian ethnic descent here in Canada, and their implications in the Ukrainian crisis.

During Ukraine's parliamentary election, held in 2012, the Svoboda Party received 10.45 percent (or 2,129,240 ballots) of the total vote and elected 37 Deputies to the Rada, the Ukrainian Parliament. Svoboda is considered right-leaning, but because of its populist support of nationalism and anti-communism, scholars and commentators have deemed it a far-right organization. Formed in 1991, Svoboda was established as the 'National Socialist Party of Ukraine' – an unmistakable allusion to Adolf Hitler's *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP or National Socialist German Workers' Party, also known as the Nazi Party) during the 1930s and 1940s, albeit less-radical but still as a concern given their nationalistic policies.

Certainly apparent is the influence Svoboda had at the beginning of the Euromaidan movement and the subsequent protests, the expulsion of then-President Viktor Yanukovich, and the formation of the new Poroshenko government.

At the time, Right Sektor, another Ukrainian nationalist group, was cooperating with Svoboda Party. The group has been characterized as nationalist, ultranationalist, right-wing, and far-right by many. In late January and early February 2014, with the Hrushvskoho Street riots, the Svoboda Party was implicated as being radicalized by its Right Sektor affiliation. Following this, the Right Sektor organized further, forming a paramilitary wing and ran a candidate for the presidency, albeit unsuccessfully.

In the Parliamentary elections that followed in October 2014, it was widely claimed that the ultranationalists had lost support, that they only elected seven Deputies. The combined Svoboda Party and Right Sektor Party garnered only 6.5 percent of the votes in Ukraine, as opposed to 10.45 percent for Svoboda Party in the 2012 election. Here, in Canada, however, support by Ukrainian-Canadians for both of these nationalist groups reached 29 percent in the most recent parliamentary election. That is four-and-a-half times the support by voters in Ukraine. Some sources suggest that Right Sektor numbers are very few, but combined with Svoboda the number of supporters was well over one million voters in the last election.

In Ukraine many said this low level of favourable support was encouraging. There was concern about Svoboda and, particularly, the Right Sektor, which engages in sometimes-violent confrontations to advance their cause and support-base.

In my meeting with Svoboda Party's representative, Oleh Howrilko, on May 24, 2014, he stated his party's stance: Ukraine is for Ukrainian speaking people, a core principle of the organization's mandate. For Svoboda, official unilingualism is necessary for national identity. Seeing for myself, the Svoboda Party's counterpart in the Euromaidan, the Right Sektor, in action in Kherson against a Jewish business owner and mayoral candidate was very disturbing. Mayoral candidate Vladlen Mirin's shop was surrounded by 50 to 60 paramilitarists, and a barricade of skids had been erected to protect the patrons and workers inside. Superficially, Mirin's business was said to have been attacked because he was Jewish. For those Jews at the community centre I was visiting, to them this was an outright and violent anti-Semitic act and was terrifying. They were frightened by the red and black colours of the Right Sektor's emblem, symbolizing support for Nazi principles. Ultra-nationalist elements, at the time, represented almost ten percent of the Rada (Parliament) and the support levels were thought to be growing.

None of the far-right parties scored well in Ukraine in the 2015 parliamentary elections, despite a strong media presence. Svoboda is neither an anti-Russia party nor an anti-European party. Svoboda is 'a pro-Ukraine nationalist's party.' While its popular support has recently diminished, it has acted like an opposition force in the streets, attacking groups and persons who appear 'anti-Ukraine' – such as attempting to force the resignation of Oleksandr Panteleymonov, because he broadcast the ceremony where Crimea was ceded to the Russian Federation in the Kremlin. Panteleymonov's actions were seem, by some, to be in the interests of democracy.



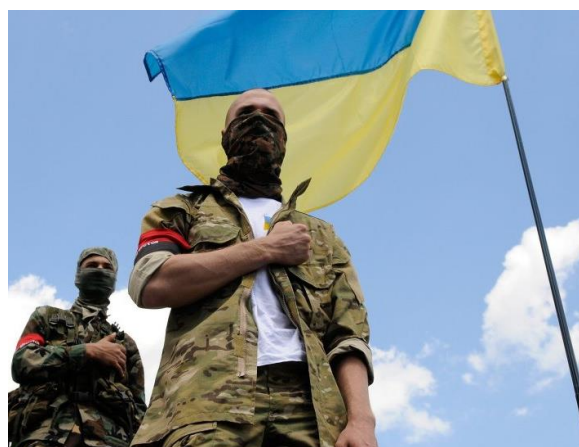
The Right Sektor also presents itself in force. During the transition of power before the election of the Poroshenko government, the Right Sektor groups forced, sometimes at gunpoint, public figures belonging to the Party of Regions – governors, mayors, police heads, and government officers – to resign. While violence occurred across the country, some of the most violent manifestations took place in the western area, where Party of Regions offices were torched. For example, in Volyn, it is reported that officials were either threatened with violence or beaten-up for their resistance.

In the most recent election, the Right Sektor was said to have attacked independent parliamentary candidates – from the disbanded Party of Regions – in an effort to force them not to run in the election! Populism and nationalism are a dangerous societal mix, and we must be careful who we support in such a volatile situation.

However, a differing view emerges in the effort to define the terrain of Ukrainian politics which suggests that today most parties and most politicians have taken up the nationalistic mantle, thereby diluting Svoboda's previously strong nationalist platform.

UKRAINE'S MILITIAS, AGGRESSION AGAINST THE CHURCHES, AND LETHAL AID

Pro-Ukrainian militias, today, including the Right Sektor, believe that the government in Kyiv under President Petro Poroshenko is too weak to rule in the face of the Russian threat.¹²² There are an estimated 30 militias alone fighting in eastern Ukraine against pro-Russia and forces from Russia. The eastern Ukraine conflict is typically seen as a war between the Ukrainian military, on one side, and Russia-backed rebels, fighting alongside unacknowledged forces from Russia, on the other. But there is another faction fighting as well, one that has gone largely overlooked: the dozens of private 'volunteer' militias that share the state's goal of ending the separatist rebellion. However, these paramilitary bodies are not necessarily under state control.¹²³



Rhetoric and propaganda from Russia inaccurately describes these militias as neo-Nazi in an effort to turn the Ukrainian and international communities against these paramilitary organizations. Canada's Foreign Affairs Department (DFATD) does not acknowledge the existence of neo-Nazis in Ukraine, but does not deny the participation of far-right elements during the crisis. There is, we must note, a difference between neo-Nazis and the far-right. Indeed, neo-Nazis are characteristically far-right on the political spectrum. However, far-right militant forces in Ukraine do not seek to revive the far-right-wing tenets of Nazism. These tenants characterized as a form of fascism that incorporates scientific racism, social Darwinism, anti-Communism, pan-Germanism, and anti-Semitism. Neo-Nazism borrows elements from Nazi doctrine, including ultra-nationalism, racism, ableism, xenophobia, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and initiating the Fourth Reich. Holocaust denial is a common feature. The vast majority of groups in Ukraine are not Neo-Nazi, but are considered by many to be far right. The far-right is reactionary, nationalistic, populist, chauvinistic, and xenophobic; it does not, however, incorporate scientific racism or social Darwinism associated with Nazism.

Non-state pro-Ukrainian fighters are accused of serious human rights violations, including kidnappings, torture, illegal appropriation of private and church property, and extrajudicial executions. Surely, the longer that these groups operate without state regulation, the greater the chances are that they will exploit their growing power for personal and political gains. Doing so risks the stability of the state after a Russian defeat of Russia, and currently undermines Kyiv's authority.¹²⁴

There are thousands of militia soldiers ready to be mobilized or already have boots on the ground. Absolute numbers, however, are uncertain. We know that the National Guard has 3,000 men ready to be mobilized at a moment's notice should Russia decide to invade. Others include the Azov Brigade and the Dnipro Brigade. Initially, these

fighters were motivated by a patriotic desire to protect their Ukrainian homeland, and were funded almost exclusively by grass-roots financing from local civic initiatives and funding from small and mid-sized businesses.¹²⁵

The militias are allies of Ukraine's central government, and most coordinate with it, but they are not under its full control. For example, the Azov Battalion, from Mariupol, answers to the Ministry of the Interior and receives considerable government support. On the other hand, the unaffiliated Right Sektor operates independently and has refused, until recently, to register as a militia with the government, instead only striving to retain its political party status.



In the case of Ihor Kolomoyskyy, the governor of Dnipropetrovsk oblast is said to be financing and permitting militia brigades to engage in activities that contravene the law. Governor Kolomoyskyy has played a crucial and respected role in stabilizing his East Ukrainian region. His favourability throughout Ukraine and his allies in Kyiv make him almost untouchable and the militias operating in Dnipropetrovsk virtually unregulated outside of Governor Kolomoyskyy's direction. This is problematic. While Kyiv and local administrations ultimately rely on the political muscle provided by militias, the banditry and vigilante activities being permitted, like in Dnipropetrovsk, have often come at the expense of human security and churches (Catholic and Orthodox) in Ukraine.¹²⁶

Some instances of this aggression towards churches and clergy are said to be as follows. On February 16, 2015, Ukrainian nationalist militants seized the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), in Bolshaya Sevastyanovka in the Cherkassy region. In another case, nationalists seized the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (UOC MP) in Bolshaya Sevastyanovka in the Cherkassy region on February 16, 2015. Eight UOC MP parishes in the Rovno region were robbed and several more seized by members of pro-Ukrainian militias. And, in the village of Pasichna, militants attempted to capture the Holy Trinity Temple of the UOC MP in September 2014. Militants successfully took over twelve UOC MP churches since July 2014.¹²⁷

So far, three priests from the UOC MP are said to have been killed and another three injured. Up to six ecclesiastical figures have faced abuse from pro-Ukrainian forces and some have been illegally detained and held by the ultra-nationalistic Right Sektor group. One of these men was Oleksandr Shevchenko, a clergyman of the UOC MP who was abducted on March 9, 2015, by unidentified persons in Boryspil, Kyiv region.

Pro-Ukrainian militias reaffirm the population's commitment to an autonomous Ukraine. Militias are actively supported throughout Ukraine by local populations. While, at first

glance, it appears that they are purely military in nature, the levels of support for them demonstrates that there is an element of populism involved. When the fighting dies down, regional paramilitary powers might assume a veritable level of power. All of this comes somewhat at the possible expense of basic human and democratic rights, human security, and religious freedoms. There is a need to strengthen Ukraine's army and its capabilities, so as to reduce Kyiv and the individual oblasts' reliance on paramilitary organizations to counter the pro-Russia and threats by Russia.¹²⁸

Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, however, retains strong relations with many governors and regional civic authorities, like Governor Kolomoyskyy, who directly support pro-Ukrainian militias. Prime Minister Yatsenyuk stated that this helps retain a power balance during the crisis, but as President Poroshenko says that it takes focus off of the military and its need for assistance. The prominence of so many militias under varying control in Ukraine also threatens any ceasefires, like the February 2015 Minsk Agreement and beyond.

President Poroshenko has tried to intervene, but his response to the growing power of militias has had political backlash. On March 25, 2015, the President dismissed oligarch Igor Kolomoisky, governor of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast, after he ordered armed militia to occupy the Kiev offices of state-run oil company UkrTransNafta, in which he is a minority shareholder.¹²⁹ The move was seen as being motivated by personal financial interests. However, Governor Kolomoisky is widely supported at home and he is a powerful ally of the Prime Minister, creating an imbalance in the federal power-dynamic. Who will replace him? Will they be as effective and as much of a supporter as Igor Kolomoisky was in this time of crisis?



While reducing the power of the militias will place more focus on the inadequacy of Ukraine's army, hopefully bring more (justified) calls for lethal aid, it also risks Ukraine losing support of its local population against increased Russian aggression amid a state of authoritarian weakness.

By sending weapons and military grade equipment to Ukraine, we can help address this problem, increase human security, ensure basic rights and religious freedoms, and improve the situation overall. The people of Ukraine currently look towards militias for protection, and not towards state policing apparatuses, which is detrimental for any future centralization and progress.

By uniting the three Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, generating a measure of social stability, judicial order will also follow, reducing the perceived need for regional militias.

Ukraine has a well-educated citizenry who are adamantly nationalist. Their soldiers' bravery is unquestioned. Ukraine's military, however, has been wrought by a corrupt government under former-President Viktor Yanukovich. There is little modern weaponry available in the face of a well-equipped Russian force, evident in the photo (right). Ukraine's soldiers need all possible help, especially through the appointing of competent senior command advisors, in order to inspire confidence among central government forces in their fight against the Russian hordes.



**PHOTO GALLERY OF THREATS TOWARDS ORTHODOXY IN
UKRAINE**

Donetsk—April 28, 2014

A demonstration organized by pro-Ukrainian groups in Donetsk became violent when masked pro-Russian supporters attacked with bats and tear gas.



Donetsk—April 28, 2014

During the rally people chanted 'Donetsk is Ukraine!' and waved the Ukrainian flag. It was dispersed after dozens of pro-Russian rebels in military fatigues arrived and attacked the crowd of 2000.

Donetsk—June 23, 2014

Pro-Russian rebels take the military oath of allegiance to the proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine. The red flags with crosses are those of the United Armed Forces of Novorossiia.



Donetsk—Undated

Following a protest, a pro-Russian militant is approached by a police officer.

Chervonaya Motovilovka—August 17, 2014

A nationalist and paramilitarist motorcade disrupts Father Vladimir Navozenko's service at the UOC MP Holy Protection Church in the Kyivan village of Chervonaya Motovilovka.



Chervonaya Motovilovka—August 17, 2014

Father Navozenko was assaulted with paint thrown at him, threatened with death, and accused of being pro-Russian and supporting 'terrorists'. Note the man in the centre wearing the Svoboda Party emblem.

Chervonaya Motovilovka—August 17, 2014

Leader of the pro-Ukrainian Radical Party, Oleh Lyashko (striped shirt) joined the attack alongside members of the Svoboda Party and Right Sektor.



Chervonaya Motovilovka—August 17, 2014

Dozens, including Father Navozenko's own parishioners joined in the attack. He was given one week to vacate his position and parish.

Butyn—October 5, 2014

St. Nicholas Cathedral in the village of Butyn in western Ukraine was transferred to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan (UOC KP) Patriarchate following a community vote.



Butyn—October 5, 2014

Pro-Ukraine protestors and far right groups, like the Right Sektor (in military garb) facilitated the transfer and forcefully removed Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) congregants.

Butyn—October 5, 2014

Nationalist militants are supervising the forced transfer.



Butyn—October 5, 2014

The transfer was not without violence. Shown above is a UOC MP congregant, injured on the ground, after an apparent scuffle with pro-Ukrainian protestors.

Kherson—May 15, 2014

Nationalist, most under the banner of the Right Sektor, supervised by apathetic police, gather in a show of force in an attempt to intimidate a Jewish businessman and mayoral candidate in Kherson. To the far right, people are making Molotov cocktails.



Kherson, May 15, 2015

Militants gather across the street under Right Sektor flags, in military garb, and armed with clubs.

Kherson—May 15, 2014

Supporters of the business and protestors line themselves behind a make-shift barricade constructed of wooden pallets.



Kherson—May 15, 2014

Workers and protestors carry the wooden pallets out of their business to defend themselves from the radicals.

Mariupol—No Date

The Azov Battalion is an all-volunteer far-right paramilitary militia affiliated with the Ukrainian government, which reports to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and is a member of the National Guard of Ukraine.



Mariupol—No Date

Azov Battalion fighting pro-Russian and Russian forces in the port city of Mariupol on the Sea of Azov.

Perevalne—June 2, 2014

In the village of Perevalne, outside Simferopol, in Crimea, the Church of the Intercession of the Holy Mother of God under the UOC KP was attacked by armed pro-Russian 'Cossacks', and the church itself vandalized.



Perevalne—June 2, 2014

Militants broke down the doors to the church, smashed the interior and prevented others from entering for Sunday service. Father Ivan Katkalo, the parish priest, warned them that others would be arriving. More members of this pro-Russian paramilitary group arrived to further the church takeover, claiming they were there 'preventing provocation from the Right Sector'.

CANADA AND NEW YORK MEETINGS

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA (ROCOR) - OTTAWA



On March 28, 2014, I met with Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal for the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) to discuss religion in Ukraine, a country deemed by many in the country, including World Jewish Congress Vice-President and Ukrainian Josef Zissels, to be a religiously tolerant state. However, we agreed, while tolerance does not presuppose state involvement in religious matters or vice versa, in many countries it does. Americans have a constitutional separation of Church and State

that is for all intents and purposes unique. In most countries the line between the religious and the secular is far less strictly drawn, even though constitutionally there is clarity, but practically it is not so. This is true in Ukraine where three main bodies of Orthodoxy – the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) – represent the majority of Ukraine’s population and influence popular opinion in many ways.

In the 2010 presidential election, Viktor Yanukovych, received most of his support from the predominantly Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine, but won by garnering sufficient support from throughout Ukraine. After three years under President Yanukovych, however, concerns about corruption, repressive laws, and the erosion of democracy were shared by millions of Ukrainians of all linguistic backgrounds. The EuroMaidan protests brought together Russian-speakers, Ukrainian-speakers, and Tatars, uniting them in the desire for peaceful change. When the President responded with more repressive laws and military violence, he was deposed in a popular uprising and fled the country as a wanted man to Russia.



Among its first acts, the new interim government repealed recently passed legislation. The Rada did not enact the legislation, it was stopped by the speaker, but the damage was done. Unfortunately, in their zeal to roll back Yanukovych’s legislation, the decision was made to also remove Russian-language protections that had been previously enacted. As the new government was composed mostly of Ukrainian nationalist politicians from the western part of the country, this was cause for some concern in the east,

leading Russia's President Vladimir Putin to seize the opportunity and invent a reason to invade and annex the Russian-speaking Crimea area of Ukraine, to 'protect' Russian interests.

Putin, then seemingly emboldened by Western inaction, did not stop at Crimea. Instead, depending on his influence in the country and through the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and the UOC MP, Moscow openly encouraged revolution in the eastern portion of the country, areas populated primarily by Russian speakers: Donetsk and Luhansk. Political leaders acknowledge the problem, but are uncertain what can be done to address it. However, there is one group that has respect across linguistic and ethnic lines in both Russia and Ukraine that could step forward to help defuse the current tensions: religious authorities.



In the 2010 Presidential campaign, the three traditional Orthodox churches in Ukraine, the UOC KP, UAOC EP, and UOC MP, appear to have chosen sides, with only the Moscow Patriarchate (Russian) Orthodoxy supporting the former pro-Russia's President, Viktor Yanukovich. Religious support for political parties was also divided along linguistic lines. That understandably led supporters of one side or another to question the clergy of the church on the opposite side of the political spectrum.

Both Ukraine's Constitution and the 1991 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religion provide for separation of Church and State, allowing Churches to establish places of worship and train clergy. Each region of Ukraine has a department responsible for registering religious groups and monitoring their activities as all religious organizations must register with the Committee for Religious Affairs and with local governments. Ukraine's political secularism is not absolute, as there are government restrictions placed on foreign religious workers and organizations, also it fell to the government to deal with the issue of restitution to the churches for property seized from them during the Soviet era.

Archbishop Gabriel noted that the Kyiv-based Ukrainian and Moscow-based (Russian) Orthodox Churches in Ukraine have set an example of working together during the crisis, presenting a united front across linguistic and cultural lines, condemning violence and corruption. It is time to empower and deploy them to the regions, to promote linguistic inclusivity and allay fears. Russian influence, he said, is not exerted through the UOC MP as a whole, but said to be based on the volition of individual clergy, notably in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. It is the aim of each Orthodox Church to remain apolitical at the centre.

Russia's recent takeover of Ukraine's Crimean region, supposedly to protect Russian-speakers, represent dramatic geo-political gains for Russia, also raises many concerns that Russia's President Vladimir Putin may yet attempt to seize more Ukrainian territory in Ukraine's east. Coincidentally, President Putin is reputed to be a very religious man. If the All-Ukrainian Council - which includes the UOC MP, UOC KP, and UAOC EP - messages collectively and clearly that Ukrainians are united in their wish for regional, cultural and linguistic inclusivity, perhaps Patriarch Kirill of Moscow can speak to President Putin to allay his concerns and temper his ardor for further conquest for Ukrainian lands.

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH – CALGARY

On the recommendation of Father Sergey Kipryanovich of St. Barbara's Russo Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, I visited with Father Stan Dubanenko of St. John's Chrysostom All Saints Russian Orthodox Church in Calgary on August 16, 2014. We were to meet with both him and Father Peter Shashkoff, but unfortunately Father Peter was unable to attend.



Father Stan's church comes directly under the authority of Archbishop Gabriel in Montreal, which is responsible to Metropolitan Illarion in New York City, who I was to meet with later, and is a part of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROCOP MP).

Further to the complex structure are the unaligned Orthodox Churches, such as St. Peter Aleiapi, St. Herman of Alaska, and Holy Trinity which belong to the Orthodox Church of America of the Moscow Patriarchate (OCA MP) but are also Russian Orthodox.

Father Stan was pleased to elucidate on the structure of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in North America. He also offered his assistance in my Ukrainian Orthodoxy project, as he too is concerned about the religious rift in the Orthodox community, citing that many in his community are recent immigrants from Russia who have great concern for Ukraine's issue. Father Stan was very emphatic and encouraging of my efforts. He said that many have tried, but none are doing so now and that I must continue to work towards uniting Ukraine's Orthodox.

MEETING WITH ANATOLIAN HERITAGE FEDERATION - OTTAWA

On October 30, 2014, (and once again on April 21, 2015) I met with Tamirci, Vice President of the Anatolian Heritage Federation and expert on intercultural dialogue, at my office on Parliament Hill. He updated me on the activities of the Anatolian Heritage Federation in Edmonton-East and across the country, as well as on the current political situation in Turkey. Though I was aware of Turkish concerns regarding Islamophobia, it was interesting to hear this perspective directly from the diaspora of the region. What did surprise me, though, was news of the amount of violence that had taken place in the country amidst a creeping and decaying secular condition and fears of Islamophobia. Certainly, Turkey has many problems dealing with Syria's refugees and refugees from other states due to the ISIL crisis, but also with terrorist threats and activities. He did not, however, expand on the improving economic ties between Russia and Turkey against the backdrop of Ukraine and Turkey's distancing from the European Union.



MEETING WITH CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF UKRAINIAN STUDIES – EDMONTON

On October 16, 2014, I addressed the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta entitled 'Negotiating Borders: Comparing the Experience of Canada, Europe, and Ukraine'. I spoke about Canada's position towards the situation in Ukraine as it concerned geo-politics, culture, and religion.

I spoke about my first visit to Ukraine in 2004 during the Orange Revolution, my many return trips, as well as my month long mission in May 2014. I talked at length about the supposed Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate's (UOC MP) involvement in politics, their tendency towards a pro-Russia stance, and the nationalist resistance it has met in Ukraine. I explained that in my meeting with Metropolitan Onuphrius, primate of the UOC MP, he noted that the Church does not support political



parties and does not engage itself in politics whatsoever, although some individual priests do.

Later in Kherson, for instance, one priest in Odessa is said to have helped incite a riot that caused the death of 50 people. Also, in areas in revolt, many of this specific Church's priests are said to support and encourage rebel separatists.

Certainly, it is known that priests and clergy march with politicians and rally with them during the elections giving their support.

The Party of Regions, the federal party of expelled President Viktor Yanukovych, sometimes noted for its pro-Russia and sometimes anti-Ukrainian policies in power, funneled vast sums of money directly or through oligarchs and towards the Church for construction purposes. This was a well-known fact in the country. Indeed, in one riding, the 'personal project' of the Party of Regions Rada Deputy (Member of Parliament) involved the renovation of a cathedral for the UOC MP at a cost of \$500,000.

There is a fear among Russian-speaking Ukrainians that government policy inclines towards linguistic Ukrainianization and is detrimental to the Russian-speaking enclave in the country. Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk was attacked directly in Ukrainian and international media – newspapers like the *Kyiv Post* and *Le Monde* - for his support of the Right Sektor and Svoboda Parties and their Ukrainian-only language policy. Ukrainian Russian-speaking leaders explained that they believe Moscow supports and reinforces true Orthodox Christian values, argued to be the foundation of Ukrainian identity, against Westernization and the decay of Eastern European and Ukrainian Orthodoxy, both ethically and morally. The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) has great political and social influence in all former Soviet countries that adhere to Orthodoxy. Borders are invisible, and as a result Churches affiliated with the ROC MP act as a conduit for Russian religious and political influence.

My recommendations to the Canadian government, upon my return, included sending an emissary to Moscow for meetings with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill to discuss depoliticizing religious activities in Ukraine, obtaining for Canada a permanent place on the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, and meeting with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to discuss the future possibilities for a pan-Ukrainian Orthodox Church recognized by Constantinople. The necessity to meet and dialogue with priests and clergy associated with the Moscow Patriarchate was also included, as they are closest to the people and area able to sense trends and concerns.

I explained to my audience that Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian identity are tied to the Orthodox faith by the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988 by Prince Vladimir of Kyiv. Even today, language is not a societal concern in Ukraine except by politicians from time-to-time, and as a wedge for President Putin's propaganda machine which breeds discontent among Ukrainians. The UOC MP could help abate linguistic concerns, but as an institution they are greatly influenced by Moscow.

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH – EDMONTON



On October 17, I met with Father Sergey Kipriyanovich and Roman Lopushinsky of St. Barbara's Russian Orthodox Cathedral, in Edmonton, to update them on my Ukraine project and the drafting of a resolution.

To thank Father Sergey for his great assistance, I presented him with a DVD copy of a short-documentary on First World War Ukrainians who were in internment camps and a cast aluminum plaque that was presented to his church in recognition of its parishioners

interned during the First World War. The documentary was made by Shaw Cable, and included a segment on Father Sergey and St. Barbara's. The video can be viewed on YouTube. He and Bishop Job were very grateful for the ceremony and the publicity that our office arranged for his church in commemorating the historical importance of St. Barbara's Cathedral.

During our meeting, Father Sergey provided helpful suggestions. He noted that former-Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, who has been working for many years to establish a Ukrainian national Orthodox Church, unifying the Ukrainian Orthodoxes, with official Patriarchal status by the Ecumenical Patriarch. He recommended that I should meet with former-President Viktor Yushchenko to discuss the issue.

Father Sergey also stated that I should meet with Metropolitan Sotirios, head of the Greek Orthodox Church, in Toronto, as he also convenes and chairs Canada-wide Orthodox conferences yearly. These are attended by Orthodox Bishops, Archbishops, and other clergy, whether Greek, Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian, or Ukrainian. He also added that Russia's former Ambassador to Canada, Georgiy Mamedov, is very influential in Canada and close to President Vladimir Putin.

Additionally, Father Sergey explained that, certainly, the International Parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy – Canada is not a member – is important, but that consultations should also be direct to the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, in Constantinople. Furthermore, the Patriarch convenes, annually, a meeting of 15 senior Church leaders, eight Patriarchs, and seven Metropolitans who meet to make Church decisions.

Concluding, Father Sergey stated that he and Bishop Job, Administrator of Patriarchal Parishes in Canada for the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, would certainly sign a letter to encourage and attain meetings with the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I. He felt strongly that I continue my project, and stated that he and the Bishop would help in any way possible. Father Sergey stated, 'We have needed this discussion, to seek a resolution for well over ten years,' and he was very pleased that I am taking the initiative to do so.

MEETING WITH GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH – TORONTO

Upon the recommendation of Father Sergey Kipriyanovich of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), I met with Metropolitan Sotirios in Toronto on October 24. His Eminence is the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in Canada and Chairs the All-Orthodox Meeting of Bishops each year.



We discussed the crisis in Ukraine and the growing influence of the ROC MP internationally as they concern internal matters in former Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR).

Metropolitan Sotirios agreed fully with my expressed concerns, and indicated his own as well. We discussed means of possible intervention into the affairs of Ukrainian Orthodoxy through the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (of which Canada is not a member), to ask if this Assembly would possibly introduce a resolution at an upcoming meeting.

The resolution, of course, would take time and involve much discussion to properly draft, but is intended to be introduced to seek assembly support, furthering our plea to His All Holiness in Constantinople for his recognition of a unified the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine.

As Metropolitan Sotirios explained, it is well known that there has been, for some time, a desire to reunite the Orthodox in Ukraine under its own recognized Patriarch.

I asked Metropolitan Sotirios if he thought the prospect had merit, and, if so, how I should proceed. His Eminence made several suggestions and offered to help in any way he could. Metropolitan Sotirios also proposed that I meet with Greek Orthodox Archbishop Demetrios in New York, and Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitan Yuriy and Ukrainian Greek Catholic Archbishop Lawrence Huculak in Winnipeg. His Eminence stressed the importance of meeting with Ukrainian Orthodox leaders and members of Ukraine's Inter-Parliamentary Assembly members.

Upon drafting a suitable resolution, Metropolitan Sotirios offered to encourage support throughout Canada, a country with a highly respected Orthodox population and with a great deal of authority in inter-Church relations.

I thanked His Eminence for his offer of assistance and guidance, stating that any help that he can provide will be much appreciated, and that I was looking forward to meeting with him in the near future.

I later met with two Members of Parliament, Costas Menegakis and Tony Clement, upon the Metropolitan's advice. Both of them offered their assistance, Mr. Megengakis in particular. Mr. Menegakis wanted to be involved personally with the arrangements being

made for my introduction to the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. I also met with New Democratic Party MP Alex Atamanenko, who is also Russian Orthodox, and he also offered to assist in any way he could.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH - EDMONTON

On October 31, I had the pleasure of meeting with Bishop Motiuk of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome) in Edmonton, Alberta. The UGCC Rome is the largest Eastern Rite Church that holds full communion with the Holy See in the Vatican. In fact, historically, this Church is one of the successor Churches that accepted Christianity in 988, under Prince Vladimir of Kyiv, who is known for converting Kyivan-Rus' to Orthodoxy during his rule. Meeting to discuss the ongoing situation in Ukraine, Bishop Motiuk emphasized the UGCC Rome's ongoing commitment to the Ukrainian people, regardless of their religious background.



Bishop Motiuk is a prolific scholar who has written on the UGCC Rome, its religious foundation, and its laws numerous times. His portfolio includes such works as 'Budka, Nicetas,' 'Canon 1071: Latin Tribunal Handling Marriage Case Involving Two Eastern Catholics,' 'Catholic and Orthodox Issues in Ukraine,' 'The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Some Ten Years Later,' 'Education and Formation of Clergy,' and *Eastern Catholics in the New World: An Historical; Study and Canonical Study of the Greek Catholic Church in Canada*. Surely, his background is impressive.

When we discussed the crisis in Ukraine, Bishop Motiuk explained that the UGCC Rome aligns itself with the Vatican and its religious and communal beliefs. Repeatedly, it has called for peace. During the EuroMaidan protests, the UGCC Rome sided with demonstrators and tended to the wounded. The Church's commitment to peace, not only non-violence but also stability, has meant that the UGCC Rome has remained neutral, despite the majority of UGCC Rome congregants residing in western Ukraine. The organization has called on Ukraine to end the internal violence, Russia to respect the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and for states imposing sanctions on Russia to acknowledge the human rights implications and destabilizing effects of their actions.

When we discussed the involvement of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in Ukraine, acting as an agent of Moscow, Bishop Motiuk was in full agreement. Both the UGCC Rome and the Roman Catholic Church, who both share the first-Primate, Pope Francis, have called for dialogue. However, both have been regularly accused by the ROC MP of supporting far-right nationalists and playing a 'very

destructive role'. Bishop Motiuk noted that these accusations are not true, as the Church maintains a strong commitment to human life and equality, hence its calls for peace in the region. Russian Orthodoxy's fears that the UGCC Rome is attempting to divide support for the organization, he noted, is substantiated by the fact that the Moscow Patriarchate fears losing its foothold in the country. Just the same, Moscow is afraid of seeing its agent in Ukraine, being the ROC MP, lose its effective authority, ability to import, and its influence on local populations.

As a token of his appreciation, and wishing for me to continue dialogue, he presented me with a book examining the life of Bishop Nykyta Budka, *God's Martyr, History's Witness: Blessed Nykyta Budka, the First Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Bishop of Canada* by Athanasius McVay. Budka was the first bishop of the UGCC Rome in Canada who opposed the communist-mandated separation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church from Rome, and for this he was imprisoned in April 1945, along with other bishops. For his resistance, he later died in the Gulag on September 28, 1949. Budka also lived and worked in Austria-Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union. McVay's book of 600 pages is an immensely detailed account of the day-to-day theological, political and social struggles that the bishop endured.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA - EDMONTON

On November 12, 2014, I met with Bishop Ilarion Rudnyk of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, which has been recognized by communion by the Moscow Patriarchate but is associated directly with the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, in Constantinople. Bishop Ilarion, born in 1972, is originally from L'viv, Ukraine, and received his formal education there. He resided in the Eastern European country under the Soviet regime, only moving to Canada in 2008. Upon discussing the ongoing situation in Ukraine as it concerns Orthodoxy, Moscow's influence through the Moscow Patriarchate was agreed to be religiously divisive. With a Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) achieving autocephalous status and uniting the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine through co-consecration, improved stability can be achieved.



Having met three days before the 75th anniversary of Russia's annexation of Western Ukraine (formerly the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), as well as 11 days before the one-year mark of the beginning of the EuroMaidan protests, public memories of Russia's total control in the wake of the ongoing crisis were further sentimentalized. This was not something that Bishop Ilarion was immune to. Having lived in Ukraine for

most of his life, he experienced both Soviet dominated life when the Church and everyday living were repressed as well as post-Soviet life.

On many occasions, Bishop Ilarion has emphasized his belief that the Church is the home of prayer, and ‘everything that happens in the Church has a purpose to unite God with human beings.’ However, he conceded that Russia’s annexation of Crimea and its invasive involvement through the Moscow Patriarchate in blurring national identity is certainly not the will of God but under the auspices of geopolitics and resource control – notably natural gas.¹³⁰ Russia’s President Vladimir Putin’s will, as exhibited through Patriarch Kirill, is delegitimizing, despite the two pursuing tactical gains. For President Putin, Russia’s control and borders are extended, and, for Kirill, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate’s (ROC MP) numbers are increased as well as his influence.

The EuroMaidan, on the other hand, Bishop Ilarion noted, is representative of his and his Church’s values and teachings. Ukrainians, from all religions and ethnic backgrounds have been brought together in the Revolution for Dignity through a common ‘language of values’. These values include justice, human dignity, and freedom. In the religious sphere, 25 parishes in Ukraine broke ties with the ‘official’ Orthodox Church in Ukraine because of its affiliation with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and moved to the other two Ukrainian Orthodox Churches – UOC KP and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) – which are considered ‘non-canonical’ by Russia, while only the UOC KP is not recognized by the greater Orthodox Community. The UOC MP in Ukraine and ROC MP in Russia, Bishop Ilarion noted, has supported Putin ‘very openly’.

Problematically, Bishop Ilarion told me the angst on the religious front in Ukraine substantiates the belief that there is an unconventional war being fought. Of course, Russia has supporters. These are the few people who benefitted under Russia’s rule and are generating civil war-like conditions in eastern Ukraine with Russia’s support. However, the great majority of Russian and Ukrainian-speaking Orthodox Ukrainians want their country, Ukraine, to remain intact. They remember the terror of the Soviet regime and from Moscow. Nationalism, tightly wound with religion – specifically the Orthodox faith – is an integral part of the fight.

When our meeting had concluded, Bishop Ilarion presented me with a book, *Ukrainian Canadians: Negotiating an Identity*, outlining early Ukrainian life in Canada

MEETING WITH CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - OTTAWA

On November 5, I met with Father Maxym Lysack of Christ the Saviour Orthodox Carpatho-Russian Church in Ottawa. Father Maxym stated that the three Orthodox Churches – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church (UAOC EP) – have courted amalgamation for over 25 years, since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. And, that the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople has set-up guidelines for granting autocephaly for the Kyivan Patriarchate. There are questions that need to be answered, however, such as: What are these guidelines? Will unity be achieved on its own? Who would head an Autocephalous Church? A Bishop, Metropolitan, or Patriarch? And, how much authority would this figure receive?



Another topic that was raised was the question of autocephaly for the Moscow Patriarchate in Kyiv. In recent years, the autonomy that was granted to the organization by Patriarch Alexy II, current-Patriarch Kirill's predecessor, has been diminished. While the people of Ukraine are somewhat open to the idea of a proposed religious brotherhood with Russia, they are opposed to the totalitarianism of the Soviets as well as being deeply suspicious and in total rejection of the internal policies of current President Vladimir Putin and his use of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) for political benefit in other countries like Ukraine. The recently deceased Metropolitan of Kyiv, Volodymyr (1992-2014), tried to keep the autonomy he inherited, but because of this, under the instigation of Moscow influenced Metropolitan Agathnagel of Odessa, he was replaced. Many congregants of the UOC MP want to move towards autocephaly, but fear further schisms, solutions, and ostracization within the Church body.

Problematically, in Father Maxym's opinion, Metropolitan Onuphrius, Primate of the UOC MP, is in favour of the status quo. However, his election was orchestrated by Moscow. Kyivan Patriarch Filaret, leader of the UOC KP, on the other hand, has stated that he will resign in protest if the churches amalgamate to form a national and autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church should he not be elected primate. Alternatively, the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, recognized and supported by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, could propose a resolution, but it would have no influence on Putin. It might, however, have some influence in altering the current status quo in Ukraine and encourage Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I and his council into a more influential position in this matter. The overall trend in Ukraine is towards attaining autocephaly or complete independence for the Kyivan Patriarchate, with the movement being spurred on by younger Bishops.

Recognition of autocephaly for the Kyivan Patriarchate is long overdue, and would substantially reduce the influence of Moscow in Ukraine. Linguistically, between 40 and 50 percent of congregants of Russian Orthodoxy are Ukrainian and Russian speaking. It is said that if conditions were satisfactory, some 70 percent of the UOC MP would cross to the UOC KP.

Father Maxym further explained that in Slovyansk, in Donetsk Oblast of eastern Ukraine, some Moscow Patriarchate churches and groups were being used to house rebel/Russian weapons artillery used in the conflict against Ukrainian government forces. He stated that while several clergy have been kidnapped in eastern Ukraine, none have been from the UOC MP. Additionally, he stated that it has been reported that many people making religious pilgrimages to Crimea from Russia in early 2014 were Russia's agents preparing for Putin's annexation of Crimea.

MEETING WITH CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - OTTAWA

On November 19, I met again with Father Maxym at his church, the historic Christ the Saviour Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church, to continue our discussion and receive an education on the importance of iconography in Orthodox culture.

His church is the seventh Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA and the first Orthodox Church in Ottawa, founded by Ukrainian immigrants from the Bukovyna region of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1913/14. The current site of his church was originally the Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church, founded in 1918, but in 2008 the two amalgamated. The parish, today, belongs to the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (CROC EP). For clarification, the Church does not and has not had any affiliation with the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). There is, however, few if any belonging to the church who are Carpatho-Russian heritage. For that reason, and also because Ottawa has become very multi-cultural, the Parish is simply referred to as Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church. Father Maxym explained that liturgical services are almost entirely in English, but the Lord's Prayer is recited in six languages (English, French, Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian and Old Church Slavonic) at Sunday morning Divine Liturgy. The multi-national Orthodox base at Father Maxym's church makes the situation in Ukraine pertinent to his congregants, as many of which are of Ukrainian heritage and still maintain strong links there – family or otherwise.



It is because of the Church's long history in Ottawa, and its important cultural place in Canada, that the Church is undergoing extensive and very beautiful iconographic work, true to Orthodox tradition. The process includes using egg-based tempura paints to complete the frescos, presently lining the inside of his Church, and the first wall (the front wall) was completed this year after over ten years of work. The process is of cultural importance, in that it aims to strengthen Orthodox tradition in Canada and North America, as well as preserve Orthodox identity within a multicultural Canadian society.

Father Maxym believes that a three stage process could be implemented to unite the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches: first, become autonomous from Moscow; second, achieve autocephalous status for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate; third, receive Metropolitans/Patriarchal status and elect own bishops.

MEETING WITH GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION - OTTAWA



On November 3, I met with Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) Executive Director Akaash Maharaj and Program Advisor Jean-Pierre Chabot in Ottawa. GOPAC is an international organization composed of democratically-elected legislators, working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law. When discussing the crisis in Ukraine and the role of its various Orthodox Churches, I pointed to the number of

construction projects within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), strengthening political influence by Moscow and Russia's President Putin. This dynamic was something not unknown amongst GOPAC members. Clear patterns have emerged, such as seeing nearly no members of the Moscow Patriarchate's clergy subject to rebel and para-militarist violence in the east. Reducing the authority of the pro-Russia factions and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and emphasizing the legitimacy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) would be beneficial to help establish national unity, they said.

Maharaj and Chabot suggested that when I visit Ukraine next that I speak with the Chair of Ukraine's GOPAC chapter, the Honourable Viktor Chumak, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. As well, they advised that I speak with Paddy Torsney, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), a permanent observer of the United Nations, in New York. These representatives, they explained, would help elucidate on

the political dynamics in Ukraine as well as the human rights implications as they concern religion.

MEETING WITH UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANT-SECRETARY GENERAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS – NEW YORK



On Friday, November 21, I met with United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights, Ivan Simonovic in his office at the United Nations building, downtown New York. We were joined by Elizabeth Williams of Canada's UN Mission, who noted that she had never seen Simonovic respond so positively by such a project as mine. Regarding the success of our meeting, Williams notified me that her report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Baird, will be very favourable.

Overall, we discussed suggesting to the Ukrainian government to consider the adoption of a human rights resolution on religious freedom, which might help guide patriarchal negotiation towards a historic Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox Church, one free of foreign and political influence. After all, Simonovic's office works objectively, actively educates people and governments, and takes action to empower individuals and states in upholding human rights.

Also highlighted was the need for political separation from Russia, as well as independence from the Moscow Patriarchate, which President Putin utilizes as an outlet to influence social mediums outside of Russia. The two – Church and State in Russia – we agreed, went hand-in-hand. As in Ukraine and experienced here in Canada and the United States, the walling off of Ukrainian Orthodoxy from the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) by edicts from Moscow is unacceptable as it interferes with Ukraine's freedom of religion. This has been dictated by Moscow, ordering the barring of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) from seeking autocephaly or co-consecration with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). Without shared communion, Patriarch Kirill and the Russian Orthodoxy can segregate the UOC KP from the UOC MP in Ukraine. This policy both creates division inside Ukraine and in North America, separating the word Orthodoxies and distancing Moscow's Church relations with Constantinople.

MEETING WITH GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA – NEW YORK



On Friday, November 21, I met with the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America (GOCA), Archbishop Demetrios. He informed me that while my work is unique and progressive, it is similar to that of Reverend Nathaniel, who focuses on creating better understanding in Romania between the Patriarchate and the Orthodox Bishops. However, Reverend Nathaniel works with American Bishops, who meet in a canonical assembly, to deliver this message, and his Mission does not have the same political implications as those I am pursuing. My proposed work would be unique, in that it provides a political and people-based petition to solving a religious and ecumenical problem in order to better facilitate discussion and understanding amongst Orthodoxy in Ukraine.

Currently, under Archbishop Demetrios, 50 Metropolitans, Archbishops, and Bishops meet once a year in the United States of America to discuss issues pertinent to Orthodoxy in the USA and abroad. With his cleric peers, a declaration to visit 1001 churches was made. According to Archbishop Demetrios, he and others in his Church seek to affirm the strength of the Orthodox Church in America and emphasize the essential role of the faithful in the work of ministry to generating a peaceful and principled coexistence of peoples. In the United States alone, with 1.5 million parishioners, this Mission has already had a profound impact.

After a lengthy discussion, Archbishop Demetrios recommended that I speak with Metropolitan Antony, who is the leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Metropolitan Antony, he explained, would have a better understanding of the workings of the Ukrainian Church and its place in Ukrainian society. I did meet with Metropolitan Antony later that weekend. Archbishop Demetrios also recommended that I speak with Bishop Gregory of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA. Unfortunately, I was unable to do the latter.

I was told by Archbishop Demetrios that Metropolitan Soterios, of the Greek Orthodox Church in Toronto, recommended to him that he meet with me. I also conveyed to him that at the beginning of the New Year I was wishing to travel to Constantinople and meet with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. And, after our conversation, the Archbishop graciously offered to review a proposal for a suggested resolution that he might consider introducing to his assembly.

To prepare for my prospective journey to Turkey, and to thank me for my visit, Metropolitan Demetrios presented me with a signed book, *In the World, Yet Not of the World* by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

MEETING WITH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION – NEW YORK

On Friday, November 21, I had the pleasure of meeting with a colleague of mine, former-Member of Parliament Paddy Torsney, who is now President of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) in New York. The IPU is the permanent observer to the United Nations (UN), and seeks to insert a parliamentary perspective into the workings of the UN as well as monitoring democratic processes worldwide. The UN and IPU work closely in various fields: peace and security, economic and social development, international law, human rights, and democracy and gender issues. While the IPU firmly believes in the separation of Church and state, the first half of our discussion, then, focused not on Orthodoxy in Ukraine, but the recognition of Orthodoxy as an important and inalienable civil right and religious freedom. When Moscow dictates walling off Orthodox communities not supporting the Moscow Patriarchate outside of its own borders – like Ukraine and in North America – it is upsetting fundamental democratic principles, whether its influence is exerted directly onto the general population or through preventing canonical co-consecration with other Orthodox administrations.



We then discussed the far-right in Ukraine, specifically the Right Sektor, and their aggressive actions towards elected officials and those running for office. I explained that on my recent Mission to Ukraine in May 2014, I saw the Right Sektor in action in Kherson, when a business owned by a Jewish mayoral candidate, Vladlen Mirin, was surrounded and attacked by 50-60 para-militarists. It was attacked seemingly because the owner, an emerging and popular public figure, was Jewish. Furthermore, during the Parliamentary election, the Right Sektor was accosting and assaulting former members of Parliament from the Party of Regions that wished to run under a different party banner to try and force them not to seek re-election. Torsney agreed that these actions and socio-political conditions are a breach of human principles and merit an inquiry by the IPU and UN.

She also agrees that it would be very informative for me to give a presentation at the IPU's upcoming assembly on the topic of 'Religion and Politics: The Excesses – The Influence'.

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE OF RUSSIA (ROCOR) – NEW YORK

On November 22, I met with Metropolitan Hilarion, leader of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR MP), also known as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA MP) at his personal residence, a beautiful building with a wonderful collection of religious artefacts, where he humbly apologized for the cold. He very warmly received me, but his room was cold.



He then ushered me into one of two chapels. The smaller one was where parishioners would come and go freely to receive their blessing. A young man with his 6 or 7 year old was there when I walked in; a touching and very warm scene of a father and son together in prayer. I always have held admiration for the community and acceptance for Russian Orthodoxy. If only we could just exist outside the realm of direct political influence.

I sensed that Metropolitan Hilarion and I agreed when it came to discussing the situation in Ukraine as it concerns Orthodoxy. After all, as a leader of ROCOR MP, he maintains that he has no direct place in geopolitics but extolls the principles of Church scripture and its values. In this matter, he appreciated my unbiased candor.

In our discussion, he mentioned the need to re-establish full co-consecration liturgy with all Orthodox churches in Ukraine. He mentioned that Moscow received autocephalous status in 1589, and now considers itself 'first among equals'. He believes that Moscow's Patriarch Kirill can provide autocephaly to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP).

Metropolitan Hilarion sees one of the main challenges of the ROC MP in Russia and ROCOR MP, as being the lack of attendance. And, overall, he believes that Church unity can be achieved, and that stability in Eastern Europe can be seen through such a religious and cultural outlet.

Upon leaving, he presented me with his book, *The First Hierarch*, written in honour of the 30th anniversary of his episcopal consecration of Metropolitan Hilarion. The book highlights his accomplishments as well as the history of ROCOR MP, with its cultural and religious contributions over the past 30 years.

Metropolitan Hilarion was born in 1945 as Igor, to Alexy and Euphrosynia Kapral in Spirit River in Peace River country, Alberta.

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN ORTHODOX PATRIARCHAL PARISHES IN THE USA – NEW YORK



On the morning of Saturday, November 22, I met with the Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA for the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), Bishop John. The meeting was encouraged by Father Sergey of the ROC MP in Edmonton. He began by stating that due to the nature of his position he is forbidden to engage in political discussions. Instead, we talked on the topic of canonical relations and liturgy in Canada and the United States. For further political discussion, he recommended

that I speak with Metropolitan Antony, whom I was already scheduled to meet later that day. Bishop John's position, primarily concerns activities in Russia and internationally as facilitated by Russia, as it affects culture and cultural events in the United States among the Orthodox and the Russian diaspora.

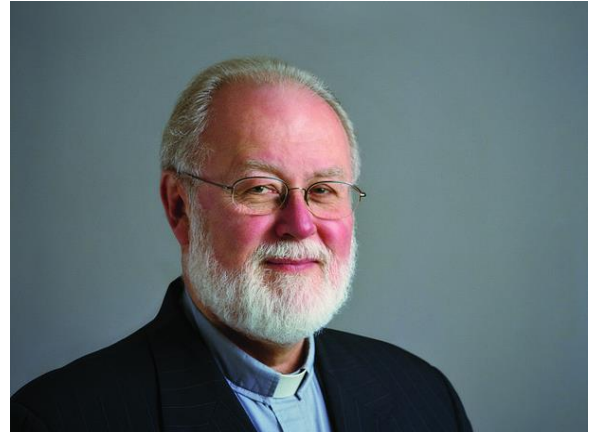
During our meeting, we conversed on the prospect of co-consecration in Ukraine - the celebration of the Eucharist with either a priest or bishop as the principal celebrant and other priests and bishops from various Churches present assisting in the consecration – as a symbolic show of unity. Coconsecration, Bishop John noted, would facilitate a strong show of national cohesiveness across linguistic and religious ideologies, but the process would likely be blocked by Moscow.

We also discussed the history of the region. He believes that it has been manifested in Great Rus' and Little Rus', the former being Russia or Russia's Tsarist Empire and the latter being Kyivan-Rus' (modern Ukraine). According to Russia's historiography, Great Rus' is the cradle of Slavic Orthodox life, while Little Rus' is generally regarded as being Russia's 'little brother', considered to be a derogatory term among Ukrainians. This version of history relies on the belief that Orthodox life in Eastern Europe began in Moscow, when it did not. Of Course, the historical truth is that Kyivan-Rus' is the source of Eastern European Orthodox culture and even the progenitor of a Slavic consciousness.

At the conclusion of our meeting, Bishop John recommended that I speak with United States Ambassador to Russia, John Tefft, as well as Metropolitan Yuriy of the Ukraine Orthodox Church of Canada in Winnipeg.

MEETING WITH (RUSSIAN) ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA – NEW YORK

On Saturday, November 22, I met with Father Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs and Inter-Church Relations for the (Russian) Orthodox Church in America (OCA MP). The OCA MP reports to the Moscow Patriarchate. He returned to New York, directly from Chicago where he was attending a conference, in order to speak with me personally. Father Kishkovsky, while versed in Eastern European affairs, was condemning of Russia's military action and cultural intervention in Ukraine, seeing it as a reversion to semi-totalitarianism under Russia's President Vladimir Putin. He apprised me, however, that national unity in Ukraine and religion are the main opposition forces against Russia's aggression. Ultimately these forces, he believes, will provide stability for the country. But, he asserted that the role of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) is multinational – based in Moscow, Kyiv, and Minsk – and not predominantly Russophilic. The Moscow (Orthodox) Patriarchate based in the capitals of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, is significant in that these three states are regarded as Great Rus', Little Rus', and White Rus, respectively. Historically, Kyivan-Rus', in 988, had very little territorial control in the Belarus and the Russia of today. As a confederation, most of the territory was governed through feudal alliances.



We also discussed the roles and histories of both the Patriarchate in Moscow and the Patriarch in Constantinople. Even his organization, the OCA MP, is recognized as having autocephalous status by the Moscow Patriarchate but not Constantinople. Arguably, this is because the OCA MP remained as a branch of the ROC MP after America purchased Alaska, in 1867, where the Archdiocese in America was located. It later moved to New York, the centre of Orthodox life in America. After the Bolshevik Revolution, Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow directed all ROC MP churches outside of Russia to govern themselves autonomously. A question to this might be: did this direction not apply to Kyiv?

In this view, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate fits into the mould of a multinational ROC MP, like the OCA MP, where Moscow presides solely over Russia. Thus, co-consecration between the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches (each viewing itself as the national Church), in Father Kishkovsky's view, is not likely and will be refused by Moscow. There is hope, however, for this process to proceed in Ukraine.

While Father Kishkovsky had his doubts about the possibility of a recognized Kyivan Patriarch, he encouraged me and provided me with contacts and useful information that would allow the continuation of my project.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA – NEW YORK



After attending the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America's 80th Holodomor Commemoration at St. Patrick's Cathedral with Metropolitan Antony on Saturday, November 22, we had a lengthy discussion about the condition of Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Metropolitan Antony is leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (UOC of the USA), a jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He was not sure whether achieving autocephalous status for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) can be done due to

current circumstances in the Orthodox Church and regional politics. On these grounds, he suggested that I talk to Patriarch Filaret of the UOC KP, and Metropolitan Yurij of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada.

We then discussed the history of Ukraine. The Patriarchate of Kyivan-Rus' was recognized by Constantinople in 988, while the Moscow Patriarchate was recognized in 1448, when the Church became independent from Constantinople. At the time, and not until the Soviet period (1919-1991) was Ukraine, as an identifiably modern state, found inside present-day borders of Russia. Previous efforts at reconciling the Kyivan Patriarchate and that of Constantinople were made. In 2008, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Patriarch Filaret were to meet with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to discuss Orthodox unification. Patriarch Filaret, however, reportedly did not show up.

Metropolitan Antony and I discussed the 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council to be presided over by Patriarch Bartholomew in Constantinople. It hoped to suggest a resolution to recognize the Kyivan Patriarchate be tabled at this meeting, and provide the foundation for a unified and cohesive Ukraine today. After all, 14 Orthodox Churches worldwide will be participating, as will 20 Bishops from each church, 11 Patriarchs, and 3 Metropolitans. We agreed that the Council is an opportunity to suggest such an impactful resolution. I later learned that His All Holiness does not wish to introduce a resolution at the Council, but is open to consultations after the 2016 meeting. The subject will undoubtedly be a topic of discussion at the meeting.

Helping me in my project, Metropolitan Antony suggested that I visit Istanbul University, the oldest in the city, founded in 1453, and speak with several historians, political scientists, and religious academics there to gain a better sense of what to expect throughout my Mission as well as what to include in my proposed resolution. He also mentioned that I meet with former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, who assisted current-President Petro Poroshenko in organizing his governing coalition. Not only will meeting with President Yushchenko help generate a greater understanding of the

political environment, but also the attitudes and values of the Ukrainian people as a whole.

He concluded by stating that amongst the Ukrainian Orthodox of the Kyivan Patriarchate there will likely be no problem with co-consecration, but that the Russian Orthodoxy would likely refuse the motion in the long-run.

MEETING WITH CANADIAN AMBASSADOR FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS – OTTAWA

On November 26, I met with Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedoms, Dr. Andrew Bennett, at my office on Parliament Hill. After discussing my trip to New York, in which I related my meetings with several Orthodox and political leaders, we both reviewed the significance of the Mission. Dr. Bennett agreed that an Orthodox devolution is taking place in the Eastern European country, and, without a doubt, Russia is exerting its influence vis-à-vis the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP).



Looking at the religious and cultural components of Ukraine's instability, important questions were raised. How do I intend on monitoring and controlling the reaction of Moscow? And, what is the role of the Ecumenical Patriarch in the context of Ukraine?

Moscow's reaction, I responded, will be met with the presentation of an irrefutably historical fact, providing motive for recognizing a Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyivan-Rus'. I also pointed out Russia's seeming violation of religious freedom in Ukraine through edicts from Moscow are prohibited in both the Ukrainian and Russian constitutions, both in Chapter 2.

As for the Ecumenical Patriarch, his influence in the Orthodox world and, by proxy, the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy is necessary when it comes to spreading awareness and pressing for a resolution. The Ecumenical Patriarch supports the Assembly and its policy goals, which influence the direction of the Orthodox world. He is not, however, a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy.

I expressed a need for Dr. Bennett's help in drafting suggestions for a resolution not only for the Canadian Parliament to possibly pass, but more so for appropriate legislative bodies around the globe to encourage the Patriarch. He agreed that this

could be significant and offered his assistance. Networking with Orthodox Church leaders, as I have been doing throughout Canada and the United States, is key for gaining favourability. They have to initiate the resolution.

Orthodoxy is not the only religion in Ukraine that has faced oppression in one form or another. Greek Ukrainian Catholicism has as well. Catholicism under Communism suffered greatly over the course of 70 years, seeing thousands of congregants and priests murdered or imprisoned because of their beliefs – which did not meld with those of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The first Greek Ukrainian Catholic Bishop in Canada, Nykyta Budka, who was originally from Austro-Hungary, returned to Eastern Europe in 1945 to provide aid to those affected by the Second World War, only to be imprisoned in a Soviet gulag until his death in 1949.

Dr. Bennett suggested that even in Canada, some members of the ROC MP cannot make the distinction between the Church proper and the Russian government. This dynamic is particularly problematic, as he says that some UOC MP parishes in Ukraine affiliated with Moscow are reported to store and import military weapons, meant to assist the rebels. I noted that in my meetings with clergy in Canada, they were very concerned and encouraging of me to find the truth. My priest, Father Serge and Bishop Job, implored me to help Ukraine. Generalizing that all UOC MP adherents follow Moscow's direction and assist rebels is wrong and untrue.



Much of the Ukrainian crisis has been fuelled by the tensions between Ukrainian nationalism and the ROC MP. Increasingly, Dr. Bennett pointed out, people are 'voting with their feet and moving both to and away from the UOC MP' – depending on their allegiances – 'polarizing much of the Ukrainian population.' However, the majority of those changing churches are moving either to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) or the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan-Patriarchate (UOC KP).

Moscow is looking to assert itself over Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew based on numerical superiority, particularly if Ukraine's Orthodox population is included. While Patriarch Bartholomew commands some 3,000 congregants in Istanbul, he is still the leader of all Orthodox. Patriarch Kirill of the ROC MP, on the other hand, presides over more than 30,000 parishes and 150 million members. Moscow feels that it is the paramount Orthodox force, and that it possesses the right to represent Orthodoxy in Ukraine. After all, over 50 percent of monasteries and 33 percent of UOC MP parishes are allied with the Moscow Patriarchate. However, Moscow is pressing a defined religious belief system onto both Ukrainians and Russians – something prohibited by both countries' constitutions. Presently, Ukraine maintains a tradition of pluralism, while Russia maintains lists of 'accepted' religions and is trying to seriously limit pluralism.

Russia presents itself as the defender of Orthodox Christians – even Putin himself has been presented as a religious hero recently. According to Putin, the Moscow Patriarchate is the true seat of Orthodoxy and the only real Ecumenical body. Religious and ethnic diversification in the present Ukrainian government under President Petro Poroshenko is notable:

- Vadim Rabinovich is a Ukrainian businessman, politician, president of the All-Ukrainian Jewish Congress and leader of the Center political party, a presidential candidate in the elections of 2014, which received a greater percentage in the popular vote than all far-right parties combined.
- Petro Poroshenko is the fifth and current President of Ukraine, in office since 2014. From 2007 until 2012, Poroshenko headed the Council of Ukraine's National Bank. He belongs to the UOC MP.
- Volodymyr Groysman is a Ukrainian politician who has been Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, the Ukrainian parliament, since 2014. He is Jewish.
- The remainder of the Cabinet are a mix of Russian Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox of the Moscow Patriarchate, Ukrainian Autocephalous, Ukrainian Orthodox of the Kyivan Patriarchate, Greek Ukrainian Catholic, and Muslim.

MEETING WITH DR. MARTA DYCZOK, WESTERN UNIVERSITY - OTTAWA

On December 9, I spoke with Dr. Marta Dyczok, a cross-appointed professor with the University of Western Ontario's Departments of History and Political Science. Over the course of a very productive hour, we discussed the dynamics of demography, historic borders and the roles they play throughout Ukrainian history, and, of course, Orthodoxy in Ukraine.

Dr. Dyczok is an accomplished and well-regarded academic in the field of Eastern European and Slavic studies, where she specializes in intellectual history, identity, and the politics of mass media. She is the author of two books - *The Grand Alliance* and *Ukrainian Refugees and Ukraine: Change Without Movement, Movement Without Change* - and numerous chapters and articles including, 'The Politics of Media in Ukraine: Elections 2002,' 'Ukraine's Media Landscape,' 'International Assistance and the Development of Independent Mass Media in Ukraine,' and 'The Politics of History in Post-Soviet Ukraine.'



We began our meeting discussing the current situation in Ukraine. Unsurprisingly, she agreed that the Orthodoxies are split both politically and spiritually. But, that the current schism is not a product of religion but politics. Dr. Dyczok proposed that the vanishing

point we should be looking at is not 988, but 1921 and the end of the Ukrainian War of Independence, which resulted in a Soviet-Russian victory. It was at that time that the structural divide amongst Orthodoxies in Ukraine came about, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Metropolitanate (Ecumenical Patriarchate) was forcefully incorporated into the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) after a brief interlude of independence. Indeed, the Metropolitanate declared autonomy after the Russian loss in the First World War, 1917, though previously it had been a part of the ROC MP dating to 1686. Constantinople has never recognized the 17th century transfer of power, providing for much historical debate over which party has religious authority over the cradle of the Slavic world: Kyiv. In 1921, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was reabsorbed, for political considerations, by the Moscow Patriarchate. Consequentially, those disenchanted by the altering dynamic broke from the Church-proper and established the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) under Metropolitan Vasyl Lypkivsky.

Both the UAOC EP and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), the latter established in 1992 after a political break, along with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) claim lineage to Vladimir I and the conversion of Kyivan-Rus'. More than one Church claiming this, of course, creates a historical problem. Though, should the UAOC EP and the UOC KP merge, we agreed, the debate between Ukrainian-national Churches is eliminated and what is left is a contest between Russia-controlled legitimacy and a new Ukrainian institution.

Dr. Dyczok pointed out that in the rhetoric being used by Russia's President Vladimir Putin, and by default the Moscow Patriarchate, does not recognize Ukraine as a state, Ukrainian culture, or the Ukrainian nation. Instead, Moscow is promoting the notion that Russia and Ukraine are 'one nation' united by history. This is to strengthen their understanding of Russia's historical premise, and the supremacy of the ROC MP in Eastern Europe.

In fact, today and historically, the region known as Ukraine, she purported, has always housed a poly-national and poly-ethnic community. Ukraine has traditionally been home to not only Ukrainians but Greeks, Poles, Germans, Russians, and Tatars as well. In the case of the Tatars – a distinct ethnic group as an umbrella term for Turkic peoples living in the former Russian Empire – who traditionally resided in the Volga region and Crimea. After 1921 and during the Stalinist regime, immediately after the Second World War the Tatars of Crimea were expelled and deported, only to be allowed back much later. While Crimea's demography today is primarily Russian, it is a new phenomenon. After the expulsion, Russians and, particularly, members of the *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (KGB) were invited to live in the area. They and their descendants grew to be the core population today. The reason for the relocation was both strategic and aesthetic. Crimea is considered to be a tropical region that is geopolitically important both economically and militarily. After all, it controls access to both the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and is home to several inland and offshore natural gas fields.

When considering recommendations for a new Ukrainian Orthodox Church or recognizing the legitimate place of one of the existing uncanonical Ukrainian Orthodox

Churches, she forewarned, one must be careful. It is necessary to acknowledge the emotional level and near-national split that came when Patriarch Filaret broke with the Moscow Patriarchate in 1992 to form the Kyivan Patriarchate, still today unrecognized by Moscow and Constantinople. So, by advocating the legitimate place of one of the Churches one must be wary of the rifts that could potentially be created. There cannot be two autocephalous churches in one country, according to Constantinople, making it possible for the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) to merge and generate a national church to juxtapose the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and the UOC MP. However, by doing so, one risks alienating the congregants of the UOC MP. It is believed that perhaps 60 to 70 percent of UOC MP members are concerned about Russia's aggression, and they will join with a recognized Kyivan Patriarchate if the conditions to do so are sensitively organized and are sanctioned by Constantinople.

Certainly, the issues are not going away and Dr. Dyczok, as a proponent of dialogue amongst state and non-state actors, proposed generating a space of dialogue and coming together. She then noted that this could be in Canada, particularly Ottawa, through inviting all Church leaders to a conference where such issues could be discussed at length before any formal actions are taken.

We both agreed that the timing of this project, aligned with the upcoming Ecumenical Synaxis in 2016, is ideal. However, the structural problems, as of right now, are permanent, especially corruption and patronage, and Orthodox unity is unlikely to alleviate these political symptoms.

Dr. Dyczok concluded with very complimentary comments about our efforts and offered to assist whenever she could.

MEETING WITH DR. PAUL MAGOCSI, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO – TORONTO



On December 15, I met with Dr. Paul Magocsi, professor of history and political science and Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto. Ihor Bardyn of the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Program previously presented me with a book by Dr. Magocsi for my support for the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Programme over many years, *A History of Ukraine*, which is a summation of his university lectures on Ukraine. His prolific writings and comments strongly suggest that the current Ukrainian

identity and the mythos surrounding Ukrainian nationalism and European Orthodoxy has its roots in 988 and the conversion of Kyivan Rus' to Orthodoxy by Prince Vladimir I.

Dr. Magocsi is a prolific scholar who focuses on Eastern European history, specifically Rusyn history. Rusyns, today, reside in Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Serbia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, and, of course, Ukraine. The majority of Ukrainian scholars consider Rusyns to be an ethnic subgroup of the Ukrainian people. They speak the Eastern Slavic Language and are sometimes referred to as Carpatho-Ukrainians. However, many Rusyns rejected the ethnonym 'Ukrainian' on nationalist grounds. He is also an Honourary Chairman of the World Congress of Rusyns. This is an assembly-organization in which representatives from Rusyn countries meet to discuss the affairs of the international Rusyn community including issues of identity, ethnicity, and culture.

Dr. Magocsi commented on what he considered Russia's President Vladimir Putin's 'biggest success', accomplishing the unification of the two distinct Russian Orthodox Churches in 2007: The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR MP) and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). For the most part, he sees Putin as representing the secular society in its movement to restore Russian values and the values of the pre-Soviet Union period. Unity was officially restored with the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion with the Moscow Patriarchate on May 17, 2007, after having formally separated from Moscow in 1927. Ultimately, this reunification was intended to strengthen the bond between state and religion for the betterment of society and social unity. Dr. Magocsi explained that there is a past history between the two organizations. The Bolsheviks, after 1917, limited the power of the Patriarch in Moscow and eventually, in 1927, prevented the ROC MP from appointing a new leader following the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925. The granting of a Patriarchal title was later re-established when Metropolitan Aleksey of Leningrad ascended the patriarchal throne in 1990. This was also pointed out in my discussion with Metropolitan Hilarion in New York on November 25.



In recognizing the unity of Russia's Orthodoxies in 2008, he acknowledged the importance of religious cohesion as a stabilizing force in Eastern Europe. Dr. Magocsi agrees fully that the Church should be united and, furthermore, stated that both former Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma (1994-2005) and President Viktor Yushchenko (2005-2010) had previously embarked on similar projects. Indeed, President Kuchma called for amicable and tactful relations between the clerical, secular, and government spheres, while President Yushchenko has constantly worked towards uniting Ukraine's Orthodox Churches and has met with religious leaders on many occasions to discuss this issue. According to President Yushchenko, through uniting the Churches 'we will resolve any issues. We have to do everything possible to achieve this.' Not only will Ukraine's Churches be unified, they will not be recognized by Moscow, but by the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew. Both former leaders, as President Kuchma put it, repeat that the Ukraine's and Russia's people have followed different historical paths, maintained different ethnic experiences, and self-identify differently. Several other central European states have petitioned for their own independent and national Orthodox Churches in the past as well: Russia (16th century), Greece (1820s), a communion of Orthodox Churches (1850s), and various movements for autocephaly throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including Ukraine, Serbia, and Bulgaria. It is a general rule, however, that a Church cannot be accepted into communion until it is recognized by a Patriarch (Ecumenical, Moscow, or otherwise).

Indeed, Dr. Magocsi's support of the close relations between Church and state perhaps stem from the fact that the political spectrum in Eastern Europe is much different than it is in North America and Western Europe. Politics in Eastern Europe are far more conservative or ultra-conservative than many here understand them to be. There, the Church is a national institution and intrinsically tied to traditional values and national identity. The crisis in Ukraine clearly indicates, too, that the nation-state is still in existence and an active player, even though one of the main tenants of globalization and regionalization is the erosion of national sovereignty. In order to bolster this and uphold notions of national self-preservation, however, it is necessary to unite the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches. With politics in Eastern Europe being more right-leaning than elsewhere, historical legacies and historical myths become firmly entrenched in political life. In the case of Ukraine, Vladimir I and the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988, led to the beginning of Orthodoxy in all of Europe from Kyiv. To expand their influence, Russia and the ROC MP have adopted the informal distinction as the first among equals for its own propaganda purposes. In fact, as Dr. Magocsi pointed out, Kyivan-Rus' was a typical medieval society which three modern states draw lineage, being Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.

While he agreed that the Orthodox Churches should unite, he felt that the greatest priority must be to deal with the ongoing conflict and Ukraine's lagging economy, echoing others' concerns for corruption and economic instability. Orthodox unity, he noted, is unlikely to happen as it is not a Patriarchal priority. However, perplexingly, he went on to express that Russia and Putin's greatest accomplishment was the unification of ROCOR MP to the ROC MP and the Moscow Patriarchate in 2008.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA – WINNIPEG



On December 17, I met with Metropolitan Yurij, Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UOCC EP), at the Office of the Consistory in Winnipeg. His Eminence's name had emerged in conversations with both Archbishop Demitrios and Metropolitan Hilarion, both in New York City. Upon discussing the matter with His Eminence, I received very encouragingly support for my initiative. He believes that Russia's continued illegal occupation of Ukraine's Crimean

Peninsula and its provocative and aggressive military activity in eastern Ukraine constitutes a real threat to personal and international peace and security.

As nominal head of the Ukrainian religious community in Canada, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), and leader of the UOCC, Metropolitan Yurij belongs to the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The body which he leads is not part of Russian Orthodoxy and operates autonomously within the larger community of Orthodox Churches. However, devout to the structure and precedents set by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Metropolitan does not accept the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan-Patriarchate (UOC KP) and its excommunicated leader, Patriarch Filaret.

On April 19, 2012, Metropolitan Yurij forbade Patriarch Filaret from visiting any church or property owned by the UOCC during his visit to Canada. The ban included prohibiting any clergyman or Church member from being near the Patriarch. Overall, the move was publicly criticized and ignored. A banquet honouring Patriarch Filaret was held in Oakville on April 21, 2012, where he toured the cemetery, chapel, and met with leaders of the Ukrainian Canadian community including Paul Grod, then-President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC). Metropolitan Yurij is nominal head of the UCC,

and has significant influence in the organization's direction. The UOCC was then accused of 'selling out' to the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) because of its rejection of Kyivan Patriarch Filaret, though nothing came of it.

While Metropolitan Yurij does not accept nor recognize Patriarch Filaret, he recognizes that the historical significance of Kyivan-Rus' and the Orthodox Church's place at the centre of the Ukrainian nation and social stability. He, too, refuses to accept the ROC MP's attempt at establishing hegemony outside of Russia's state borders. For this, he offered his full support to my initiative. Should the resolution recognizing a historic Kyivan-Rus' patriarchate be accepted, Metropolitan Yurij noted that there is a distinct possibility that a national autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church, recognized by Constantinople, can form. Because over 60 percent of Ukraine's population belong to either the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) or Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), the formation of such an institution would make distinct a Ukrainian identity and history.

He emphasized his concern that Russia is coming down 'top-heavy' religiously and in Ukraine. There are whispers that the Pan-Orthodox Synaxis of the Ecumenical Patriarch will not take place in 2016 because of the ROC MP's refusal to cooperate and its workings against Constantinople. It is a common belief that the ROC MP also wants to usurp the position of Constantinople as the Second-Rome, a title given to the Turkish city by Emperor Constantine after having established the city as Rome's second capital in the year 330. In doing so, there is concern that the Moscow Patriarchate will become first among equals, reinforcing Moscow's influence. By recognizing a historic Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate's (ROC MP) influence can be reduced outside of Russia and give independence to Orthodoxy in Ukraine, free from foreign influence.

Upon official photos being taken for his magazine, His Eminence Metropolitan Yurij presented me with a medal struck to commemorate his 25th anniversary of episcopacy, from 1984-2014.

MEETING WITH DR. HEATHER COLEMAN - EDMONTON

On January 8, 2014, I met with Dr. Heather Coleman at my constituency office in Edmonton. Dr. Coleman is currently a Canada Research Chair at the University of Alberta in Imperial Russian History, Director of the Research Program on Religion and Culture for the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, and an Associate Professor of Imperial Russian and modern-Ukrainian history. During a very productive and stimulating meeting, Dr. Coleman and I discussed the prospects of recognizing a historic Kievan-Rus' Patriarchate based on the legacy of the Conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988 and the legitimacy it would be granted. Dr. Coleman agreed with me completely.



Dr. Coleman is an accomplished and well-known scholar in her field. Prior to being a Canada Research Chair and Professor at the University of Alberta, Dr. Coleman was an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Calgary. She is also currently the Editor of *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, an academic journal that publishes articles on Slavic linguistics, Russia's literature and history, Ukrainian literature and history, and Polish and Balkan history and culture. Her books include: *Holy Kyiv: Priests, Communities, and Nationality in Imperial Russia, 1800-1917*; *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905-1929*; and *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia*.

As she explained, her research examines the experiences of Russian Orthodox priests and parishioners in the multiethnic diocese of Kyiv. Dr. Coleman is trying to answer such questions as: How did the priests try to deal with these differences? Which of them tried to win local allegiance to the idea of the Russian nation, and why? How did they grapple with ideas of what it means to be 'Russian,' what it means to be 'Ukrainian'? How did they represent themselves, and the Church, to the communities they served? In the process, her works shed light on the role of religious feeling in political relations, revealing more about the ways in which modern identities are shaped.

After I explained the purpose of visiting Ukraine and Turkey, Dr. Coleman mentioned that such an undertaking would be valuable and shed much light within the popular and academic communities. The last work to be published on the topic of religion and nation in Ukraine was published nearly fifteen years ago, in 2002, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* by Serhii Plokhy and Frank Sysyn. Both of these men are renowned scholars in the field of Ukrainian history and identity. Serhii Plokhy, a Harvard scholar with the distinction of being the 'Mykhailo Hrushevskyi professor of Ukrainian history', is also the author of *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History*, which examines the looks at the dismantling of Russia's imperial identity and its historical narrative in Ukraine.

Dr. Coleman informed me that a symposium held in May at St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto – the 'Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the Global Family of Orthodox Churches: Past, Present and Future' symposium – aimed to deepen the understanding of the Ukrainian Kyivan Orthodox tradition and the role of the Orthodox Church in 'decolonizing' Ukrainian culture and society. Present were academics, theologians, activists, and clergy from all over North America and from Ukraine, and the event was dubbed the 'most significant church event in the life of the Ukrainian Orthodox diaspora in the last half century.'

Furthermore, she noted that another meeting was held in Toronto on June 2, 2014, between the members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) to discuss the revitalization of said Church. Triggered by the visit of leaders from several religious communities in Ukraine, Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) also joined in what became an expansive discussion of the history and significance of the Kyivan Patriarchate. The creation of a new 'Brotherhood' or *Bratstva*, these were fraternities affiliated with individual churches in Ukraine and Belarus that performed a number of religious and secular functions to ensure that the voice of the laity was heard in the Church. In 17th century Ukraine, they are credited with preserving the continuity of the Kyivan Church at a time when the Church hierarchy was unable to assume its leadership position. Over time, it became a movement that helped shape the unique identity of the UOC KP today. It was suggested at the meeting, given the ongoing situation in Ukraine, that perhaps what is needed is another Brotherhood-type movement to ensure that the people are represented, and their rights protected. Currently in Ukraine, with the Orthodox population divided amongst three Churches, this is not the case.

Dr. Coleman agreed that the recognition of a historic Kievan-Patriarchate could bring some degree of unity between the Churches. Acknowledgement by the Ecumenical Patriarch is essential, however proposing to the various organizations in Canada and the United States is a good place to begin, she noted, as it brings the idea to all levels in the Orthodox Church hierarchy to be discussed.

Conducting and facilitating this sort of dialogue is something I have been doing over the course of the past year, having spoken with Church leaders and clergy throughout Canada and in the United States. I also mentioned my discussion with other groups such as the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, which she had not heard of, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which deals with issues of corruption and human rights (including religious rights and freedoms). Although, because the European Parliament, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and other organizations prefer to remain secular in their processes, it is necessary that the resolution or recommendations focus on the aspects of history and identity of Ukraine and not focus primarily on the religious or spiritual.

At our meeting's close I thanked Dr. Coleman for her input, support, and encouragement, as well as the offer of future-assistance she provided.

KYIV, KHARKIV, ISTANBUL MEETINGS

MEETING WITH CANADIAN AMBASSADOR ROMAN WASCHUK – KYIV

On January 16, 2015, I met with Canadian Ambassador to Ukraine, Roman Waschuk, upon arriving in Kyiv, Ukraine. We discussed the ongoing situation in Ukraine as well as the details of my trip. At the meeting were several political programmers from the Embassy, all of which informed me of certain distinct aspects I needed to be aware of in order to ensure a safe and successful mission. The Ambassador and his staff were wary of the situation in Kharkiv, a city where I planned on travelling to in the next few days, noting that there had been six bombings over the two months preceding our meeting. He reminded me that the Department of Foreign Affairs advised against visiting Kharkiv.



In meeting with Ambassador Waschuk and his team, he said that he is opposed to Russia's rejection of Ukraine's advancement towards European integration, arguing that 'Ukraine should itself choose the structure of *its own* foreign integration.' The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, in turn, said that Ukraine was a sovereign state and that it would itself decide whether or not to join NATO.

Ambassador Waschuk was appointed to his post on September 19, 2014, succeeding Ambassador Troy Lulashnyk. Roman Waschuk began his diplomatic career with the Department of External Affairs in 1987. His first post was second secretary (political) in Moscow and he subsequently served successively as political counsellor in Kyiv and political/economic and minister-counsellor in Berlin. Between 2011 and 2014, Waschuk was the Canadian Ambassador to Serbia, with concurrent accreditation to Macedonia and Montenegro.

Indeed, Ambassador Waschuk was previously recognized for his accomplishments abroad, specifically in Kyiv. In 1998, he received the Foreign Service Award by the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers (PAFSO),

For his outstanding performance in helping to bring about the [Distinctive] Partnership between NATO and the Ukraine and the Canada-Ukraine Special Partnership, and for his personal and distinctive contributions to the advancement and close relations between Ukraine and Canada.¹³¹

This was done primarily through promoting Canada's interest in the security and success of Ukrainian freedom; and for the conception, negotiation and early life of Ukraine's Distinctive Partnership with NATO, particularly during Canada's tenure as NATO's Contact Mission in Kyiv.

As a footnote, I valued Ambassador Waschuk and his staff's assistance greatly. This mission would not have achieved the same level of success without the Embassy's gracious accommodations. Much thanks go to Ambassador Waschuk, Inna Tsarkova,

Rouslan Kats, Anne Mattson-Gauss, and Iryna Lavriv, among those others behind the scenes for their professionalism, guidance, and assistance.

Of further note: The Department of Foreign Affairs's cautioning against travelling to Kharkiv was well founded. While I was in Kharkiv, a bomb attack took place in the city's centre, leaving 13 injured, four seriously.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE – KYIV

On January 17, the first religious leader I had the privilege of meeting with in Kyiv was Metropolitan Antony, Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarch (UOC MP) and second in the Church hierarchy. He asked me say hello to Bishop Job, in Edmonton, for him upon my return to Canada. Bishop Job is my bishop, presiding over St. Barbara's Russian Orthodox Cathedral (Moscow Patriarchate) in Edmonton, of which my family has belonged to for over forty years.



While discussing the crisis, he referred to the bloodshed in Eastern Ukraine as outright 'war'. Indeed, the Metropolitan is correct: war is defined as an oppositional situation in which two sides fight over two different sets of ideas (ideological, territorial, ethnographical, linguistic, or resource based) in which, in the process, more than 1,000 civilian and combatant deaths accrue. However, the Metropolitan was keen to point out that there are two areas of Ukraine, each with its own 'local' identity. These are the densely Orthodox populated eastern Ukraine and the predominantly Greek Catholic western Ukraine. While he indicated that the UOC MP is resident throughout Ukraine, the high number of Orthodox adherents in the eastern portion of the country point to the expansive influence of the UOC MP, Ukraine's second largest church by numbers.

There is a distinction between east and west Ukraine, Metropolitan Antony suggested. Eastern Ukraine is host to more Russian arts, literature, and culture. This includes Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk. However, the people that live in these areas are Ukrainians; those whom he described as Ukrainian at heart but Russian in their souls. When Parliament (Rada) voted to repeal the law 'On the principles of the state language policy' (2012), the government went too far, he stated. The law protected Russian and all minority languages, and its repealing would have made Ukrainian the sole language

in the country. On February 23, 2014, the second day after the flight of former-President Viktor Yanukovich, while in a parliamentary session, a deputy from the Batkivshchina (All-Ukrainian Union 'Fatherland') Party, Vyacheslav Kyrylenko, moved to include in the agenda a bill to repeal the 2012 law. The motion was carried with 86 percent of the votes in favor – 232 deputies in favor versus 37 opposed against the required minimum of 226 votes. The bill was included in the agenda, and immediately put to a vote with no debate only to be approved with the same 232 Rada members voting in favor, with a total 450 members. Had there been advanced notice and a debate in the Rada, it is doubtful that the Bill would have passed. When it did pass, it caused considerable consternation and angst in Ukraine's Russian speaking community. At that point, I drew a comparison to Canada, noting that 'if we did something like that in Canada, like a surprise vote being proposed and passed in our Parliament to remove French language and minority rights, we would have no country.'

When speaking about the EuroMaidan, Metropolitan Antony noted that the Svoboda Party's support for Stepan Bandera and recognizing him as a Second World War (WWII) hero was too insulting and inflammatory. The destruction of WWII monuments and cenotaphs by the far-right and ultra-nationalist party were, as he described it, unconscionable. There are mounting allegations that the Poroshenko government is supporting the Svoboda Party's paramilitary wing, which only exacerbates the situation in the country's east, especially amongst pro-Russia forces.

Metropolitan Antony went onto say that for most Ukrainians, the herculean efforts and contributions made by their armies under the Soviet Union (including nationalists from both Ukraine and Russia) to free Europe from Nazi control were sacred, and the actions of the Svoboda Party degrade their achievements and insult the memory of war heroes. This is not simply an attitude propagated by Russia's propaganda, but a historic truism that is celebrated nationwide and has been incorporated into the national consciousness since the end of the Second World War. Monuments to the heroic achievement of the Soviet Union's armies during the war are everywhere. Second World War veteran medals cast with orange and black striped ribbons are symbols of their heroic efforts, and at a great cost, to end the Nazi's war.

He said that the people that are trying to destroy the legacy of WWII are those few who want their version of history to predominate and drown out all other narratives. What Stepan Bandera supporters do not understand, however, is that their effort to eliminate all 'Soviet' past ignores the fact that a great number of Ukrainians were trained and fought with Russia's Red Army to defeat the Nazis.

Metropolitan Antony's comments appear to add to the controversy surrounding the point that at various points, Bandera aligned himself with and fought with and against both the Nazis and the Soviets - two repressive regimes, albeit in an effort to secure Ukrainian independence in the midst (and following) of the Second World War. Bandera's alliances seemed to be, for some, only marriages of convenience, and today remains a controversial and, in some areas, unpopular figure.

When we discussed autocephaly in Ukraine, the Metropolitan pressed that in the early 1990s (1990-1992) when the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches were formed, the separation between the three bodies became impossible to fix. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) was organized inefficiently, mostly because it was a re-established or 'resurrected' Ukrainian Orthodox Church that was established in 1921 and existed briefly through the early years of the Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic. The Church was actively persecuted under the Soviets, though it did officially receive autocephalous status in 1924. It is because it received this status in its former manifestation that the Church continues the autocephalous title and recognition today. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) was the product of a political break between then-Metropolitan Filaret and the Russian Orthodox Church and Moscow Patriarchate. It is not canonically recognized.

The unification of all Orthodox Churches in Ukraine would have to abide by a canonical code, and would be a 'conservative unity'. However, Metropolitan Antony said that the majority of Ukrainians do not accept autocephaly as a form of canonical recognition.

When I asked what the most important issue for the world and Ukraine is today, he responded 'peace'.



As with my previous meeting with Metropolitan Onuphrios in May 2014, the reception was warm and very encouraging of future dialogue. Since returning to Canada, Sergii Bortnyk, head of the Department of External Church relations for the Church, has sent me a message under the title, 'Invitation to cooperation with the UOC inviting further questions or proposals.'

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF KYIVAN PATRIARCHATE – KYIV

Also on January 17, I had the honour of meeting with the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), Patriarch Filaret. As Primate of one of the two Orthodox Churches that claims to be the national Ukrainian Church, the other being the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), Patriarch Filaret is known for his pro-Ukrainian and anti-Russia stance and influence in Ukrainian society and politics. However, Patriarch Filaret claims to have less overt influence in the political realm than his spiritual peer and leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), Metropolitan Onuphrios.



First we discussed the ongoing crisis in the country as it pertains to Orthodox Christianity. By virtue of his spiritual and social position, Patriarch Filaret is adamantly opposed to Moscow's claim to be the mother city in the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988 – a phenomenon credited, otherwise world-wide, as being the foundation of Ukrainian nationalism – and then justifying the military and political invasion by the Russian Federation into Ukraine on the grounds of a historical revision based geo-political claims.

With the ailing physical condition of Patriarch Pimen I, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', Patriarch Filaret personally oversaw the preparation and celebration of the Baptism of Rus' millennium anniversary in 1988. That celebration redefined the relationship between the Soviet state and the church, and was marked by the return of numerous church buildings to the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). Upon the death of Patriarch Pimen I on 3 May 1990, then Metropolitan Filaret was widely viewed as a front runner in the ROC patriarchal election, especially when he became a patriarchal locum tenens. However, on June 6, 1990, the ROC MP elected Metropolitan Alexis of Leningrad as Patriarch. On October 27, 1990, in a ceremony at St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, Patriarch Alexei granted Metropolitan Filaret 'independence in self-government' (not autonomy or autocephaly), and enthroned Filaret, heretofore 'Metropolitan of Kyiv,' as 'Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Rus-Ukraine'. He later broke with the ROC MP and formed the, still uncanonical, UOC KP in 1992.

Early September 2014, during the 2014 Russian military intervention in Ukraine, Patriarch Filaret implied that Russia's President Vladimir Putin 'calls himself a brother to the Ukrainian people, but in fact according to his deeds, he really became the new Cain, shedding the brotherly blood and entangling the whole world with lies' (referring to the bible story in which Cain kills his brother Abel). He went on to conclude about Putin

'Satan went into him, as into Judas Iscariot.' He said that the Kyiv Patriarchate was still having informal talks with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and discussing potential recognition. Patriarch Filaret also noted that unification was more likely to happen as a result of more Moscow Patriarchate parishes switching to the Kyiv Patriarchate. About 20 parishes have switched to the Kyiv Patriarchate over the past two months, he said. 'The Kyiv Patriarchate supports the people and the Ukrainian army, and the Moscow Patriarchate can't do this because it is said to take direction from Moscow. That is why the people are angry about this and are transferring their allegiance to the Kyiv Patriarchate.'

The UOC KP acquired a more prominent position in Ukraine's social-politics during the EuroMaidan, when it threw its support behind the popular uprising. Its priests regularly delivered speeches at Maidan Square and its churches were turned into hospitals for EuroMaidan activists. 'President Yanukovich deceived the Ukrainian people,' Patriarch Filaret said. 'He was preparing for an association agreement with the EU but backtracked at the last moment,' and aimed to ultimately tie Russia and Ukraine together, effectively dissolving Ukrainian identity into a Eastern European one centred on the idea of a strong Russian core. In 2004, Patriarch Filaret was a staunch supporter of Viktor Yushchenko for presidency during the Orange Revolution because of his pro-European and pro-Ukrainian stance – something that seemed legitimate and necessary to Patriarch Filaret, unlike Yushchenko's presidential opponent Viktor Yanukovich.

He went on to say that should Ukraine join NATO, it is expected that Russia will establish anti-missile defense systems in occupied parts of Ukraine and the situation will only become worse. Patriarch Filaret claims that Russia is threatening to use its nuclear weaponry to its advantage, deterring the west from any intervention. Patriarch Filaret fears that if Russia occupies more of Ukraine, the Third World War will result. He then compared the situation between Ukraine and Russia to that of the Sudetenland Crisis of 1938 and Neville Chamberlain's pacifist Munich Agreement.

Continuing to discuss the crisis in Ukraine, Patriarch Filaret noted that those fervent pro-Russia clergy in the east, Odessa, and Transnistria are 'confused', serving two countries, Russia and Ukraine. Men of God are ordained to serve their parishioners, not foreign political masters.

When talking about Orthodox Church unity, Patriarch Filaret commented that American and Canadian parliamentary support is important to ensure religious freedom in Ukraine and to keep with the traditions of Constantinople (not Moscow). Russia seeks control of the historic lands of Kyivan-Rus' - Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine - and already maintains significant influence in the Orthodox Churches of these states, and their populations. They want to continue the trend of expansive growth.

What Ukraine needs is armaments, increased economic sanctions against Russia, and support for a national Kyivan Patriarchate or Church under the Ecumenical Patriarch. Bringing together the Orthodox in Ukraine under a recognized Kyivan-Rus' will help

lessen Moscow's socio-political influence, and strengthen the status of the Ecumenical Patriarch as head of the Orthodox Church.

MEETING WITH UKRAINE AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH – KYIV

Later on Saturday, January 17, I had the pleasure of meeting with Metropolitan Mefodiy, primate of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP). The UAOC EP is one of Ukraine's two Orthodox Churches claiming to be a sovereign body representing the spirituality in an autonomous national Ukraine. We discussed the situation in Ukraine, the interest in dialogue between the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches, and the possibility of repatriating a historic Kyivan Rus' Patriarchate.



Metropolitan Mefodiy is Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine and Primate of the UAOC EP worldwide. Since his elevation, he has worked towards global visibility for the Church. He has fostered continued positive relations with the Ukrainian government and other religious communities. When I asked whether it is a possibility that the three Churches merge in the future, Metropolitan Mefodiy responded that he had previously discussed unifying the UAOC EP with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) in 2005, and that his Church, today, is still open to the idea. In the 2005 discussions to merge the two Churches, the negotiation committee decided that Patriarch Filaret would send 200 delegates and the Autocephalous Church 100. This seemed fair given the size of both Churches, but some Autocephalous Church leaders believe that the Kyivan Patriarchate would absorb the Autocephalous Church and impose its views. The Autocephalous Church proposed the election of a hierarch allowing both communities to present various candidates, but Patriarch Filaret insisted that the election would be between him and Metropolitan Mefodiy only. Subsequently, Metropolitan Mefodiy stated that he does not wish to be the head of the new Church.

If a new national Ukrainian Orthodox Church is to be formed, it must be recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch at Constantinople. At a convention attended by all three Churches, clergy will nominate and determine a new Church head after it is agreed that a new unified Church is to be established. The Metropolitan added the convention's objective is to unite the Churches and to only be recognized by the Ecumenical

Patriarch, Bartholomew. Patriarch Filaret's self-declared status might complicate matters, as he was deprived of his official priestly powers when he left the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) in 1992 to form the (uncanonical) UOC KP. Should he win the leadership, these powers could be reinstated by a Synod of Bishops upon the new Church's entrance into the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Beginning in 1992, Patriarch Filaret started dialogue to acquire for the Kyivan Patriarchate autocephalous status. There can only be one autocephalous Church recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch in each state.

Along with Patriarch Filaret, Metropolitan Mefodiy supported Viktor Yushchenko for the presidency throughout the Orange Revolution because of his pro-Ukraine stance and his promotion of religious pluralism and inclusivity. Unlike Yushchenko, his 2004 opponent for the office of president, Viktor Yanukovich, previously exhibited pro-Russia attitudes publically and did so once again reneging on campaign promises after the 2011 election.

As a Ukrainian national, Metropolitan Mefodiy has been staunchly pro-Ukrainian throughout the ongoing crisis and publically links himself to the idea of an autonomous and national Ukraine, distinct from Russia. He supports the idea of recognizing a historic Kyivan Patriarchate based on the legacy of the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988. He is a graduate of the Moscow Theological Academy in Zagorsk. In 1981, he became a priest and was a part of the Lviv and Ternopil diocese of the Ukrainian Exarchate - Moscow Patriarchate, the UOC MP's predecessor. In 1990, he joined the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Because of the action, there followed a decision of the Synod of Bishops of the UOC MP banning him from undertaking any priestly duties and activities in the jurisdiction of Lviv and Ternopil. He was later excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP). Between 1995 and 1998, he was the Bishop of Khmelnytsk and Kamenets-Podilsk and Chancellor of the UOC KP. In 1998, he rejoined the UAOC EP. The UAOC EP was resurrected at the end of the Soviet period by Metropolitan Ioann (Bodnarchuk) and Bishop Vikentiy (Chekalin). On October 16, 2000, Mefodiy was elected Primate of the UAOC EP and successor of Patriarch Dymytriy (Yarema). Through his positions in both the Autocephalous Church and the Kyivan Patriarchate, Metropolitan Mefodiy has displayed his commitment to a Ukrainian spirituality as being separate from the influence of Moscow.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE – KHARKIV



On January 18, I had an excellent meeting with Bishop Athanasius of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) in Kharkiv. I was joined by Ms. Inna Tsarkova, the Canadian Embassy's Political, Economic Relations and Public Affairs Officer, who was very helpful in providing translation and protocol advice. The city of Kharkiv, capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkrSSR) from 1919 to 1934, today is home to a large ethnic-Russian population located

in eastern Ukraine, close to the border with Russia. The city has also been home to unrest in recent months, including bombing near the district court and a grenade attack on a group of Ukrainian nationalists in January 2015.¹³² Considering the generally low-number of Autocephalous Church congregants in the country - around 8 percent - and with this specific Church striving to be the national Church in Ukraine (it has been recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate) it was essential to meet with Bishop Athanasius and his entourage, some 12 people (mostly clerics), especially in the predominantly Russian speaking city. We discussed the ongoing situation, and the socio-political effects that a recognized historic Kyivan-Patriarchate would have. The Church as an institution is very important to the Ukrainian people, more so than in other Western states.

The Ukrainian character, according to Bishop Athanasius, is free-spirited and prideful, especially when it comes to the Ukrainian nation. Indeed, beginning in November 2013 and the start of the EuroMaidan Movement, people from all denominations in Ukraine joined to fight for their homeland. The Bishop emphasized that there is a continuous fear that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarch (UOC MP), under the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), will become Ukraine's national Orthodox Church, and that all other Orthodox Churches in Ukraine will become subordinate to the Moscow Patriarchate.

We then discussed the dynamics behind Russia's aggression against Ukraine. He stated that the popular memory of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, who was the Hetman of the Zaporozhian Host of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (now part of Ukraine). Khmelnytsky led an uprising against the Commonwealth between 1648 and 1654, which resulted in the creation of a Cossack state. In 1654, he concluded the Treaty of Pereyaslav with the Tsardom of Russia. The uprising was a direct result of the Czaplinski Affair in 1647. Religion, ethnicity, and economics factored into this discontent. While the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth remained a union of two nations: of Poland and Lithuania, a sizable population of Orthodox Rusyns (or Ukrainians) were ignored.

In Ukraine, Hetman Khmelnytsky is generally regarded as a national hero. However, he is also criticised for his union with Russia, which in the view of some, proved to be disastrous for the future of the country. His legacy in present-day Ukraine is more positive than negative, with some critics acknowledging that the union with Russia was dictated by necessity and an attempt to survive in those difficult times. In Russia, however, Khmelnytsky has been traditionally viewed as a national enemy, until 1954 and the declaration of Russian-Ukrainian brotherhood under USSR Chairman Nikita Khrushchev. Official Russian historiography today stresses the fact that Khmelnytsky entered into union with Moscow's Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich with an expressed desire to 're-unify' Ukraine with Russia. This view corresponds with the official theory in Russia of Moscow as an heir of the Kyivan Rus', which today is merely appropriately gathering together its former territories – unifying Rus' or Russia. These imperial notions have been revived under Russia's President Vladimir Putin, and utilized in justifying Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

In 1686, however, when Metropolitan Petro Mohyla of Kyiv, and nominal head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, proposed the establishing of a Kyivan Patriarchate the idea was opposed by the conservative circles of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. At the same time, despite opposition from the Kyivan metropolitans, the Tsarist government in Russia successfully subordinated the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Patriarch of Moscow, Joachim. The autonomy and guaranteed rights of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church were violated, and 250 years of Russification and the destruction and uprooting of all signs of independence of the Ukrainian Church ensued. The relation of the Orthodox Church to Ukrainian identity has always been strong, and repression of this facet of Ukrainian life has always prevented full autonomy from being achieved, at least since the end of Kyivan-Rus'. The year 1686 marked the end of nearly 700 years that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was subordinate to the Church in Constantinople and the beginning of its acrimonious relationship with Moscow.

When, in 1917, Ukraine began to fight for sovereignty in the Ukrainian War of Independence (1917-1923) the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was conceived of, says Bishop Athanasius, as a Ukrainian national Church representative of Ukrainian values and separate from Russia's influence. The Church body was officially established in 1921 at Kyiv, and gained autocephaly status from the Patriarch at Constantinople, Gregory VII, in 1924. During the years of Soviet repression, clergy were actively persecuted and the Church eventually disappeared in the 1930s amidst constant pressure from Moscow. Clergy and administrators of the early autocephalous Church are considered to be martyrs of Ukraine in the early 1990s.

During the Second World War, Orthodox Ukrainians enjoyed somewhat increased freedom under German occupation. In May 1942, with the blessing of UAOC EP Metropolitan Dionisiiy, more than a dozen bishops were consecrated in St. Andrew Cathedral, Kiev. Finally, ecclesiastical order could be established. This time it is referred to as the 'second resurrection' of the Church. However, this was a short-lived reality.

On October 8, 1942, Archbishop Nikanor Abrymovych and Bishop Mstyslav Skrypnyk of the UAOC EP and Metropolitan Oleksiy Hromadsky of the Ukrainian Autonomous Orthodox Church entered into an Act of Union uniting these two church hierarchies under the UAOC EP banner. The ROC MP regained its general monopoly after World War II in the Ukrainian SSR. Most of the other churches were liquidated, as the Soviet government only recognized the Moscow Patriarch (MP).

The Church regained state recognition in 1990, which is known as the 'third resurrection'. Initially it was governed from abroad by Patriarch Mstyslav Skrypnyk. Subsequent to his death in 1993, he was succeeded by Patriarch Volodymyr Romaniuk, following the return of the Church to Ukraine.

Considering the history of the Autocephalous Church, I asked if it was possible to establish a new Church to reunite the Ukrainian people with Constantinople, to which Bishop Athanasius responded, 'absolutely.' First and foremost, this move would better serve parishioners of the Orthodox faith and protect Ukrainian identity through distancing the Ukrainian people from Moscow's influence. After all, Church unity would be a cause that would ensure the people's liberty and not mandate an authoritarian regime especially in light of the crisis today.

Notably in Eastern Ukraine, the Bishop contended, there is confusion amongst the people because there are two perceived masters – Kyiv and Moscow – based on the legacy of the Church and, going back far enough, national histories related to Bohdan Khmelnytsky. This is problematic because today the UOC MP supports Ukraine's oligarchs and assigns business leaders with strong connections to Moscow to positions of authority within the Church.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE KYIVAN PATRIARCHATE – KHARKIV

Later on Sunday, January 18, I had the pleasure of meeting with Bishop Mitrophan of Kharkiv for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). Given the prominence of the Russian language in Kharkiv and the objective of the Kyivan Patriarchate Church to Ukrainian nationalism, Bishop Mitrophan and I discussed, at great length, how his congregation has managed amidst the crisis. We also talked about the prospects of recognizing a historic Kyivan



Patriarchate and inter-Church dialogue in Ukraine. In our discussion, Bishop Mitrophan declared that Church unity is possible.

While unity is achievable, today co-communion between all Orthodox Churches is not allowed by the Moscow Patriarchate. The UOC KP and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) have been open to the prospect of uniting to form a single recognized Orthodox Church in Ukraine. In the recent past, less than 10 years ago, senior members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) were actively engaged in consultation to do so. However strongly, Moscow Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church is now resisting participation in discussions of the UOC MP.

Political, social, and religious discord has caused violent struggle throughout Ukraine after Russia's President Putin ordered the illegal seizure of Crimea, following a campaign of destabilization. When UOC KP churches were forcefully closed on the Crimean peninsula, they were subsequently given to the UOC MP and then renovated and reopened with Moscow's help, exerting influence on the region's population.

Bishop Mitrophan concluded by remarking that the UOC MP is praying that the bloodshed will end at the edge of Russia's occupied lands. However, he believes that Russia seeks to occupy an even larger part of Ukrainian lands by way of its overwhelming and unrelenting military strength (an invasion that is not-so stealth) overpowering the Ukrainian military to buffer the possible NATO designation for Ukraine.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE – KHARKIV

On the evening of Sunday, January 18, 2015, I met with Father Michael Kit and his wife at his parish in Kharkiv. Father Michael is the former priest of St. Barbara's Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, and my regional contact in Kharkiv, Ukraine. It was Father Michael and his son, Father Serge Kit, who were instrumental in organizing the Kharkiv portion of my trip, a city that the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development and the Canadian Embassy in Ukraine advised against visiting, twice, because of dangers. As Father Michael was my priest from the late 1980s to the late 1990s at St.



Barbara's Russo-Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, I found discussing the place of Orthodoxy in the crisis with him to be very open and sincere. Father Michael, a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), is devoted to the ideal of a united Ukraine and a united Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

I met Father Michael just before his Sunday evening sermon during the Feast of Epiphany, and, upon his invitation, I attended both the mass, while seated in the choir gallery, and the feast. It was after mass and over dinner that we discussed, with Father Serge, Ukraine's current situation and the prospect of a united and autonomous Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Father Michael is concerned at the dilemma that Russia's intrusion into Ukraine has caused for his relationship with his parishioners. The implication is that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) is supporting aggression in the country's east and uncomfortably brought up by some of his congregants. He stated that it would be better if the Moscow Patriarchate Churches could become part of a recognized Ukrainian Church based on the legacy of the Metropolitanate established in 988 to separate international politics from domestic religious practices. Father Michael said that this new Ukrainian Church could be realized if support was promised from the three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Patriarch.

My belief is that most all UOC MP priests are fair and family oriented people, having the same relationship with those who belong to their churches. A transition would be very complex. A road map is necessary and has to respect the distinction and accreditation of each priest, their status, and assure them a future inside a new Church organization. These assurances must be carefully detailed through negotiations.

Father Michael's son, Father Serge, is more wary and questioning of what he describes as Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 'Economics of War' against Russia's President Vladimir Putin. 'Economics of War' refers to Canada's sanctions placed on Russia in reaction to the escalating situation in Ukraine, suggesting that Canada engages in the effort for its own economic benefit. Father Michael and I both know from spending a great deal of time engaged in the daily life and Canadian politics that Canada does not engage purposefully to gain from the economics of war. But, Canada does engage, humanly, in ending warfare to bring peace. As can be seen, Canada's actions are being interpreted differently –creatively for President Putin's political media propagated purposes, and in Western media, which both depend largely upon one's individual exposure and one's belief. Opinions differ even in families of religious leaders. Both men, however, agree in the concept of Orthodox unity in Ukraine.

I met with Father Michael and Father Serge briefly before mass and for a time thereafter. The mass on this particular day was part of the Feast of the Epiphany. This event is a feast day celebrating the revelation of God the Son as a human being in Jesus Christ and his baptism in the Jordan River. Present at Father Michael's beautiful new church were 300 to 400 parishioners inside with well over a thousand outside arranged in long lines. Father Michael was greeted very reverently, obviously being held

in high esteem by his parishioners. This demonstrates, however, the influence that the Church has in Ukrainian society, as well as the potential helpful impact it may have when politics and Church matters differ, particularly if under foreign influence

At the Church I was invited to speak to Father Michael's congregation inside. I was introduced proudly as a Canadian old friend. I began my remarks, accompanied by his interpretation, about how both myself and Father Michael's parishioners in Edmonton miss him. However, I remarked, we are pleased he has such a wonderful reception and high level of respect in Kharkiv. I wished his parishioners well during these difficult times and that myself and all Canadians would share their concerns. I congratulated them for their spiritual resolve on this feast day, the Blessing of the Water. After which I joined both Father Michael and Father Serge and their families and friends for dinner. Immediately following dinner, I was appreciatively treated to the beautiful singing of several songs by the world renowned 16 person Kharkiv choir.

Overall, Father Michael and Father Serge gave different perspectives on the question of devolution of regional power, such as we have in Canada with our provinces, but do not differ greatly. Both agreed that the status quo must be maintained for the sake of society and spirituality in Ukraine, but that Orthodox unity in the country should be accomplished.

It is worth noting that while I was in Kharkiv, a bomb was set off in Kharkiv injuring 13 people, four of them seriously. I guess the embassy was right in trying to warn me not to go to Kharkiv. The people that I met with were wonderfully friendly, and I hope to return and visit Father Michael and Kharkiv in the near future with my wife, Lorraine.

MEETING WITH THE JEWISH ETHNIC COMMUNITY – KHARKIV



On the morning of January 19, I met with Chief Rabbi Moshe Moskowitz at the Kharkiv Choral Synagogue, Ukraine's largest. The synagogue is a center for Jewish life in Kharkiv and an important city landmark. Jewish holidays are celebrated at the synagogue by Jews and non-Jews alike. Events include the annual Hanukkah celebration and a tribute for Kharkiv Jewish war veterans. During our meeting we discussed the crisis, Orthodox Christianity in the country, and its effects on the Jewish population.

Rabbi Moskowitz is a US born Chief Rabbi of Kharkiv and the region's Chabad-Lubavitch emissary. Chabad-Lubavitch is a Chasidic (or Hasidic) Jewish movement and, organizationally, it is the largest Jewish body in the world. Chasidic Judaism is a branch of Orthodox Judaism that promotes spirituality through the popularization and internalization of Jewish mysticism as the fundamental aspect of the faith.

In our meeting, Rabbi Moskowitz commented that he is particularly concerned about how the situation in the Kharkiv region, which was pressured into an illegal referendum on secession in 2014, has affected the Jewish community. He related that rising anti-Semitism has left many in fear, especially after the city's Jewish (and pro-Russia) mayor, Gennady Kernes, was shot in May 2014, albeit not fatally. Kernes, a Jew, acted as Kharkiv's mayor for 10 years. Anti-Semitism has also become less isolated and more overt. Anti-Semitic graffiti has been found on Jewish schools in Kharkiv. Hate slogans included 'Kill the Jews,' and 'Heil Happy Holocaust.' Incidents in the past year have included stabbings, graffiti, attacks on Jewish-owned businesses, and the firebombing of cars and synagogues.

Anti-Semitism is not specific to Kharkiv, noted Rabbi Moskowitz. I related to him my experiences in Kherson, where I saw live local television reporting of the Right Sektor, some 40-55 persons in military formation in a variety of fatigues with weapons, harassing a Jewish business. The owner of the business was running for mayor. I visited the business, talked to the manager, and viewed videos of the assault, which included Right Sektor and or some paramilitary group with red-and-black armbands.

According to Russia's news sources, Odessa, which is located in southwestern Ukraine on the Black Sea, recently saw a string of anti-Semitic incidents, but Ukrainian media censored the news so as to ,not tell the truth that Neo-Nazis and the extreme right are acting out in Ukraine in whatever manner they please.' However, the Rabbi noted that the Jewish community does not blame Ukrainians, but the growing influence that Russia has had in recent years, as well as the most recent incursion and destabilization.

MEETING WITH THE 'YUNPRESKLUB' (GORLIVKA) – KHARKIV

On the invitation of Canadian Embassy representative, Ms. Inna Tsarkova, I met with 'Yunpresklub' (Gorlivka) later on January 19. The Yunpresklub is an ongoing Embassy funded project that seeks to assist internally displaced persons (IDP) children in Ukraine today. It aims at helping teenage girls and boys — internally displaced persons from Donetsk region of Ukraine, and provides social and psychological rehabilitation of teenage girls and boys in difficult situations because of the military conflict in their Oblast.



At the meeting, the group proposed the oft-cited notion that a civil society is the foundation of local democracy. This is exactly what 'Yunpresklub' is, a civil society helping future generations of Ukrainians in need, especially during these grim times for Ukraine's east. The organization provides school supplies, clothes, lodging, toys, books, winter clothes, and food to the thousands youths and displaced persons in and from the area of Donetsk.



I was asked of my interest in their work, to which I related my many years of experience with the homeless and disadvantaged persons in Canada and the United States that led me to visit shelter projects and participate in late night food distribution and feeding programmes for homeless youths in Kyiv, with Leanne Swekla-Barkinsky in 2004. Children as young as 10 years old came out from unheated spaces under buildings to our van at 2:00 AM to have hot soup and dinner. Since then, I regularly give financial support to their good efforts.

MEETING WITH V.N. KARAZIN KHARKIV UNIVERSITY AND CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – KHARKIV

On the afternoon of January 19, I met with Associate Professor of Eastern European History Dr. Dmytro Mykolenko with the Department of Modern History. Dr. Mykolenko is an expert in nationalism, national identity, and modern Eastern European history. Most recently, he spoke at the 'Statehood Building Problem in National Narratives: Ukrainian, Belarussian, and Bulgarian' conference in January 2014 at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv University. As such, our discussion focused on the ongoing situation and the role that the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine have played. While Dr. Mykolenko declared that his expertise does not include knowledge of the Medieval and pre-modern periods in Ukraine nor the ecclesiastical realm, thus precluding any in-depth discussion of Kyivan-Rus' or the patriarchal proposal of 1686, he did comment extensively on the current situation. The meeting took place jointly with the Centre for International Cooperation.



Also present at my meeting with Dr. Mykolenko was Director of the Centre for International Cooperation (CIC), Dr. Olena Shapovalova. She is also a modern history faculty member at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv University; however, she met with me in her capacity as Chair of the CIC. As an expert in the fields of international relations and Russian foreign policy, Dr. Shapovalova elaborated on the European East-West divide as well as the place of Ukraine in a larger European sphere.

Dr. Shapovalova is the author of *The Responsibility to Protect Minorities*, a text supported and endorsed by the European Union, University of Lodz (Poland), and the United Nations. In it she expresses that the state, not any external organization, has a responsibility to protect all people who fall under its sovereign authority – be they citizens or non-citizens, indigenous people, majorities or minorities – in the form of war, invasion, violent revolution and/or rebellion, and crimes against humanity through the ensuring of good and responsible government. This responsibility entails the prevention of such phenomenon, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means.

She further stated that the international community should use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means to protect populations from these crimes. If a state fails to protect its populations or is in fact the perpetrator of crimes, the international community must be prepared to take stronger measures, including the collective use of force through the UN Security Council.

Within this larger dynamic, however, national minorities and 'non-citizens' have a right to protect and promote their identity, and it is the obligation of the state in which they

live to defend that right. However, neighbouring or nearby states may have strong ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic links to the minority population, and a legitimate interest in its protection. This does not preclude the state's obligation to protect the national minority nor does it eliminate the state's responsibility to them. Dr. Shapovalova's commitment to human rights, minority rights, stability, and international relations and cooperation was an apt segway into a larger discussion on the Russian incursion into Ukraine.

Both Dr. Mykolenko and Dr. Shapovalova agreed that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) is losing support of parishes, especially amidst escalating violence. More and more congregants are moving to either the Kyivan Patriarchate or the Autocephalous Church, and the influence that the Moscow Patriarchate had at the beginning of 2014 had diminished. This happened for two reasons: the Ukrainian population associates the UOC MP directly with Moscow, as the name overtly suggests, or the people are aware of the influence that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and the Russian government has within the organization. The majority of the Moscow Patriarchate's adherents reside in the eastern portion of the country, in close proximity to Russia, hundreds-of-thousands also work in Russia.

We also talked about the east-west divide. Western Ukraine is predominantly Ukrainian Greek Catholic or members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Kyivan Patriarchate and culturally Ukrainian, while the east can be considered strongly Russian linguistically and culturally. The eastern oblasts are home to a high concentration of Russian language, literature, culture and arts, and ongoing communal relations. In recent months, this ideal has been propped up by Russia's propaganda, which promotes the creation of a stronger 'Russian' character to the region and those living there. For instance, Kharkiv was one of the greatest cultural and administrative centres of the Russian empire by the mid-1700s. Russia's connection to the region dates back to the 1500s when the Tsarist Empire absorbed the region. Emphasizing historical ties such as this is intended to turn those living in the predominantly Russian-speaking city towards Russia. However, it has not, aside from a few isolated incidents, and Kharkiv remains staunchly 'Ukrainian'.

MEETING WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE – KHARKIV

Following my meetings at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv University I met with Metropolitan Onuphrios Bogodukhiv of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) at the holy historic Assumption Cathedral in Kharkiv (built 1901). The Metropolitan, Canadian Embassy representative, Inna Tsarkova, and I were joined by Father Michael Kit. Our meeting was both insightful and delightful in that Father Michael had done a wonderful job hosting my visit to his city. Both the Metropolitan and Father Michael emphasized their commitment to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, first and foremost, but also acknowledged the Churches' influence in the community.



Metropolitan Onuphrios Bogodukhiv was born in 1970 at Khodorkiv, just outside of Kyiv, to a family of priests. August 28, 1990, at age 20, he was ordained as a deacon by the Metropolitan of Kharkiv, Bogodukhiv Nycodym, as a clergyman with the Kharkiv Holy Annunciation Cathedral. By 1997, he was appointed rector of the St. Sergius Orthodox Church community of Kharkiv, where he started the construction of the temple. On April 21, 2000, he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite and nominated Bishop of Izyum. On September 18, 2003, he was appointed Deputy Abbot of the Holy Protection Monastery of Kharkiv.

In 2001, for his ongoing commitments to the Ukrainian people and religious dialogue in Ukraine, he was awarded the Medal '10 years of Independence of Ukraine', the Marshall Zhukov Medal, and the Certificate of Merit of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine under Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma. President Kuchma is known today for improving Russian-Ukrainian relations and who represented Ukraine at negotiations with the armed separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces on June 21, 2014, to discuss President Petro Poroshenko's peace plan.

In 2006, he was awarded the Order for Faith and Fidelity and the Order of Peter the Great of the 2nd degree, both by the Russian Federation, for his ongoing commitment to the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and his work done for the Russian community in Ukraine's east. These distinctions from both Ukraine's and Russia's governments are a tribute to his ecclesial commitment to his parishioners without regard for nationality.

During our meeting I asked: 'From your perspective, what can we do? What should we be doing? And, should we be doing anything?' He responded that outside of the conflict-zones the situation is very different. Language is not a problem; it is the politics that

surrounds language and how language is being used to emphasize difference. Before the violence began, the Ukrainian and Russian communities lived together in peace. When I asked about the role of the Church in the crisis, he responded that Russia desires and encourages movement towards the establishment of a pan-Slavic Moscow Patriarchate.

When we addressed the question of uniting the three Ukrainian Orthodoxies, he noted that the first step would be to negotiate an arrangement that would be acceptable to all three bodies. When contemplating the inclusion of the Moscow Patriarchate, one must consider the interests of Metropolitan Onuphrios and Metropolitan Antony, the Chancellor of the UOC MP and assumed successor to Onuphrios.

When concluding the meeting, both Metropolitan Onuphrios Bogodukhiv and Father Michael stated firmly that they will both be praying for the day of Orthodox Church unity in Ukraine.

MEETING WITH TETYANA GAVRYSH AND YURIJ SOSHENKO FROM 'SIX MONTHS OF FREEDOM' PROJECT - KHARKIV

Late on January 19, I met with the project leaders for 'Six Months of Freedom', Tetyana Gavrysh and Yurij Soshenko, in Kharkiv. Yurij was a former Parliamentary intern with the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Program (CUPP) in Ottawa. Their project is centred around a documentary series aimed at promoting and changing social consciousness. The films tell their stories without 'selected truth' and 'convenient facts'. They are documentary stories about people, who influence the destiny of Ukraine today. Characters of these films are soldiers, medical workers, children, and volunteers. There has never been a script written for these stories.



Information today is the driving force for change, the project leaders portended. They feel that it is the time for new media; it is the time when society governs media scene instead of being governed by media. The videos show 12 stories of doctors and nurses, soldiers, workers, and whose lives have been and will always be connected to this turning point in the history of Ukraine, especially one in which saboteurs known as 'Putin's Tourists' continually work to destabilize Ukraine's east.

The films were professionally done. They do not characterize the violence nor depict the wars, which would undoubtedly be disturbing to those in North America and Western Europe. They do, however, emotively depict real people's lives in Ukraine, and the struggles of those injured and hospitalized. In the film depicting the wounded soldier, a young Ukrainian girl presents him a drawing, a sentiment meant to alleviate the man's traumatic burden and comfort him momentarily. Whether it is a stranger or his sister giving him the drawing, it does not matter. What the viewer sees is a sympathetic action, supporting the Ukrainian soldier, and showing the people's commitment to its protectors. The soldier bravely struggles to hide his pain and discomfort in order to make the young girl – perhaps his daughter or sister – comfortable. This is indeed a film for all Canada to see.

I applauded their efforts and offered my support to do whatever I could. I am awaiting future direction.

MEETING WITH DANIEL BILAK - KYIV

Upon returning to Kyiv from Kharkiv, on the morning of January 20, I was met by Daniel Bilak, a fellow Canadian and the managing partner of the Kyiv office of CMS Cameron McKenna LLC. CMS Cameron McKenna is an international law firm that operates around the globe in all sectors of the legal profession. Bilak was keen on meeting with me and discussing Orthodox unity after hearing about my presence in Ukraine through the grapevine. He is also an acquaintance of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Constantinople. While our meeting was impromptu, it was nonetheless important, and I hope that in the future he will sit with myself and other political and religious leaders to structure a working group to work out a strategy for a resolution and other initiatives towards Ukrainian Orthodox unity.



Mr. Bilak has over 20 years of experience working in the private and public sectors in Ukraine, primarily as an advisor to international development projects and international relations. Between 1995 and 2006, he was a senior governance expert in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), providing advice and assistance on administrative and legal reform, and regulatory issues to the Ukrainian government, including the President, Prime Minister of Ukraine, and the Minister of Justice of Ukraine.

He has been a strong public proponent of anti-corruption tactics and federal reform to alleviate conditions in eastern Ukraine and Crimea from the outset, while being a major critic of the regime of former President Viktor Yanukovich. The centrality of the Orthodox Church in Ukrainian life during the EuroMaidan and the Russian influence exerted through one of Ukraine's major Churches, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), is part and parcel to the instability in Ukraine, according to Bilak. In an article recently published in the *Kyiv Post*, he noted:

The Kremlin plans to suborn Ukraine politically, economically and culturally. Support for separatist movements, coupled with the December 2013 economic accords signed in Moscow, form part of the first two pillars of this strategy. As a serious instrument to advance Russian political interests in Ukraine, the Moscow Patriarchate is indispensable to the construction of the third pillar.¹³³

He goes on to identify the power the UOC MP plays in Ukrainian society, and how it could be used as a political tool. Indeed, in some areas, such as eastern Ukraine, it is a political tool used to mobilize public support for pro-Russia forces and the Russian idea.

Mr. Bilak also recognized that one of the Constantinople Patriarchate's leading theologians, Metropolitan Elpidophoros, severely criticised not just the Moscow Church, but its entire policy of hegemony, described as 'wherever there is a Russian, there too the jurisdiction of the Russian Church extends.'¹³⁴ In Ukraine, Mr. Bilak agreed, there is need of a unified and national Orthodox Church recognized and in communion solely with Constantinople, thus severely limiting the impact and influence that Russia has in Ukraine. The Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, by virtue of overwhelming universal moral authority and espousal of Christian values, influences churches and people across the Orthodox tradition and around the world, something the Patriarch of Moscow has never been able to achieve but continues to seek today with the aggressive arm of Russia's central government under pan-Slavist Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH – KYIV

At the Patriarchal Administration building, on January 20th, I met with Auxiliary Bishop of Kyiv, Bishop Josyf Milyan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome), also known somewhat disparagingly as the 'Uniate' Church. It is the largest Eastern-rite Catholic Church in full communion with the Holy Vatican See. Having been established in 1595 (claimed 988), the UGCC Rome is the third-largest spiritual organization in the country with 4.2 million adherents, only behind the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). The UGCC Rome dominates the three western oblasts of Ukraine – Lviv, Volyn, and Ivano-Frankivsk – but remains a minority in most regions of Ukraine. This status is important in determining the religious situation in Ukraine, and whether religious pluralism can be maintained if a historic Kyivan Patriarchate were to be recognized.



Bishop Milyan advocates a united Orthodox Church of Ukraine as a way forward to strengthen the recognition and distinction of his Ukrainian Greek Catholic community from the UOC MP Orthodox community. He stated that the Moscow Patriarchate has always been negative towards Catholicism, especially towards the UGCC Rome, which it considers a threat. According to Bishop Milyan, forming a national and unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch might provide some measure of stability and the resumption of normal relations present in other canonical jurisdictions.

The UGCC Rome and Ukraine's Orthodoxy have always maintained a tense relationship, sometimes erupting violently, yet Bishop Milyan stated that the UGCC Rome has continually sought to bridge the gulf to moderate concerns between the Catholic and Orthodox. In 2012, at Khmilnyk, Ukraine, a wave of protests from the clergy of the UOC MP began in response to the City Council's decision to grant the parish of St. John the Evangelist of the UGCC Rome permission to work on paperwork to build a temporary chapel. According to some influential Orthodox (Moscow Patriarchate) clergy, historically Khmilnyk never had any Greek Catholics, so there is no need to construct a 'small church.' Bishop Milyan says that UGCC Rome 'Redemptorists' (members of the Catholic Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer) are buried in Khmilnyk, which means that 'we came here not only now, and are not starting something new but continue to be here.' Overall, the Khmilnyk parish has about 20 people who pray in a Catholic Church. The concern is whether the Orthodox clergy should have a say, or not, upon the development of a new Ukrainian Greek Catholic parish, which supposedly is constitutionally protected in Ukraine under the auspices of 'religious freedoms'.

In the past year a UGCC Rome monastery has been destroyed in Crimea, and several priests arrested there, only to be released when the Vatican placed pressure on the Russian government. In Donetsk, UGCC Rome Cathedrals are shelled by pro-Russia rebels. There is fear amongst the bulk of UGCC Rome congregants that they might be threatened by Orthodox (Moscow Patriarchate) adherents following any form of spiritual opposition.

In October 2014, Dr. Andrew Bennett, Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedom, travelled to Kyiv and Lviv, Ukraine, to meet with government officials, religious leaders and civil society leaders, including Bishop Milyan, in order to increase awareness of international standards on freedom of religion, to prevent and respond to hate crimes, and to facilitate multi-community dialogue. In his official statement marking the occasion, Dr. Bennett stated:

Canada stands with the people of Ukraine as they seek to build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future in which the right to religious freedom is fully enjoyed by all. The Ukrainian people continue to show resilience, courage and commitment to building a more pluralist, peaceful, democratic and prosperous future while their country's sovereignty and territorial integrity continues to be threatened by *Russia's* aggression. It is essential that all Ukrainians, regardless of their church or faith, be allowed to contribute to Ukraine's democratic development without fear of violence or consequence.

Bishop Milyan noted that I am in keeping with Canada's commitment to both Ukraine and its people through my project. Ukraine is a declaratively religiously pluralist and multicultural state. A Church composed of the three major Ukrainian Orthodoxies must display the same inclinations.

The UGCC Rome has always maintained good working relations with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), according to Bishop Milyan, and hopes for the unity of all Orthodox in Ukraine. Why? First and foremost, if unity is to be achieved, Russia's presence in Ukraine would be drastically limited, and the imposition of Russia's ideology would all but cease. The situation, notably in warring areas, is solely a war of information. This is a situation in which false notions of a 'natural' Russia's dominance are spread and absorbed, and misinformation is popularized. For example, Russia's propagandists constantly advocate that the UGCC is composed of fascists and akin to Nazis. However, the UGCC Rome's life is premised on the ideas of Ukrainian unity, the nominal unity of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Orthodox peoples, and a condition of pan-Ukrainian Orthodoxy.

The UGCC Rome has a strong relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarch and is constantly in search of more positive influence to help elevate Ukrainian culture before the Church.

MEETING WITH THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS – KYIV

While continuing my examination of how non-Orthodox enclaves will be affected should a pan-Ukraine Orthodox Church recognized solely by the Ecumenical Patriarch, not Moscow, I met with Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress, Josef Zissels on January 20. I had previously met with him when he visited Ottawa. Mr. Zissels is a political dissident of the Soviet Union and opposes Russia's current regime, as well as its current influence in Ukraine through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). According to Mr. Zissels, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) is completely under the influence of Russia's political authorities and accomplishes Russia's missions, and that this trickles down into the Ukrainian Church.



From the early 1970s, Mr. Zissels worked with Jewish and general democratic underground movements in the Soviet Union. In spring 1972, he was expelled from the Komsomol (the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and a political party of the Soviet Union) for speaking out in support of the right for Ukrainian national repatriation. In 1978 and 1984, he was sentenced to three years in a high security penal colony. In 1978, he joined the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, a not-for-profit organization mandated to monitor human rights in Ukraine. That same year and the first time he was arrested, Mr. Zissels was sentenced to three years in high security penal colony 'for slander discrediting the Soviet government and social order' and inciting pro-democratic 'slander'. Finally, in 1988, Mr. Zissels set-up Ukraine's first Jewish organization in Chernovtsy in western Ukraine. In 1989, he took part in the creation of the Vaad (Confederation of Jewish Organizations and Communities) of the USSR and became its co-chair. Today, Mr. Zissels is Chairman of the Vaad, a position he has retained since 1991. The Vaad represents Ukraine's 246 Jewish organizations jointly and is the chief Jewish organization in the country.

In line with his anti-Russia and pro-Ukraine convictions, Mr. Zissels opposed both President Viktor Yanukovich's former-regime and the actions of Russia's President Vladimir Putin, citing that both of their actions have been an 'assault on political and social rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens.' The fact that, as Mr. Zissels contends, President Yanukovich and the UOC MP are funded by Moscow only adds to the contention. Money being transferred to pro-Russia forces, located primarily in Ukraine's east, is not done electronically but in the form of direct real dollars. Indeed, Ukraine is split into two worlds, east and west, and it has become apparent that the east will not let go because of the unprecedented amount of military resources and money being funnelled into Ukraine from Russia. The funding is being used by various political and religious (UOC MP) factions to influence the people. As Mr. Zissels pointed out, in the

east, the power of the Moscow Patriarchate Church has been capitalized on so much that to a certain extent in the warring regions the church dictates law. Paraphrasing classic author Fyodor Dostoevsky: if the power of the church replaces law and this law is based on power, not spirituality, then everything is allowed. As stated by Dostoevsky, 'God help me to kill, steal.' The east's struggles are political, a dynamic that the UOC MP has factored itself into.

Of course, Russia's military has inserted itself into Ukraine unabated. The lack of an adequate response has meant that regional issues are being dealt with insufficiently. The Ukrainian army needs adequate tools in order to implement a measure of stability in an otherwise unpoliced and unstable area.

The EuroMaidan was not a clash of language, but of 'east and west'. In an interview, he noted: 'It's very important that Jews take part in Maidan. Jews took part in Maidan, yes. Three died on the barricades of Maidan. But I don't want to exaggerate the role of Jews on Maidan.'¹³⁵ Mr. Zissels was the first Jewish leader to help the Maidan movement. However, there were 3-4 Jewish leaders who upheld President Yanukovich too, not very actively but the world saw it, and once they did so, it raised the anxiety in the Jewish community. While some have said that anti-Semitism is growing in Ukraine, Mr. Zissels believes this is not true. Furthermore, he has written and given several speeches on this topic – that there is no growth in anti-Semitism in Ukraine.

MEETING WITH THE CENTRE FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM - KYIV



In my meeting at the Centre for Progressive Judaism, on January 20th, Executive Director Alexander Gaidar explained that the ethos Russia is generating in Eastern Europe is similar to that of Europe in 1938 – the year Hitler gained full control of the Wehrmacht in Nazi Germany and occupied Austria. The same year Germany occupied the Czechoslovak Sudetenland, after German Chancellor Adolf Hitler convinced British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to avoid conflict and sign the controversial Munich

Agreement that ceded the area to Germany. Certainly, history is repeating itself. Today's suggestions of Russia's peaceful intentions in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, most recently in the February Minsk Agreement, mirror the actions of Hitler in the 1930s where once before the West gave in to appeasement instead of action. The West had a formidable deterrent in NATO, but has lost all resolve. Within this comparison is concern for the Jewish population of Ukraine. The weakness of NATO and the hypocrisy of

Russia's President Vladimir Putin (read: German Chancellor Adolf Hitler), Gaidar noted, are worrisome and more options aimed at providing stability must be sought.

The Centre for Progressive Judaism is the international umbrella organization of the reform, liberal, progressive, and reconstructionist movements of Judaism, playing a major role in the historic renewal of Jewish life in the former Soviet Union. It is a national community organization that presses for increased rights and abilities of Jewish people living in Ukraine. The recent aggression and Russia's incitation of rebellion, in whatever form, has driven the social and political crisis as a whole and has the potential to generate grave circumstances for the Jewish population. Notably, this was exacerbated by the existing national and religious division among Ukraine's Orthodoxy. However, anti-Semitism is less prevalent today than in the past.

Upon meeting with Mr. Gaidar, he noted that the country is divided between east and west, and that the western portion is home to the more progressive and pro-European Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarch (UOC KP) and Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome) congregations. The 'European mentality' of Western Ukraine dates back to the era of Austro-Hungarian rule, which lasted in the region until the Empire broke apart in 1918. He showed me pins with pictures of Vladimir Lenin, first Chairman of the Soviet Union (1918-1924), that were given to children. These children were collectively known as the Children of Lenin, who between the ages of seven and ten received these pins to mark their entrance into the Soviet Kommosol (youth movement of the USSR). They were conscripted into becoming a full member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to be indoctrinated into a communist military life-style in which the government supplied everything from jobs to healthcare to pensions. This is one of the reasons why there is a lingering attachment to the Soviet Union governance among Eastern European countries even years after states gained political independence. He described it as 'birth-to-death Soviet Socialist cradling benefits'.

In March 2014, Mr. Gaidar, along with many other representatives from Ukraine's Jewish community, wrote an open letter criticizing Russia's aggression and its invasion of Crimea. The letter, written in Russian and co-signed by 21 Jewish leaders — including the Vaad leadership, an artist, an engineer, and others — criticized President Putin's perceived hypocrisy and asserted the signers' support of Ukrainian sovereignty 'in the name of national minorities and Ukraine's Jewish community.' Since Russia's troops invaded Crimea, a peninsula in southeastern Ukraine, Putin has justified his military action by claiming that he is acting to protect Ukraine's Russian-speaking population. In response to these allegations, the group spoke on behalf of a Ukrainian Jewish community that is historically 'mostly Russian-speaking.' The letter's authors wrote, 'we are quite capable of protecting our rights in a constructive dialogue and in cooperation with the government and civil society of a sovereign, democratic, and united Ukraine.' Among the co-signers were Josef Zissels, chairman of Vaad Ukraine (Ukraine's council of Rabbis) and Vice President of the World Jewish Congress; Grigoriy Pickman, B'nai B'rith Leopoldis president; and, Leonid Finberg, director of the

Center for the Study of History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry at Kyiv Mohyla National University.

Since the letter, Mr. Gaidar has been increasingly critical of Russia's aggression due to Russia's attack on the Ukrainian people and organizations, and the hypocrisy associated with Russia's motive for invading 'on linguistic grounds.' Indeed, according to Gaidar, amongst other Jewish leaders, chaos and criminal activity in eastern Ukraine are causing anxiety and increased emigration by Ukrainian Jews. Hundreds of Jews have already emigrated to Israel alone. According to Mr. Gaidar, a growing number of members of his community in Kyiv were contemplating emigration following the political upheaval that gripped Ukraine in November 2013, and increasingly so in 2014.

In the areas experiencing extreme violence the pro-Russia military units are not conscripts but contracted local citizens who do not receive proper training, however many military leaders are citizens of Russia. Gaidar remarked the significance of this since, as he put it, 'Russians never leave Russia.' The direct inference is that Russia is helping the rebels through a mission approved by Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

While Ukraine is an independent country, some in Eastern Ukraine (notably pro-Russia forces) view Ukrainian troops as occupiers. Some in this area would welcome the prospect of becoming Russia's citizens and receive very generous pensions from Russia. The Pension Fund of the Russian Federation (PFRF) is considered to be the most comprehensive in Eastern Europe and includes social payments to veterans, the disabled, the disabled due to war injuries, heroes of the Soviet Union, heroes of the Russian Federation, personal insurance, and maternity payments.

Mr. Gaidar stated that in order to counter Russia's efforts in Ukraine, Ukrainians and the West need to boycott Russia's goods, supply precision weapons to Ukrainian forces so as to minimize possibility of killing innocent citizens caught in the fighting, impose satellite monitoring for security purposes, impose further economic sanctions, and shut Russia off from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). While Gaidar agreed that economic sanctions and penalties are working, he stated that more needs to be done. Turkey and other countries in NATO are disregarding the sanctions and are trading heavily with Russia.

MEETING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE - KYIV



Next, on January 20th, I met with the Kyiv Section Head of the International Republican Institute (IRI), Michael Druckman. I had previously met with Mr. Druckman when he addressed the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, which I have been a member of for many years, and the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group, of which I was Chair and have also been a member for many years. The International Republican Institute is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization that seeks to advance freedom

and democracy worldwide by helping political parties become more issue-based and responsive, assisting citizens to participate in government planning, and working to increase the role of marginalized groups in the political process – including women and youth. It actively works with the Institute for Public Opinion Research (IPOR) to assess how to address issues in Ukraine based on the public's attitudes.

Mr. Druckman explained that the IRI works in countries important to U.S. interests, especially in areas where it can make a difference. The organization focuses on three tasks: helping political parties broaden their appeal, ensuring that they rule justly once elected, and aiding civil society in guaranteeing democratic governance. While the IRI can help catalyze the efforts of democratic activists in a country, it cannot implement nor enforce democracy.

He fears that Moldova and the small breakaway state of Transnistria might be in President Putin's sights next because of their strong connection to Russia. According to Mr. Druckman,

Crimea is in Moscow's hands. Deadly fighting has broken out in parts of Eastern Ukraine. And now there are signs that Russia's President Vladimir Putin may have picked his next targets: First is *Transnistria*, a small breakaway state in Moldova, west of Ukraine, where thousands of Moscow's troops are already stationed; then its close neighbour Odessa, Ukraine's third-largest city and its largest remaining port, where pro-Russia and pro-government groups are tangling. If forces loyal to *President* Putin can successfully disrupt Odessa, it could effectively cut the county of Ukraine in two.¹³⁶

Overall, he believes that the immediate objective for the international community must be to help Ukraine create a sense of stability and security. Ukraine cannot achieve stability if its primary focus is on securing borders from possible military invasion. Russia's President Vladimir Putin's exhibits disingenuousness when it comes to ceasefires and Russia's presence in Ukraine is frightening, especially when considering

the fragility of the current Minsk Accords, coupled with rumours of increased aid to separatists by Russia, and the volume of pro-Ukrainian militia activity.

When we discussed the prospect of Orthodox unity in Ukraine, he agreed that such a prospect is necessary since it would also expand social democracy in the country. Mr. Druckman went on to note that various factions within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), under the control of the Kremlin, do not want dialogue amongst Ukrainians nor the other Orthodox Churches. The Moscow Patriarchate, he contends, is pro-Russia, anti-Ukrainian, and anti-Maidan. Establishing a new national Orthodox Church must receive an ecclesiastical designation by a patriarchal council in Constantinople, seen as necessary to limit Moscow's influence.

MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS MATTERS, GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE – KYIV

Later, on January 20, I met with Andriy Yurash, Associate Professor L'viv National University and head of the Department of Religious Matters (Ministry of Culture) in Kyiv. Discussing Ukrainian Orthodox unity, he noted that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), which the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) reports to in the organizational hierarchy, is a force that aims to destabilize Ukrainian national sovereignty. This is assuming that Ukrainian national identity must be seen as being founded through the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988, which would affront Moscow's version of history.



We talked about the political nature of each Orthodox Church, which, he said, is undeniable. However, he continued, some (like the Moscow Patriarchate) are more involved politically, for Moscow's benefit, than others. Indeed, the UOC MP is tied to the actions of the ROC MP, though not many of the Church's Ukrainian clergy agree with the nature of the two Churches' political relationships today.

Regarding the visit of Patriarch Kirill, head of the ROC MP, to Ukraine in 2010, Professor Yurash pointed out that the political component of this visit is undeniable. 'How can it not be of political nature if the Patriarch is meeting with the Prime Minister, the President, local authorities?' According to Professor Yurash, Patriarch Kirill's visit to Ukraine was very well planned. It served to greatly diminish the perceived autonomy of the UOC MP, which officially received independence in the early 1990s. Patriarch Kirill

wishes to be an absolute leader in the Orthodox world. He pointed out that by 2010 it seemed logical and desired that Ukraine create its own national Church, an idea that has since regained popularity amidst the transference of many UOC MP congregants to the Kyivan Patriarchate. Between 2011 and 2013, however, the strength and aggression of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, supported by the Yanukovych regime, prevented any movement towards a national and united Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The actual number of adherents of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine, he noted, is not clear particularly when it comes to any one Church body. There are anywhere between 17 and 40 million in Ukraine today who are active and belong to one of the three Orthodox Churches out of a population of 45.7 million people. This represents a large portion of the estimated 130 to 150 million Orthodox adherents that the ROC MP claims, of a total 300 million Orthodox adherents worldwide. Professor Yurash stated that the Moscow Patriarch, Kirill, is worried about 'the further escalation of the conflict and the *possible* separation of the UOC MP from Moscow,' and that this 'situation can come back like a boomerang and hit the ROC MP as a whole.' Kirill's fears are justified. Were the Moscow Patriarchate's Sees and parishes to break with Moscow or, what would be even worse from his point of view, combine with the Kyiv Patriarchate into a Ukrainian autocephalous Church, Kirill would lose much of his power, influence, and income. Indeed, without the Ukrainian parishes now under his control, the Moscow Patriarch would be reduced to almost half of its current size in terms of bishoprics and parishes, and Kirill's credibility in the Kremlin as someone who could promote the Center's interests in non-Russian countries would largely evaporate. Thus, his influence over the UOC MP remains but is not actively made public, especially amidst the worsening crisis.

When debating the election of a new UOC MP leader in the future, Professor Yurash is sure that the model of pro-Ukraine development will be on the agenda, but at the same time, he expresses doubt that such a model might win. He reminded me that the position of Metropolitan Onuphrios, who leads the UOC MP today, is assigned by the Synod that elected him. So, if the Synod is pro-Russia, as it appears to be today, it will elect a pro-Russia candidate. He believes that some transitional personality most suitable for the hierarchy, who is able to gain support from both Ukrainians and Russians, is likely to be elected. Based on his understanding of the Church's tradition and prospective candidates, it is likely that Metropolitan Antony will be elected primate. Antony is currently Chancellor of the UOC MP.

MEETING WITH FORMER CANADA-UKRAINE PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAM INTERNS – KYIV

Late on January 20, I met with former interns from the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Program (CUPP), all of whom could comment on the situation in their homeland more generally. In particular, I met with former interns Uirk Kushnir, Stacy Tsarkova, Andrii Sorohan, Oleh Malskiy and Yaroslav Udovenko, each of them worked in Ottawa at different times. Over the course of the past 18 years, I have had the honour of hosting interns from this programme in my office, helping the young emissaries expand their horizons and learn the dynamics of Canadian-style democracy and social value, which has made a valuable impact in Ukraine, as we have seen in recent months.



Established in 1990, CUPP is the first and longest-standing non-governmental organization (NGO) that has aimed to assist Ukraine, and has done so uninterrupted since 1991. Since then, over 800 interns and 200 CUPP scholars have benefitted from their Canadian experiences, and the Canadian House of Commons has served as an incubator for training a new generation of Ukrainian leaders.

In November 2013, CUPP alumni were among the leaders and organizers of pro-European integration, and what followed with the Revolution of Dignity or EuroMaidan. I was in Kyiv when this happened, and delivered a speech to 400,000 at Maidan Square. During this mission, I was helped and guided by a former CUPP intern Andrii Sorohan. His assistance was essential and much appreciated. As an example of this assistance, when I was asked to speak on stage I reviewed my speaking notes with Andrii to be sure that I was speaking with clarity and precision. I was careful to make sure that my speech would be easily and appropriately translated. The message I gave, though an interpreter, was as follows:

People of Ukraine, you are citizens of a great and independent country with a fantastic future! A future achieved if unfettered (uncontrolled) by external influences.

You have many friends around the world who stand together with you. In Ottawa. In Edmonton. And here in Independence Square. We stand with you for what is right, in the face of what is wrong. We support you this day and always, to democratically and peacefully put forth your demands that your true destiny be fulfilled.

We stand with you for wholesome economic and civil trade engagement. Not just with the East. Not just with the West.

*But with the world as truly a nation of the world.
Slava Ukraine!*

I then was assisted by yet another intern, Solomiya Borshosh, who helped arrange for and was interpreter during a half-hour interview with talk show Hromadske TV. The bonds of friendship that the Parliament of Canada has made with Ukraine through CUPP is mutually valuable, especially in these troubled times.

MEETING WITH GRAND MUFTI OF UKRAINE – KYIV

In Kyiv, on January 21, I met with Sheik Akhmed Tamim, the Grand Mufti of Ukraine. During my May 2014 visit to the Kherson area, I had been impressed at the insights offered by Imam Kazim. Of course, Muslim leaders have a keen interest in proposals to unite the Orthodox Churches of Ukraine, which would certainly have implications for the adherents of minority religions such as Islam. The Muslim community also sees great value in a stable Ukraine, enough to appreciate the value of a recognized Ukraine Patriarchate.



In many ways, Sheik Tamim sees the unrest in Ukraine as being as much a religious conflict as a political one, with the two main Orthodox Churches being aligned for the most part with pro-Russia or pro-Western sentiments. While there have been suggestions that foreign fighters have joined the conflict in Ukraine, especially from places such as Chechnya and other disputed former-Soviet areas, Ukraine's Muslim leaders have called for peace and strongly urged young Muslims to stay in their own countries rather than add to the unnecessary violence in Ukraine.

Sheik Tamim is a member of the Kyiv Council of Churches and an advocate of dialogue between Orthodox denominations and religions in Ukraine. He stated that a large part of the problem for religions in Russia is attributed the absence of access to balanced news-media and sources of minority religious information in Russia. Russia's government has prohibited the importing of outside literature in an attempt to generate a strong and resilient, albeit isolated, position and identity for Russia. The control of Russia's media by the central government is well known. Unfortunately, this means that

the public's understanding of current affairs in Russia is becoming less worldly and increasingly exclusive. In an attempt to back social democracy and freedom in Russia, Sheik Tamim and the Muslim community have been attempting to send literature to the Muslim community there in an effort to keep the population informed of the larger Muslim community's efforts and work. Hopefully by doing this, he stated, some degree of peaceful coexistence and justice will eventually form.

MEETING WITH THE GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION – KYIV



Next, on January 21, I met with the Honourable Viktor Chumak. He is a Deputy (Member of Parliament) in the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) and the Chair of the Ukrainian chapter of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).

Mr. Chumak was very supportive about the efforts of uniting the three branches of Orthodoxy in Ukraine. He stated that much of Russia's propaganda message in Ukraine is promulgated through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) and that a truly independent Church would be good for Ukraine. One of his primary focuses is analyzing areas under heavy influence from Russia. Currently, he agrees that much of Moscow's propaganda enters Ukrainian channels through the UOC MP, and that this Church is used for advancing Russia's political interests.

He was especially supportive towards the ideas of a resolution on church unity to be presented to political and ecclesiastical bodies for their support. He agrees that Orthodoxy in Ukraine must come together until a national Kyivan-Rus' Church is recognized. Mr. Chumak stated that he has been in regular communication with Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). I explained that if organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (of which Canada is presently not a member, but should be), OSCE, Orthodox Synods in Canada and the USA, Parliament of Canada and the Verkhovna Rada endorsed the concept, that would show Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and his council that the idea has broad popular support. He really liked the idea, calling it 'brilliant' and offered his help.

Mr. Chumak also commented on my some 80 meetings, as have many others. He stated that while there have been efforts in the past to unify the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine, no has worked on such an international scale in the pursuit of such ends, such as I am doing today. He was greatly impressed with my plan.

MEETING WITH PRESIDENT VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO – KYIV

On the afternoon of January 21, I had the honour of meeting with Ukraine's Orange Revolution hero and former President, Viktor Yushchenko (2004-2010). One of the things President Yushchenko is remembered for is his extensive efforts to establish a national image separate from Russia. This included an attempt in 2008 to unite the Ukrainian Orthodoxies under Patriarch Filaret, of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) who is currently not recognized by either Patriarch Kirill of Moscow or Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. While President Yushchenko is pro-Western, his successor and Orange Revolution rival, pro-Russia President Viktor Yanukovich reversed much of the cultural and religious progress made under President Yushchenko. President Yushchenko has become an elder statesman in Ukrainian politics and is completely convinced of the immediate need for Orthodox Church unity under a new administration distinct from Moscow's influence.



Throughout his political career, President Yushchenko has remained at odds with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, while expressing concern that the West was not listening close enough to President Putin's comments. For instance, President Yanukovich brings up the President of Russia's oft-quoted phrase that 'the greatest tragedy of the 20th century was the collapse of the Soviet Union.' He believes that President Putin will not rest until he regains control and influence over former Soviet countries, and many other countries through the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR MP), also known as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA MP)

After his 2004 electoral victory, Patriarch Filaret of the UOC KP welcomed the election of President Viktor Yushchenko, saying that the election had been 'a triumph of good over evil.' Patriarch Filaret said that through the Yushchenko victory, he said, 'we have gained the right to democracy and freedom, to spiritual self-expression.' During the 2004 Ukrainian presidential campaign, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow

Patriarchate (UOC MP) supported Viktor Yanukovych, prompting some Orthodox laymen to complain that their Church leaders had allowed partisan politics to corrupt their faith. Patriarch Filaret praised those laymen, saying that they 'stood up as one for their constitutional rights, including the right to free and fair presidential elections and democracy.'

President Yushchenko has, for many years, encouraged the creation of a united national Orthodox Church in Ukraine. He understands that religion and identity are entwined in both Russia and Ukraine, and that much of the message of Russia's civil authorities is conveyed through the close relationship between President Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) under Patriarch Kirill (who also presides over the UOC MP through the precedence of the ROC MP).

President Yushchenko emphatically stated that the most important issue for the Ukrainian government is the establishment of a recognized Kyiv-based and unified Orthodox Church. He was so interested in my suggestion and draft resolution that he had the interpreter read each word of the proposed resolution, ending with comments and his declaration of total support for the concept. The former-President made the observation that the proposed working resolution I drafted might not be best to begin in 988, but, rather, in 1686 when a Kyivan Patriarchy was formally proposed to the Ecumenical Patriarch. Subsequently the Orthodox Church in Ukraine lost its direct lineage to the Ecumenical Patriarch and fell under the ROC MP and the Moscow Patriarchate, only to be followed by a period of repression and Russification under the Tsar. The 700 year old relationship with Constantinople ended.

President Yushchenko said that Moscow believes that a recognized independent Church in Ukraine would be 10 times worse for Russia than Ukraine joining NATO, and that he understands that the question of Orthodox unity should be the primary objective of the government of Ukraine. Its cultural and spiritual implications would deal a damaging blow to Russia's influence in the country. After many meetings with the primates of both the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) and the UOC KP, Metropolitan Mefodiy and Patriarch Filaret, it is considered that unity between the two is possible, and that a new Autocephalous Church recognized by Constantinople would be led by Patriarch Filaret.

Certainly, it would be difficult to consolidate the three Churches under a single entity, but it is not impossible. Most likely, the unifying of the UOC KP and the UAOC EP under a recognized entity would draw most UOC MP parishioners, but still leave a much smaller and much less significant UOC MP Church. Between the UOC KP, 950 parishes, and the UAOC EP, 460 parishes, alone, the two – if unified – could greatly diminish Moscow's influence in Ukraine. Behind this effort are both Patriarch Filaret and Metropolitan Mefodiy.

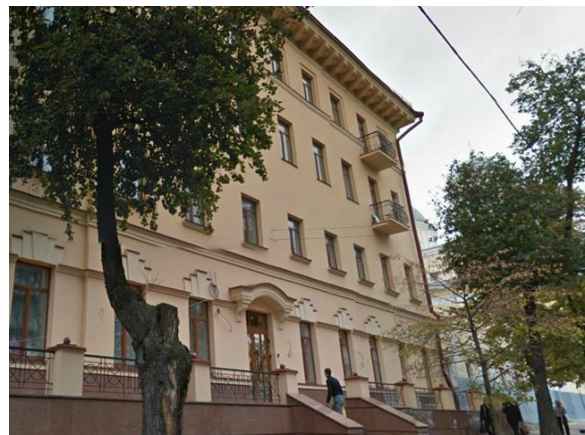
He sees a national Orthodox Church as the key to a cohesive and free Ukrainian national identity, one intrinsically linked to the conversion of Kyivan-Rus' in 988 and the

Patriarchal proposal of 1686. He was very supportive of my initiative and has asked of we can meet again for further discussion on the topic.

Note: Still, as the only modern Western-style leader in Ukrainian history, President Viktor Yushchenko remains fiercely pro-Ukrainian, something that is clear not only from his words but by the decoration of his office suite in central Kiev. It reflects his love of Ukrainian history - filled with pastoral landscapes, paintings of farms kids with chickens, and portraits of the 19th century poet Taras Shevchenko, whose work is considered the foundation of the Ukrainian language.

MEETING AT CANADIAN EMBASSY IN UKRAINE, EMBASSY ROUNDTABLE – KYIV

On January 21st, I met with Canadian Ambassador Roman Waschuk; Bohdan Yaremenko, Chairman of Maidan of Foreign Affairs; Maksim Vasin, Institute of Religious Freedom; Anwar Derkach, EspressoTV reporter; and Victor Yelensky, Member of Parliament and Deputy Chair of the Committee on Culture and Spirituality. Yelensky is also head of the Committee on Religious Freedom. We discussed Russia's influence and its divide and conquer tactic in Ukraine. The general understanding is that



Russia's President Vladimir Putin is using force and propaganda as a strong-armed approach to implement control by Russia in the vacuum of outside military intervention to help Ukraine. This method is proving effective and is continuing unabated.

There are over 9,000 Russia's troops and 500 tanks, heavy artillery and armoured personnel carriers in eastern Ukraine as of January 21, 2015, but they are not the only force in the region.¹³⁷ At the heart of an independence movement tearing Ukraine apart are members of the Russian Orthodox Army (or 'Orthodox Army'), the breakaway region's unofficial shock troops.¹³⁸ Civilians are killed daily amidst pro-Russia and pro-Ukraine fighting. Unidentified attackers have staged bombings in cities outside the main combat zone, raising the prospect that a new, broader campaign of civilian terror is under way. In one instance, while I was in Kharkiv (Ukraine's second-largest city), thirteen people were injured in a January 19, bomb attack. Moscow is financially supporting military, contracted soldiers from Russia, pro-Russia and pro-Ukraine militias, and the so-called 'Orthodox Army'. Moscow is also sowing doubts among the

local citizenry about the ability of the Ukrainian authorities to protect them. Russia is using all possible means to destabilize Ukraine.

Moscow labelling an otherwise unidentifiable group as the 'Russian Orthodox Army' not only signifies that the crisis is an ongoing geo-political struggle, but a battle for Orthodoxy as well. Religious freedoms are being affected, even though Chapter Two Articles 17 and 19 of the *Constitution of the Russian Federation* protect religious rights and freedoms.¹³⁹ In eastern Ukraine, Protestants, Catholics, Orthodox, Muslims, and Jews are not treated as equals and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) reigns supreme as the quasi-official Church in the rebel held region. Any gains that the Ukrainian military makes, President Putin responds by pouring more volunteer soldiers and massive amounts of arms and armour across the border until pro-Russia rebels reassume control of the territory. Putin does not want Western intervention in the form of military aid, weapons, or otherwise.

After our meeting concluded, I asked Ambassador Waschuk, before departing, what his comments and thoughts were on this meeting. He commented that he was pleasantly surprised at the unanimous support for my efforts and encouraged me to continue. Of course, the main purpose of my visit was to speak with a wide variety of interests in Ukraine in regards to my proposal to encourage the unity and Ecumenical Patriarchal recognition of a historic Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox Church for Ukraine. I detailed my thoughts and asked each person that I met with for their comments and criticisms, if they had any at all. Remarkably, the discussions I had in some 80 meetings were favourable and very encouraging.

MEETING WITH THE CANADIAN CONSUL - ISTANBUL



Upon my arrival to Istanbul (Constantinople) on January 22, I met with Canadian Consul Andrew Smith. Consul Smith is a tenured diplomat with the Canadian Foreign Service, previously serving in China, Tokyo, and Manila as Trade Commissioner. He also holds the distinguished status of being Canada's first Consul General in Istanbul. Meeting with him was very helpful and furthered my understanding of Turkey's relationship with NATO and Russia during the ongoing crisis, as well as Canada's official stance. His assistance, along with that of Ambassador John Holmes and his staff in Ankara, in arranging an interpreter and driver was essential to the success of my mission.

We began by discussing Turkey's place in current affairs, as Moscow is seeking closer ties with Turkey, a country holding a prominent position within NATO due to its strategic

location and partnerships. Although Turkey is a European Union (EU) accession country, it is not a full member and therefore does not fall within the remit of the West's economic sanctions against Russia. As a result, the economic relationship between Russia and Turkey, primarily through trade, has flourished.¹⁴⁰ In fact, Russia and Turkey are set to increase their trade from the current \$33 billion to \$100 billion by 2020. Indeed, Putin is seeking closer ties with Turkey in order to dilute the effects of the EU, American, and Canadian sanctions against his country.¹⁴¹

Because of Turkey's growing isolation from the EU, after its membership bid was recently rejected, relations between the country and Russia are becoming stronger. While Turkey is a member of NATO, and has been since 1952, in light of recent trade opportunities, it is slowly gravitating eastward. Of course, NATO does not – or at least has not – impose sanctions, only its member states do. Turkey has no legal or treaty obligation to oblige, and because of Russia's hard-hit energy sector, Turkey is profiting from Western sanctions on Russia through supplying Russia with what it cannot ascertain. Turkey's second largest trading partner is now Russia, and the two countries plan to construct a cross-border oil pipeline.¹⁴²

Geographically strategic and the home to the Ecumenical Patriarch, weakened relations with the West and stronger relations with Russia threaten relations with Turkey and worsen the geopolitical balance in the region.

MEETING WITH THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH – ISTANBUL

On January 22, I met with His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Rum Patrikhanesi, for one hour, to discuss the circumstances surrounding Orthodoxy in Ukraine. Following our meeting I was invited to lunch with him and his Bishops. My two-and-a-half hours with His All-Holiness had been arranged after several personal meetings with Metropolitan Soterios in Toronto and Metropolitan Demetrios in New York City.



I informed His All-Holiness that I met with Daniel Bilak upon landing in Kyiv on January 21st. Mr. Bilak informed me of his support for my project and offered to provide any assistance that he could. Patriarch Bartholomew confirmed his working relationship with Mr. Bilak, and noted that he would be a valuable resource and team member going forward.

As a proponent of pan-Orthodox unity, he was open to proposals that might facilitate Orthodox unification in Ukraine, bringing the people under the transnational jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. By doing so, the Orthodox Church in Ukraine would receive greater agency and representation both domestically and in world affairs. Unfortunately, the power and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) prevents this from happening today. This hindrance is complicated by the somewhat acrimonious relations between the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates over the title of 'first among equals'.

Patriarch Bartholomew firmly suggested that no formal proposal or plan for Orthodox unity in Ukraine should be brought forth to Constantinople until after the 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council or Synaxis. Doing so could risk the displeasure of Moscow Patriarch Kirill of the ROC MP, and those Church leaders under him to not attend, thus jeopardizing the agenda and legitimacy of the meeting itself.

The ROC MP's influence in Ukraine, through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), has been diminished as increasing numbers of Orthodox (Moscow Patriarchate) adherents are transferring to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). However, the UOC KP, headed by Patriarch Filaret, is deemed to be uncanonical by both Moscow and Constantinople – for purely political reasons.

It is important, His All-Holiness emphasized, that levels of support be gauged and consensus be acquired before unity is actually approached. Most notably, this can be done through establishing dialogue with Church members, political, and community leaders worldwide. The idea of setting up a working group or forum was highlighted as a possibility as a means to establish a plan, something that I am actively working on today.

His All-Holiness did explain, however, that in western Ukraine there might be a way to bring Orthodox Ukrainians under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In 1924, when Poland was granted full political autonomy after the First World War, the Polish Orthodox Church was formed. Originally established to cater to the small percentage of Ukrainian, Polish, and Belarusian Orthodox in the country's east, the jurisdiction of this Church could be expanded to include those in Western-Ukraine. This move would be highly strategic as only one autocephalous Church can exist in each state. Because Ukraine already has an autocephalous Church – the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) – under Metropolitan Mefodiy, it is impossible to install another See in Ukraine. The aim, overall, would be to amalgamate all of Ukraine's Orthodox Churches to create an institution exempt from intrusive outside influence. Utilizing the Polish Orthodox Church is just one possible issue of consideration.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's tenure has been characterized by inter-Orthodox co-operation and inter-religious dialogue. His efforts to promote religious freedom and

human rights, his initiatives to advance religious tolerance among the world's religions, as evidenced by Pope Francis' recent visit to Constantinople, together with his work toward international peace and environmental protection, have justly placed him at the forefront of global visionaries, peacemakers, and bridge-builders.

We exchanged gifts and wished each other well, saying that we must meet again soon.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is the foremost and oldest ecclesiastical centre of the Orthodox Church worldwide, tracing its history to the Day of Pentecost and the early Christian communities founded by the Apostles of Jesus Christ. According to tradition, the 'First-Called' of these Apostles, Andrew, preached the Gospel around Asia Minor, the Black Sea, Thrace and Achaia, where he was martyred. In 36 AD, he founded the Orthodox Church on the shores of the Bosphorus in the city known then as Byzantium, later Constantinople (today Istanbul).

The title 'Ecumenical Patriarch' dates to the sixth century and historically belongs to the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome. As holder of this position, in accordance with tradition Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew occupies the First Throne of the worldwide Orthodox Christian Church, presiding in historical honor and fraternal spirit as 'first among equals' of all Orthodox Primates. These include the ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, as well as the more recent Patriarchates of Moscow, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia. Beyond these, the Ecumenical Patriarch has the historical and theological responsibility to initiate and coordinate common activity among the Orthodox Churches throughout the world. Transcending national and ethnic borders, the Ecumenical Patriarch is spiritual leader to 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. Moreover, he is responsible for convening pan-Orthodox councils or meetings, facilitating inter-church and inter-faith dialogues, while serving as the focal point and primary spokesman for Orthodox Church unity.

MEETING WITH TATAR COMMUNITY LEADER - ISTANBUL

Later on January 22, I joined Mr. Celal Icten, a leader of Turkey's Tatar community, in discussing the crisis in Ukraine and Turkey's relations with Russia.

He was very appreciative of my visit, particularly so when I referred to my meetings in Ottawa with Ukrainian Tatar Member of Parliament Mustafa Dzhemilev, and with Tatar community leader and businessman Ibrahim Surrymansv in



Kherson.

Mr. Icten represents the interests of Crimean Tatars, a historically repressed group, especially in the modern period, by the Russian state (in its many forms). In 1993, he became President of the Crimean Turks Association, and in 2000, in Ankara, he founded the Crimean Foundation in Ankara, which works to enhance recognition of the Crimean Tatar nation and national identity.

Crimea's status has always been a matter of debate. Prince Vladimir of Kyiv, who introduced Orthodoxy to Eastern Europe, was baptized into the Orthodox faith at Korsun in Crimea. This spiritual event is a central component of Pan-Slavism. Since the Soviet era, the appropriation of Kyivan-Rus' has also been a topic of contention in Ukrainophile vs. Russophile schools of historiography and thought, especially today, after the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 2014. Crimea, home to the Crimean Tatar ethnic group, is an important area within historic Kyivan-Rus'.

The Crimean Tatars, Mr. Icten explained, are a Turkic ethnic group of the Muslim faith that formed between the 13th and 17th centuries through a process of cultural transmission and amalgamation amongst the resident Turkic tribes. Crimean Tatars constituted the majority of Crimea's population from the time of its ethnogenesis (the process of creating an ethnicity) until mid-19th century, and the largest ethnic population until the end of 19th century. It is important that they are recognized as a distinct ethnic group and nation.

Following the liberation of Crimea in 1944, the USSR State Defense Committee ordered the deportation of the Tatar population from Crimea for cooperating with and supporting the Germans (and not the Soviets) during the Second World War. Included in the deportation to remote Soviet territories were the families of Crimean Tatars who actually served and continued serving in the Soviet Red Army. They were removed in trains and boxcars to Central Asia, primarily to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, though a large portion of the Crimean diaspora remains in Turkey and Kazakhstan today. Starting in 1967, some Tatars were allowed to return to Crimea, and, in 1989, the state Duma of the USSR under General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, condemned the removal of Crimean Tatars under Stalin from their motherland as inhumane and lawless. The reason Stalin did so, however, was to punish Tatars and create a uniformly Slavic demographic in the historic lands of Kyivan-Rus'. After all, Stalin was the first leader of Russia to fully conquer the entire historic region (ironically he was Georgian).

There is fear today that the pan-Slavic ambitions of Russia's President Vladimir Putin will institute similar treatment on the Crimean Tatar population. Today, Crimean Tatars constitute approximately 12 percent of the Crimean population.

With a large portion of Crimean Tatars, maintaining strong links to their homeland in Ukraine, residing in Turkey, it was pertinent that Mr. Icten and I discussed the strengthening of ties between Turkey and Russia. Currently, 245,000 Tatars live in Crimea, 188,772 in Uzbekistan, and upwards of three million live in Turkey.¹⁴³

Traditionally, Turkey has aligned itself with Western powers. During socio-political turmoil and economic hardship in 1960, when American aid provided through the Marshall Plan was running out and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was planning a visit to Moscow in hopes of establishing alternative lines of credit, a *coup d'état* took place under Colonel Alparslan Turkes. Turkey had been a member of NATO for eight years at this point, and continued to retain strong American relations thereafter.

Today, however, Turkey's pro-Western stance seems to be weakening. Its European Union bid is uncertain, and strengthening ties with Russia harbours economic benefit. Turkey, by not supporting western countries sanctions on Russia, is profiting greatly by selling Russia all the sanctioned goods they need.

The legacy of the 1960 coup, which aimed to protect democracy and national interests, within the contemporary global situation Turkey, it seems, has ceased to continue today. Tatars in Crimea are repressed by Russian occupiers, and Turkey's commitment to the Crimean Tatar population within its borders – by way of representative democracy – is ignored.

Indeed, when Russia's forces entered Ukraine on February 28, 2014, Tatar political representation began to break down. Ethnic-Russian attitudes on the peninsula were heavily Russo-centric, which resulted in many instances of violence and repression. The Tatar population boycotted the 2014 referendum on independence out of protest to the occupation. Many fled before the area was completely annexed for personal security reasons.

Under Ukrainian rule, religious and ethnic pluralism was real. After the beginning of the Russia's incursion, many Tatars joined the Ukrainian military, to counter Russian cultural and ethnic limitation, Mr. Icten stated.

Just as President Putin is seeking strengthened trade and political relations with Turkey, Russia's government is also looking to control natural resources (oil and gas) in areas of Crimea with high Tatar populations.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BAHA'I COMMUNITY OF TURKEY – ISTANBUL



Late on January 22, I met with Ms. Suzan Karaman and Mr. Farzad Kuchani, Secretary General of the Baha'i community in Turkey. The Baha'i was the world's fastest growing religion between 1910 and 2010 (on average),¹⁴⁴ and, by 2007, it was the second fastest growing religion by percentage (1.7 percent).¹⁴⁵ Baha'i is also one of the most persecuted spiritual movements. It is a monotheistic religion that emphasizes the spiritual unity of all humankind and is based on three core principles: the unity of God,

that there is only one God who is the source of all creation; the unity of religion, that all major religions have the same spiritual source and come from the same God; and the unity of humanity, that all humans have been created equal and that diversity of race and culture are seen as worthy of appreciation and acceptance. Because of the religion's predisposition towards unity, I believe, there can be much to learn from the Baha'i in preparing for Orthodox unity in Ukraine.

We discussed the virtue of religious unity as it benefits society as a whole. Applicable to Ukraine, they stated that, tragically, organized religion, whose very *raison d'être* entails service to the cause of brotherhood and peace, behaves all too frequently as one of the most formidable obstacles. Organized religion has long lent its credibility to fanaticism. It is clear, from the Baha'i perspective, that, 'Other segments of society embrace the implications of the oneness of humankind, not only as the inevitable next step in the advancement of civilization, but as the fulfilment of lesser identities of every kind that our race brings to this critical moment in our collective history.'¹⁴⁶

What is needed, after the unity of Orthodoxy takes place in Ukraine, is a secular constitution and a fully sovereign state without outside influence from states like Russia. In doing so, the individual rights and freedoms of Ukrainians – Orthodox and otherwise – will be protected and no single group will be given greater political or social authority in state affairs. It will also eliminate favouritism on the part of the state, as seen with President Yanukovich, and nepotism. Such an arrangement will also ensure increased dialogue between religious and spiritual groups, so as to protect liberty. Ukrainian Orthodoxy itself, unified under a single entity, must also be recognized by the Church in Constantinople, thus limiting Russian political influence in Ukrainian religion and politics.

MEETING WITH CHIEF RABBI OF TURKEY – ISTANBUL

I met with the Chief Rabbi of Turkey, Rav Isak Heleva, for a discussion on religious unity and inclusivity on January 23. Upon being appointed Chief Rabbi in 2003, Rav Isak Haleva assumed a 500-year-old position, one that dates back to when Jews fleeing the Spanish Inquisition were welcomed by the Ottoman Sultan. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire, though going through many distinct periods of rule, was generally pluralistic. Although, like Europe during the medieval period, Renaissance, and Modern era, Turkey did have a social hierarchy, one that placed Muslims, Jews, and Christians (in descending order) at different levels. Chief Rabbi Heleva's main message was that all religions have one common denominator. Each rely on their own interpretation of 'righteous' and 'good' to move forward. Dialogue and discussion would expand this peacefulness within a constructive contact-zone for the betterment of society as a whole.



This philosophy is not flexible, though, in many cases, politicians use religion for their own interests. From this, conflict ensues; something that the Baha'i community pointed out in a previous meeting. Instances of this can be seen between Israel and Palestine, and in many historical cases such as the Crimean War (geo-political and religious, 1853-1856). When speaking of Ukraine, both pro-Russia and pro-Ukrainian sides associate themselves with different religious organizations, which are then applied to other socio-political facets, like nationality.

In Turkey, the Jewish community numbers 25,000 in a country of 77 million, and while anti-Semitism is well-known and constantly addressed, anti-Semitism continues. However, because anti-Semitism is present in Turkey, and because the state allocates significant resources to curtail the problem, community and religious growth has taken place. There are 19 new synagogues since Chief Rabbi Heleva took up his position in 2003. While there still anti-Semitic articles published and sermons preached in Turkey, the self-declared secular government has done a great deal to curtail violence against minorities.

In fact, just as outside forces are disturbing the peace inside of Ukraine, the radicals from outside Turkey has been the main propagator of terrorist acts inside the country's borders. In 1986, 22 people were killed in a terrorist attack at the Neve Shalom Synagogue in Istanbul. The attack was attributed to the Palestinian militant Abu Nidal.¹⁴⁷ In 2003, the same synagogue was hit by one of four car bombs, seeing 24 people dead (six Jewish). Even though the Great Eastern Islamic Raiders' Front, a local Turkish militant group, claimed responsibility, police and the Israeli government attribute the violence to an international terror group due to the sophistication of the explosives used.¹⁴⁸ External organizations active in Turkey, inciting violence, are attempting to

manufacture discord and confusion. Attacks are almost always accompanied by propaganda. This is only one parallel, Rabbi Heleva noted, 'We are all vulnerable.'

In Ukraine, the religious leaders must continue to come together to achieve some form of unity. This does not pertain solely to Orthodox leaders, but also leaders of minority religions in the country. Dialogue should be inclusive and reinforce pluralism.

MEETING WITH PROFESSOR DR. ATILLA SANDIKLI, PRESIDENT BILGESAM (THINK-TANK) – ISTANBUL



Next on January 23, I was told by Turkish think tank Bilgesam: Centre for Strategic Studies, that I was the first Canadian to speak with Dr. Atilla Sandikli, President of the organization and Associate Professor of Political Sciences at Haliç Üniversitesi. Many Americans and representatives from other European and Asian states have met and discussed Russian relations with him, but no Canadians. According to Dr. Sandikli, Russia's aggressive push for an increased sphere of influence is meant to consolidate

Russian influence in nearby states, and reinforce its superiority in the region. This applies to both Turkey, Dr. Sandikli's homeland, and Ukraine. Unifying the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine he agrees would limit Moscow's power and cause it to work with other regional authorities, cultural or otherwise, such as Constantinople.

This proposed 'zone of influence' composed of former Soviet states would be a buffer between the west and Russia. Creating and solidifying such a zone would enable Moscow to deal with internal unrest without the use of mass force through a policy of internal containment. The Chechen War (1785-Present), for example, without the safety/buffer zone, necessitated the use of brute force on the part of Moscow to stabilize the situation to Russia's benefit, including the securing of regional oil interests, military maneuvers and use of military force, as well as building up security assets in the area to prevent future crises. During the Chechen War there was fear that Russia's loss of the region's oil interests would cause the Russian Federation to dissolve. Oil has benefitted Russia in the past, strengthening its central position as a preeminent transcontinental power. During the current Ukrainian crisis, Russia's strengthening ties with resource rich Turkey are necessary to strengthening Moscow's position diplomatically, economically, and militaristically.

Turkey currently supplies Russia with sanctioned goods, like food (seasonal vegetables, meat, and meat products), and agricultural supplies and implements. If NATO would impose sanctions on Russia, bound by treaty, Turkey would have to respect them. Turkey is not a member of the European Union and has to develop its own relations, including free trade, with outside states (including the European Union countries). Dr. Sandikli stated that should Turkey-European Union membership talks resume, the European Union would look more positively on Turkey and the country would begin to act as if it were already a member.

From the end of the Cold War to the current Ukraine crisis (1991-2013), Moscow's relations with the West have been amicable, which has proved beneficial for Russia as its influence silently expanded. Russia has maintained both contemporary political and economic relations with Western countries, which has worked to Russia's benefit as this has proved to deepen Russia's Asian relationship. Dr. Sandikli called this the 'Eurasian Strategy', a term not unknown in North America among political scientists. It has involved the creation of an economic alliance among various independent states, formally called the Eurasian Economic Community.

I asked what Russia fears? To this, Dr. Sandikli responded, 'outside organization'. One example being a union between the burgeoning powers of Pakistan and India, which together - traditionally regional foes - could challenge the forming Russian dominance in central Asia. Russia is trying to bring countries closer together in an irreversible manner. Indeed, Russia has begun to exert political pressure, and sometimes instigate internal revolt and violence in order to deter Western alignment. Ukraine and Georgia, both of which made an attempt at closer relations with the West, (NATO), have had problems with Russia. Georgia tried to join NATO (2005-2008) and ended up in open war. It now contains two *de facto* independent regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which gained limited international recognition after the 2008 Russo-Georgian War. Georgia and much of the international community currently consider the regions to be part of Georgia's sovereign territory under Russian military occupation.

Russia's tactical and military success in Georgia, disregarded by Western countries, encouraged Russia's expansion into Ukraine. When the Ukraine crisis began with the EuroMaidan in autumn 2013, Ukraine was in a precarious position with pro-European and pro-Russia factions advocating for their positions. Either of these could characterize the country's future. Russia then directly interfered in the country's domestic affairs. It placed sanctions on the country when it appeared that the pro-European side was winning the *quote-on-quote* 'public debate'. Pro-European forces replaced the pro-Russia's President, Viktor Yanukovich, creating tension with Russia and the new government moved to align itself with the European Union.

Dr. Sandikli explained that Russia's annexation of Crimea, in May 2014, was viewed by Russia as militarily vital and important for security. The West did not consider the strategic value of the region at all, and still does not; hence, the lack of action. Russia anticipated that the West's response would only come in the form of sanctions and political rhetoric; that there would be no military confrontation. The takeover, albeit

successful, did not shake Kyiv's pro-European leanings. Russia soon provoked unrest in the east. In the oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk, Russia supported and aided rebel extremists with military assistance.

The West soon forgot about Crimea. Now with the West's economic sanctions and low oil prices, Russia is facing its own problems. However, some say that there are historical reasons as to why Crimea should remain under Russia's control, dating back to 1954 and the transfer of the region to Ukraine under then-Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Russia simply views Crimea as a strategic military platform, ignoring Tatar origins and treating the Tatar population badly, both historically and even today.

In the past, Russia utilized three motives justifying expansion: the creation of a Slavic people's community, the protection of Orthodoxy (a divine mission, i.e. the Crimean War from 1853-6), and a show of military readiness to support political policy. Overall, Moscow and the leader of the ROC MP, Patriarch Kirill, compete with Constantinople for the title of 'first among equals'. Concerning the situation in Ukraine, Russia is using its authority in Orthodoxy for political and strategic gain, both at home in Russia and in the larger Russian-aligned spiritual community.

If Ukraine's Orthodoxy comes together, other regional Orthodox Churches might leave Moscow's orbit and begin cooperation with Constantinople. The total jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch might increase to more than 170 million.

What should be done? The West needs to ensure that Turkey remains a political and economic ally. In response to growing Russia-Turkey relations, the US and European countries have sent strategic researchers, professors, congressional experts, ministers, and others in an attempt to strengthen ties.

Dr. Sandikl feels that in the past few years the West has declined as an international force. Politics, in Russia, the United States, and in the West have become more authoritarian. More and more is being asked of President Putin and Russia's central government. In 2010, Turkey's membership talks with the European Union cooled, perhaps triggered by renewed Islamophobia. Former-French President, Nicholas Sarkozy, sees Turkey as being outside of Europe and the European Union, despite a portion of the country clearly lying inside continental Europe's boundaries. Islamists are being accused of being terrorists. I mentioned that in Ukraine, the bombing of polling stations by Christians were seen not as acts of terror, but as acts of extreme radicalism. In Kharkiv, a separatist extremist bombed a popular spot killing five and seriously injuring two others. He was not viewed as a terrorist. Only Muslims are seen as terrorists these days, at least locally. When, Dr. Sandikl asked, when was the last time a Turkish Muslim attacked a Western country? He said that everyone must condemn the criminal element, not the religion.

MEETING WITH ARMENIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - ISTANBUL

On January 24, before concluding my visit to Istanbul, I met with the acting-Patriarch of the Armenian Orthodox Church, Aram Atesyan. He acquired this position when Patriarch Mesrop Mutafyan fell seriously ill. I opened the meeting by presenting His Holiness with a silver coin from the Royal Canadian Mint as I had done with others, and I began by discussing my efforts to encourage Orthodox unity in Ukraine and welcomed his perspective on the issue. He emphasized that history is a large ocean that is difficult to understand, rife with a myriad interpretations of the past and a multiplicity of perspectives examining them. When it comes to Orthodoxy in Ukraine, however, he agrees, like many others, that unity is necessary in order to establish true national self-determination.



Patriarch Atesyan explained that the Armenian Orthodox Church was established in 301, fifteen years before Emperor Constantine made Constantinople the Second-Rome, in 316, and the Holy See there was established. The Armenian Orthodox Church is considered one of the ancient Sees and does not look directly to Patriarch Bartholomew.

The Armenian Orthodox Church is the central Church of the Armenian population in Turkey, a nation that was drastically reduced in size during the Armenian Genocide (1915-1923). In fact, in 2010, Patriarch Atesyan conducted the first religious mass since the atrocities.

When discussing Orthodoxy in Ukraine, Patriarch Atesyan noted that since Orthodoxy was established in Kyivan Eastern Europe in 988, the Orthodox Church in Ukraine has reported to both the Ecumenical Patriarch (988-1686) and the Moscow Patriarch (1686-Present [under the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate or UOC MP]). While the majority of Russians belong to the Moscow Patriarchate, a minority does not. And, the worsening situation in Ukraine has forced many Russian-speaking Ukrainians away from their 'natural' Church. As long as the seat of Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) remains in Ukraine, where it can foster national growth, the Church can continue to expand. In the long run, so long as geopolitics does not prevent the natural growth of the UOC KP, unity might not be necessary. That, however, seems unlikely.

His Holiness Atesyan was insistent that Orthodox unity should be pursued in Ukraine in order to facilitate a coming together of the community and strongly encouraged my efforts to date. He did not see it taking the form of co-communion, but more an agreement to respect the traditions of all Churches that join the union.

MEETINGS AFTER RETURN

MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY – OTTAWA

On February 5, following my return to Ottawa, I met with the new Turkish Ambassador to Canada, Selcuk Unal. We engaged in a comprehensive discussion in which we covered numerous topics, including the impact of political Islamophobia, the invigorated Russian-Turkish relationship, NATO's sanctions against Russia, and the situation in Ukraine. With much debate in Parliament surrounding ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), also known as ISIS, naturally a great number of concerns have been brought forth concerning Turkey both geopolitically and economically, in relation to the Middle East and Russia.

Turkey is a transnational country of 77 million people, located in both Asia and Europe. Because of its valuable tactical position, Turkey has often found itself involved in Western politics. After participating with UN forces in Korea in 1952, and, in 1954, it gained North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership. In the post-Cold War world, Turkey's geostrategic importance lies with its proximity to the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Balkans. Its geographic relation and cultural connection to Ukraine is also of significant importance.



We began our discussion by talking about my recent trip to Ukraine and Turkey to examine the possibility of bringing the Orthodoxies together in Ukraine and form an autonomous and recognized Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Ambassador agreed that Moscow is sending money and supplies to pro-Russia forces in Ukraine and utilizing the influences of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). This, he stated, was a serious problem during the crisis in Crimea.

Ambassador Unal noted that the conflict in Ukraine and Crimea are issues of concern for Turkey, which has supported the Ukrainian people and government from the beginning. While some political leaders in North America and Europe are aware of the importance the situation, most, he contended, are not aware that Russia has effectively altered the balance of power. He is concerned that no one is talking about Crimea anymore. There is, instead, a focus on the war in eastern Ukraine. Apparently, European Union (EU) and NATO countries have adopted the policy stating that the Russian Bear will *only* need to be stopped if it arrives at their borders; let them have Ukraine in the meantime. However, Russia has no intention of limiting its conquest to only a small region of eastern Ukraine; it will keep sending in more and more resources and gaining territory as much as they can before the West develops the backbone to stop them.

While controversy has been growing around Turkey's ignoring of EU and North American economic sanctions against Russia and profiting greatly from trade, the Ambassador emphasized that Turkey is making every effort (overt and covert) to aid and cooperate with Ukraine. Because Turkey is not a member of the EU only NATO sanctions are applicable. Turkey cannot impose its own sanctions due to its energy dependence. Only two percent of Turkey's energy is produced locally, while 45 percent is imported from Russia. With a diversifying and dynamic economy, it is important to sustain relations between Turkey and Russia. Turkey is trying to remain economically neutral, according to the Ambassador.

We moved on to discuss the situation in Ukraine and the ties between the two countries, which the ambassador referred to as a cultural bridge. Turkey's population is four times that of Ukraine. As a result of the Tatar expulsion from Crimea in 1944, after the Second World War many Tatars relocated to Turkey, where the Tatar population was already actively pressing for political and cultural independence for Ukraine.

The issue of Ukraine is particularly worrisome for Turkey as Russia has trampled on other states, like Georgia, in the same fashion in recent years. Similar instances, he warned, will come about in states like Belarus, Moldova, and the breakaway state of Transnistria should NATO and other Western states do nothing.

Turkey feels that it is being isolated based on concerns of Islamophobia. Turkey, the Ambassador stated, is a tolerant, interdependent, multicultural, and secular state with a Muslim majority. It is firmly committed to a position that advocates for dialogue and international human rights progress, as exemplified through its establishing of the Alliance of Civilizations under the United Nations. The Alliance of Civilizations, jointly conducted with Spain, is an initiative that seeks to galvanize international action against extremism through the forging of international, intercultural, and interreligious dialogue and cooperation.

The idea behind these projects is to shed light on incorrect perceptions and combat ignorance as a means of facilitating cooperation and inter-communal peace. While there were few hiccups in Turkey in the 1990s following the end of the Cold War, the country serves as a model for democracy in a predominantly Muslim state. In regards to ISIL, Turkey's opinion of ISIL's version of Islam is a perversion and not a true representation of the values and lessons of Islamic teachings. While Turkey is a characteristically 'modern' state it is also Islamic and peaceful.

Our discussion was frank, open, and went well. Ambassador Unal graciously offered his personal assistance and the assistance of his office in helping to arrange future meetings in Istanbul when I visit again.

MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE, AND DEVELOPMENT – OTTAWA

On February 18, 2015, I met with Mr. Steven Vo, Parliamentary Liaison and Advisor with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD), specifically with the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In my Hill Office, we held a debriefing session in which myself, Mr. Steven Vo, and Ms. Ann Rosenthal of DFATD, and Mr. Grant Peters from my Ottawa office were present. We discussed my January trip to Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Istanbul. Mr. Vo has been my point of contact and chief advocate with the Minister's Office and Department throughout my Ukrainian Orthodoxy project and assisted by helping to keep my mission on-track. The debriefing session was productive and set the stage for the future of the project.

Beginning our meeting, we discussed my observations. Mr. Vo asked whether the link between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) and the Kremlin was visibly present during my meeting with Metropolitan Antony, to which I stated yes. I gathered from the language of the discussion that he wanted to talk about aspects of public perception and media which were decidedly from Moscow's perspective.

I explained that the people who are Russian speaking follow the Russian speaking news in Ukraine, which in the eastern part of the country is transmitted directly from Russia, where media is under heavy influence (or control) by Russia's government. *RT News* is one example. Metropolitan Antony, who is second on the Church hierarchy under Metropolitan Onuphrios, takes political direction from Moscow. It is at this high level that the linkage is most prominent, however, as further down the line clergy associate less with the political direction of their Church and more with community links and values, but the language from throughout Russia by way of TV and print media is consistent, in that Russia is biased and uses terms such as 'the Ukraine' and 'Uniates' in a derogatory manner.

When I was asked about the reaction of the other Orthodox Churches in Kyiv to my proposal, I noted that the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome) felt strongly towards unity. Metropolitan Mefodiy of the UAOC EP and Patriarch Filaret of the UOC KP actually worked towards formal unification in the past, as facilitated by former President Viktor Yushchenko, in 2008. Mefodiy stated that, today, he is still open to unification and that he would not seek a seat as head of a new unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Filaret is also receptive to the idea, and the whole project is supported by the pro-Ukrainian and nationalistic UGCC Rome. Both Father Michael Kit and Metropolitan Onuphrios, in Kharkiv, together stated that they are praying for unity of Ukraine's Orthodoxy.

We then discussed the resolution currently being drafted to be proposed to world bodies – like the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Inter-

Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, individual legislative assemblies, and individual Church bodies. I stated that the resolution would focus not on the creation of a new Church, but the repatriation and recognition of a historic Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate and Ukrainian Orthodox Church of 988 (and 1686). The resolution would be an expression by that entity for their membership's desire of religious freedoms to organize a recognized and united Church for Ukraine. Beyond that, I recognized that religious freedoms is the mandate of Canadian Ambassador for Religious freedoms, Dr. Andrew Bennett, and that I am pursuing this project not based on individual rights, as he does, but on the grounds of religious and national self-determination for Ukraine. Indeed, my project addresses issues that might overlap with the priorities of Dr. Bennett's office, in which case we would work together. Our end goals are similar but different.

Mr. Vo then asked what is next. I responded that I am finishing up a final draft of my report, which emphasizes history and historical-right. The next stage would be to arrange another round of meetings in Ukraine, with focus on the creation of a committee to work towards Orthodox Unity within Ukraine. This committee might include such persons as former-Presidents Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yushchenko, Canadian Ambassador Roman Waschuk, Orthodox representatives (from Church inter-relations branches), Andriy Yurash (Head of Department of Religious Matters, Ministry of Culture), Daniel Bilak, Viktor Yelensky (MP and Chair of Committee on Culture and Spirituality, Chair of Committee on Religious Freedom), and Political Scientists and Sociologists from Ukraine specializing in nationalism and movements in Ukraine. By convening a special committee in Kyiv with these individuals, a roadmap could be drawn and a plan organized. This plan would be actioned after the March 2016 Pan Orthodox Synaxis convened by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Constantinople.

I assured Mr. Vo that I do not mean to infringe upon, but hopefully to complement Dr. Bennett's mandate or work on the grounds of religious freedom and minority rights on an issue that I have been involved in form more than 10 years. I hope to continue consulting with Dr. Bennett and maintaining an excellent working relationship. One important element necessary to gain the confidence of the majority is that specific religious concerns are examined. This can readily be accomplished by continued dialogue with both clergy and their parishioners, which to date have been most welcomed.

MEETING WITH RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF CANADA - TORONTO



On February 20, I met with several founding members of the Russian Congress of Canada (RCC). We discussed violence against the various Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. Our meeting stemmed from concerns that the RCC, notably Father Vladimir Malchenko of Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church in Toronto – part of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) – had in regards to remarks that Canadian Ambassador for Religions Freedoms, Dr. Andrew Bennett, made in a *Globe and Mail* article, as well as his speech at the Conference of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Toronto last October. During our meeting, which lasted two-and-a-half hours I addressed the RCC's concerns and stated that I intended to continue to provide a degree of balance to information being conveyed.

They stated that Ambassador Bennett expressed that 'Russia's President Vladimir Putin is orchestrating the persecution of Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Muslim Tatars.' He stated that Russia's actions are systematic where pro-Russia militias are active, as well as in Crimea. 'Russia's forces have kidnapped priests, detained nuns, firebombed churches and intimidated worshippers.' He later called for dialogue and discussion. Dr. Bennett found an ally in Dr. Ihor Kutash, a Ukrainian Orthodox priest in Montreal who defended Dr. Bennett after Malchenko's accusations.¹⁴⁹

Dr. Kutash noted that Father Malchenko and the RCC only represent congregations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) when they refer to 'Ukrainians'. To be clear, the RCC discredited the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) in its open letter. Father Malchenko attacked Dr. Bennett and the Canadian for 'intervening in Orthodox Church affairs'. 'The defence of religious freedom is one of the prime values of Canadians and no other community except the Russian Congress (and Father Malchenko, on a personal level) seems to be alarmed at Dr. Bennett's criticism of Mr. Putin's policies,' Dr. Kutash wrote. He also accused the RCC of continuing the wave of disinformation emanating from Russia, while Dr. Bennett speaks of dialogue between religious communities.

Russia has implemented an aggressive public relations strategy (propaganda) in Ukraine and in the media – influencing public perception through agencies like *Russia Today (RT News)*, the *Moscow Times*, and, to a lesser degree, *Interfax-Russia*. A leaked government document (released February 25, 2015) outlining Russia's blueprint for a progressive annexation of Ukrainian territory tells us this.¹⁵⁰ This policy of propaganda has evaded our understanding of the current crisis. This was exemplified in the RCC's open letter and in our meeting.

The RCC stated,


It is the Ukrainian armed forces that have bombed churches in the Donbass Region of the Eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian army has systematically and indiscriminately shelled civilian areas of Lugansk and Donetsk. Thousands have been killed, and there has been widespread destruction of hospitals, schools, and churches. Twenty two churches in Donetsk and Lugansk have been destroyed by Ukrainian shelling. This is a matter of public record...The evidence also shows that it is local Ukrainian militias which are beating up priests, intimidating parishioners, and confiscating churches of the legitimate, canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, before handing over the buildings to the illegal, self-proclaimed 'Kyivan Patriarchate.' Three priests from the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church have been killed, and up to six clerics have faced abuse from Ukrainian forces. More have been detained and held illegally by the ultra-nationalist Right Sector Group. Ten churches of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church have been seized, and handed over to the Kyivan Patriarchate. Once again, this is a matter of public record.¹⁵¹

The RCC's open letter appeared to be one-sided, as was Ambassador Bennett's comments. I addressed this in our meeting, stating that crimes have been committed on both sides. Indeed, the West rarely reports the actions of groups like the Right Sektor, Svoboda Party, and the many Ukrainian militias. We cannot look exclusively at the actions of pro-Russia groups in Ukraine. We agreed that there needs to be more discussion and greater transparency. Ukraine is a war-zone and wars are never black-and-white phenomenon, but a haze of grey in which damage and crimes occur on both sides.

Father Malchenko provided me with a compendium of news clippings. One of these articles led me to a video showing the abuse of a UOC MP priest, Father Vladimir Navozenko, by Svoboda Party and Right Sektor members led by Radical Party leader and Member of Parliament, Oleh Lyashko. In the video, Father Vladimir was visibly assaulted, abused, and splashed with red paint feigning blood. During the incident, the assailant yelled, 'In your hands, the blood of my brothers!'¹⁵² Clearly, it was a disturbing image, but we cannot forget the crimes against the UOC KP Patriarchate and other religious groups like Jews and Tatars, as well as the UAOC EP and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome).

I offered to document events in which Churches were transferred from one administrative body to another, and subject to violence, vandalism, acts of aggression against clergy, and /or shelling. This list would rely on cross-checked references as much as possible and well as substantial audio and visual evidence.



RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF CANADA 
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March 05, 2015

To: Peter Goldring, MP

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0A6

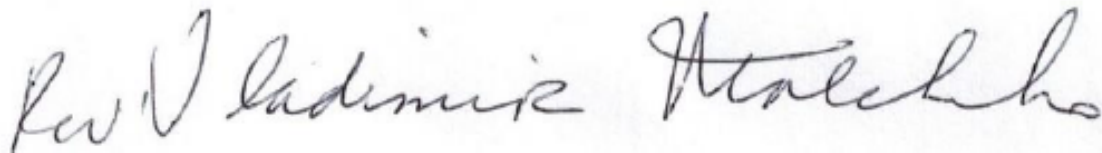
Dear Mr. Goldring,

I would like to thank you for your time to come and visit us on February 20th, 2015. We greatly appreciated the opportunity to voice our concerns about the situation of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine, and the treatment of its clergy. It is our hope that you will present the material we provided to the office of the Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedom in an objective manner. We also hope that this will initiate further discussion and investigation into this matter at the next meeting of the Parliamentary committee where these issues are discussed, perhaps with a representative who could confirm the evidence we have provided.

I would also like to point out that some statements made by the participants at the meeting do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all members of the Russian Congress of Canada but rather representative of the opinions existing within the Russian community at large in Canada.

We look forward to meeting you again and continuing our conversation, as we believe that the dialogue represents the only way forward. We entrust you with acting substantively on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Vladimir Malchenko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "V".

The Very Rev. Archpriest Vladimir Malchenko

Rector of Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

23 Henry Street, Toronto, Ontario

Dean of Eastern Canada

RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF CANADA – LETTER OF REPLY

Thursday, March 12, 2015

Father Vladimir Malchenko
Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral
10 Trinity Square
Toronto ON M5G 1B1

Dear Father Malchenko,

I would like to thank you and the founders of the Russian Congress of Canada for taking the time to meet with me on Friday, February 20. Having discussed the situation extensively while in Ukraine I have been made aware of the many narratives being circulated that propose two tales of events, I believe that our dialogue was beneficial and hopefully lead to a better mutual understanding by everyone.

Your concerns regarding Ambassador Andrew Bennett's statement from last October, which place blame on Russia for the violence and aggression in Ukraine, are noted. While his comments were one sided, they were fairly representative of reports of that one-sided view by many media outlets that are otherwise said to be reliable sources. Even the comment about Russia's President Vladimir Putin having a calculated plan was somewhat substantiated last week after the murder of opposition leader and former Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov and the report of a detailed plan.

Ambassador Bennett's comments, though, were devoid of reports of problems in Ukraine caused by Ukrainian nationalists for which there is considerable concern. One such instance was evidenced by the video of Father Vladimir Navozenko of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate being assaulted by the Right Sektor and Svoboda Party supporters, with Verkhovna Rada Deputy and leader of the Radical Party Oleh Lyashko in attendance. Surely, there are more cases like this. I thank you for providing the details for the reporting of the videos.

To respond to the first point in your open letter, certainly the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and mainline Protestant Churches, as well as the Moslem and Jewish faiths retain full equality under Chapter 2, Article 19 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Indeed, the document states: 'All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, linguistic or religious grounds shall be banned.' Minorities – religious or otherwise - enjoy the full protection of the law.

As well, the Constitution of Ukraine, Articles 21 to 50 specifically ensures the protection of individual rights, particularly in the case religions and religious assembly. I also point out that Articles 36 and 37 states that Ukrainian citizens have the right to freedom of association in political parties and public organisations for the exercise and protection of

their rights and freedoms. The bodies, it goes on to note, shall not have paramilitary formations. Obviously the rules have been in place in both Ukraine and Russia for some time. But, has there been the will by their governments to enforce these rules?

In Ukraine, as in the case of many armed struggles, much remains in a grey zone in which both sides – and various intermediaries – play different parts and incur damage of their own. However, it is impossible to believe that rebels in Ukraine could arm themselves as well as they are through local Ukrainian military sources without Russian help. In a relatively small part of Ukraine, the rebels are armed with far superior and more modern guns, heavy artillery, and tanks, and an endless supply of ammunition and have been successful in holding off Ukraine's entire army thus far. Logistically, this is just simply not possible to do without Russia's military help.

However, what would bring clarity to the issue would be if the Government of Canada, now supposedly doing satellite imaging, would release pictures of troop, tank, heavy equipment, and material convoys crossing the Russian border into Ukraine. Though, this would not account for the white aid convoys that could quite literally be carrying anything and everything.

After our meeting in Toronto, I met with Ambassador Bennett to discuss my recent Mission to Ukraine and Turkey in January, at which time our meeting the week prior was briefly discussed. He agreed that dialogue and discussion were essential to understanding the situation in Ukraine and appropriately responding. The Government of Canada is committed to helping the Ukrainian people – Ukrainian and Russian speaking – and is working to assist in any way it can.

At our meeting, I promised to seek to find evidence to illuminate fairly both sides of wrong-doings in Ukraine. I am compiling a working list of instances in which parishes have been reported as forcibly transferred from one Ukrainian Orthodox Church to another - whether the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), or Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) – or where they have been purposely attacked, vandalized, or cases where clergy have been assaulted or harassed. Shedding light on these events is the only responsible thing to do, as no religious leader – or a church, synagogue, temple, or mosque – should suffer threats or attacks by any organized groups or individuals.

In the course of compiling this list, as well as accessing general media reports, we must, of course, be cognitive of our sources. Russia's President Vladimir Putin's vast media and public-relations (propaganda) campaign extends beyond Russia and Ukraine, and into the materials we access daily here in North America. While Western media sometimes omits, or minimalizes, coverage of some serious situations, they, by and large, are more credible in their reporting than Moscow's state sponsored media. We must remain critical of what we read and endeavour to seek the truth.

The examples that you gave, particularly the video evidence showing an altercation between an Orthodox Priest, Father Vladimir Navozenko, and the Right Sektor, is hard to refute. This list will also prove beneficial, as I hope to visit some of these sites when I return to Ukraine to better understand the situation and report back to the Government of Canada. In time, I hope make this list and my corresponding findings public.

In addition, your offer of safe passage into rebel held areas is under serious consideration. As I detailed in the Executive Summary of my report, fair analysis of recent interdenominational conflicts, instances of violence, and vandalism is necessary in order to achieve a more focused understanding of events and to help pave the way towards Orthodox unity.

I encourage you to continue to help in any way possible. Should you know of further specific incidents, particularly backed up by video evidence, please forward them to peter.goldring.a2@parl.gc.ca and we will examine it for possible inclusion in our log.

Thank you again for helping me, and in turn, the Government of Canada to better understand the reality in troubled Ukraine.

Should you or the RCC wish for further dialogue, I will make an effort to be available at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Peter Goldring
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

INSTANCES OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINIAN CHURCHES

'In the villages, towns and cities of this land, the credibility of the various Churches has melted away, like snow in springtime. Whilst some clergymen try to preach peace and mercy, some bishops and priests choose instead to bless cannons and pray only for 'their' militias. Even families are sharply divided.'¹⁵³

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP)

- Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) Patriarch Kirill revealed that over 60 churches were damaged by heavy fighting in the Donetsk and Horlivka dioceses in Ukraine throughout 2014. (February 6, 2015)¹⁵⁴
- Patriarch Kirill said at least 15 of the 60 damaged Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) churches have been ruined completely, and he added that some churches were attacked during services, killing and injuring parishioners. According to the report, church leaders killed in the shelling included archpriest Pavel Zhuchenko, archpriest Vladimir Kreslyansky, and archpriest Georgy Nikishov. (February 6, 2015)¹⁵⁵
- Ukrainian nationalists seized the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (UOC MP) in Bolshaya Sevastyanovka in the Cherkassy region of Central Ukraine. (February 16, 2015)¹⁵⁶
- St. John Church (UOC MP) in the village of Demidovka, Rovno region, in western Ukraine was victim to vandalism. The vandals damaged a section of the church fence. (February 12, 2015)¹⁵⁷
- Eight UOC MP parishes in the Rovno region, in Western Ukraine, were robbed and several more seized by supporters of the self-proclaimed Kyiv Patriarchate. (February 12, 2015)¹⁵⁸
- Holy Trinity Temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC MP) in the village of Pasichna (Baryshivka district, Kyiv region – Boryspil diocese) – attempt to capture with alleged inciting by Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP). (September 13, 2014)¹⁵⁹
- Exaltation of the Holy Cross parish (UOC MP) in the village of Peregonivka, Golovanivskiy rayon, Kirovogradska oblast (Central Ukraine, below Kyiv)– attempted force conversion to UOC KP. (October 20, 2014)
- Since July, twelve UOC MP churches in the whole of Ukraine have been taken over and transferred to the UOC KP, with support from nationalist groups. (October 24, 2014)¹⁶⁰
- So far, three priests from the UOC MP have been killed and another three injured. Up to six clerics have faced abuse from Ukrainian forces. Some have been illegally detained and held by the ultra-nationalistic Right Sector group. (October 24, 2014)¹⁶¹
- There were attempts by representatives of the UOC KP to seize parishes in the Kiev, Lvov, Ternopol, Volyn and Rovno regions. 'By now, 14 parishes of our Church (UOC MP) have been seized. The situation in six other ones remains tense. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian laws regarding the UOC MP are normally being violated with tacit

approval, and sometimes even at the behest, of local authorities.’ (December 24, 2014)¹⁶²

- Militants of the Right Sector movement seized a church of the UOC MP in the Cherkasy region, in Central Ukraine (February 12, 2015).¹⁶³
- St. Paraskeva Cathedral in the village of Chudnitsa in Rovno Oblast, Western Ukraine – supposedly attacked by pro-Ukrainian men on the incitement of a UOC KP priest. ‘A group of men, some of whom were in a state of alcohol intoxication, started insulting parishioners, preventing them from performing a church prayer service, the UOC MP said. They beat up women who tried to bar entrance to the church, cut locks and seized the building.’ (March 6, 2015)¹⁶⁴
- On June 22, 2014 a large number of violent and armed men gathered near the wall of the Kyiv Caves Monastery (UOC MP). This looked like an attempt to capture the monastery. “With the grace of God and thanks to the professional actions of law enforcement officials the situation was resolved.” At about 12-noon, a few hundred young people under Ukrainian flags and banners featuring “Right sector” came from Arsenalna metro station and picketed the Kyiv Caves Monastery, where, according to their data, it was planned to hold action to establish the ‘Kyivan People's Republic’.¹⁶⁵
- Oleksandr Shevchenko, a clergyman of the UOC MP from the Donbas region, was abducted on March 9 by unidentified persons abducted a priest in Boryspil, Kyiv region.¹⁶⁶

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome)

- The Roman Catholic Church in Crimea, represented by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome) is facing closure should it fail to comply with religious regulations set by Russia, a Catholic news agency reports. (January 28, 2015)¹⁶⁷
- Some members of the UGCC Rome, which is popular in western Ukraine, are providing assistance to Ukrainian soldiers fighting in the largely Russian-speaking east. And many of the Moscow-tied Orthodox churches are helping the rebels.(February 2, 2015)¹⁶⁸
- The most active church in support of the social awakening was the UGCC Rome. The UOC KP was more reluctant to align itself with the protesters but eventually supported them firmly, offering them its St. Michael’s Monastery as a hospital and shelter for protesters seeking refuge from the riot police.(October 2014)¹⁶⁹
- On July 3, Donetsk militants took captive UGCC Rome priest Tykhon (Sergiy) Kulbaka. Prior to that, he repeatedly received threats, including his car being vandalized with graffiti of Nazi symbols. Finally, on July 14, the priest was released from captivity by the militants, but with compromised health.¹⁷⁰

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP)

- Armed men Sunday attacked a Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) in Crimea, beating up a priest and church-goers including a pregnant woman, the Kiev patriarchate said. Calling the attack ‘a planned action,’ the patriarchate said police who arrived at the scene three hours after the attack ‘took the

side of the assailants, explaining that the patriarchate of Kiev was carrying out anti-Russian activities in Crimea.' (June 6, 2014)¹⁷¹

- The UOC KP claims that some 30 parishes around the country have already converted from UOC MP to UOC KP. Yet, the UOC MP denies the trend and accuses opponents of seizing 14 parishes in Ukraine. They acknowledge that three parishes switched allegiance voluntarily. (January 23, 2015)¹⁷²
- All the clergy of the UOC KP were forced to take their families out of Crimea. Crimean Tatars have proposed to allow priests of the UOC KP [whose possessions in Crimea are reportedly seized by the ROC MP] to celebrate the liturgy in their mosques. Two priests have left Crimea; eleven others led by Archbishop Clement continue to carry out their service. (March 23, 2014)¹⁷³
 - o UOC KP clergy and the UOC KP Church has remained barred from Crimea, despite a large number of adherents residing on the peninsula.
- On July 3, 2014, Patriarch Filaret of the UOC-KP stated that in the Luhansk region 'worship services are not actually being held in our temples because the separatists-terrorists prohibit it.'¹⁷⁴
- Armed men threatened to execute UOC KP Bishop of Luhansk and Starobelsk, Afanasiy (Yavrovskiy). Later, militants forcibly expelled the Bishop of Luhansk and also tampered with the brakes of his car, obviously hoping to cause an accident leading to his death.¹⁷⁵
- On July 8, Donetsk terrorists kidnapped UOC KP Archpriest Juriy Ivanov. 'Earlier, separatists came to the priest's home and demanded that he request an urgent visit from the Archbishop of the Kyivan Patriarchate in Donetsk, Sergiy (Gorobtsov), apparently with the intent of additional abductions,' said UOC KP Archbishop, Yevstratiy (Zorya). On July 30, after three weeks of captivity, the priest was released and transported to a safe place.¹⁷⁶

Against Other Denominations

- In the east, rebels, fortified recently by an influx of weapons and soldiers from Russia, used their period in power here purging Slovyansk of rival Christian denominations. They seized the 'Good News Church', a large evangelical complex, moving in Russian icons and replacing Protestant services with Orthodox ones. They parked tanks in the center's gardens and, blessed by Russian Orthodox priests chanting prayers, began lobbing shells at Ukrainian forces outside town. (September 7, 2014)¹⁷⁷
- Pastor of the 'Assembly of God' Protestant Church reports about the kidnapping of two Protestant pastors, Valery Yakubenko and Oleksandr Khomchenko, by terrorists of the Donetsk People's Republic. (August 9, 2014)¹⁷⁸
- Father Sergei Kosyak from the 'Gospel Protestant Church' in Donetsk traditionally joins a 'prayer marathon' after Easter every year. When prayers were being said around a tent in central Donetsk on May 23, however, Fr Kosyak found himself confronted by 15 rebels.
 - o The self-declared Donetsk People's Republic, which controls this Ukrainian city and much of the surrounding region, proclaims Orthodoxy to be its official religion. Inside their occupied headquarters building, leaders of the pro-Russia rebellion display portraits of St Nicholas and the glittering iconography of their faith. But all other

Churches are viewed with deep suspicion. Having turned on journalists, trade unionists and anyone who favours a united Ukraine, the Donetsk People's Republic has found a new target in the form of priests who do not share its religion. (June 18, 2014)¹⁷⁹

- On June 8, 2014, during the Trinity Sunday holiday, gunmen under the command of Russia's Igor Girkin (Strelkov) kidnapped four members of the Transfiguration Evangelical Church in terrorist occupied Sloviansk, Donetsk Oblast.¹⁸⁰
- On June 14, 2014, in Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, pro-Russia terrorists tragically killed Sergiy Skorobahach, pastor of the Restoration Protestant Church and chairman for the City Council of Churches. According to local residents and media sources, the pastor's vehicle was shelled by Donetsk People's Republic militants.¹⁸¹
- On June 15, 2014, armed militants looted the premises of the New Generation Evangelical Church in Horlivka, Donetsk Oblast. They stole computers and other equipment from the office, as well as legal documents related to the church's charitable funds.¹⁸²

MEETING WITH DR. PETER GALADZA, ST. PAUL UNIVERSITY - OTTAWA



On March 24, I met with Dr. Peter Galadza of St. Paul University in Ottawa. There, Dr. Galadza is a Professor with the Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies. He is a former professor at Ukraine's L'viv University and a former advisor to Professor Paul Magocsi of the University of Toronto, when he was publishing his *Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture*. I met with Dr. Magocsi in December 2014 on similar grounds. Dr. Galadza and I discussed the prospect of Orthodoxy unity in Ukraine almost

immediately. He already knew of my work, as published in *Ukrainian News* and *New Pathway*, and sees my project as being of great benefit.

Dr. Galadza stated that meeting with people is of utmost importance. After viewing the list of meetings I have had in Canada, the United States, Ukraine, and Turkey, he noted that 'If you could get these people of so many different and conflicting backgrounds to sit in the same room to meet and shake hands, it would be a significant event.' He went on, identifying that anything more would be monumental.

He stated that there is a 'totem pole', or hierarchy, of sorts within Ukraine's Orthodox Churches, in an attempt to explain the reactions of the clergy I met with in Ukraine – their gifts and their entourages. The lower that ecclesia are down the hierarchy, the more welcoming they will be; but, at the same time, the more moral, honest, and true to their roots they will be as well. At the lower rungs, clergy will be more open to meet because the request to do so from anyone else is rare, especially in Ukraine. In the case of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (AUOC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), some Ukrainians will not even consider consultation or meetings. He emphasized that everything is politics, when it comes to the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine.

In Ukraine, when it comes to the politics of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), which falls under the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), we must consider the politics of Moscow and Constantinople. Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarchate does not have deep pockets or resources, and is restricted by domestic politics in Turkey. Meanwhile, as we see in eastern Ukraine today, the ROC MP (and some parts of the UOC MP) has been backed by the Kremlin and is supported by an aggressive state policy.

In order for Orthodox Unity in Ukraine to be achieved, what needs to be stressed, Dr. Galadza stated, is that according to canonical law Ukraine should have its own recognized autocephalous Church. Ukraine is sovereign, politically and culturally

distinct, has a distinct population, an independent economy, and its political jurisdiction is completely autonomous (at least after the abdication of former President Viktor Yushchenko in early 2014).

Placing emphasis on the political dynamic of the Ukrainian crisis, Dr. Galadza pointed out that there are two issues that I am currently addressing. One, is trying to assess what is really happening in Ukraine among the far-right and corruption; a prerequisite for moving towards Orthodox unity. And, two, is trying to foster social cohesion through Ukrainian Orthodoxy. He advised that while the two issues must be examined together, they must be kept separate when used to make my case, as emphasizing one over the other might detract from my aim and compromise the end results.

Indeed, Russia is violating international agreements and the sovereignty of Ukraine when it influences people in eastern Ukraine to rebel. Many of these rebels, or separatists, have been inspired by the ROC MP and Patriarch Kirill, who is in bed with Russia's President Vladimir Putin. Of course, as we know, Russia's troops and arms are present in the Donbas region, but it is the ideological influence being exerted by the ROC MP and Russia's propaganda that is, perhaps, one of the most worrying elements. Dr. Galadza stated that as responsible global citizens, Canadians must convey to Patriarch Kirill that people everywhere are watching and that everyone is aware of the 'sacred' ROC MP's involvement in the Ukrainian crisis as well as its political corruption. I could be the individual to convey this message during a meeting with Patriarch Kirill, he stated.

Upon explaining to Dr. Galadza my intention of establishing a working group in Kyiv, Ukraine to consider and study Orthodox unity in that country, he advised that I should not coordinate a joint committee with the heads of the individual Churches, but those immediately underneath them. Doing so, will detract from the backlash that will be experienced by the Primate of the UOC MP, UOC KP, and UAOC EP, and actually facilitate productive discussion. He noted that I should continue working with Daniel Bilak, as well as establish relations with Mykola Danylych (UOC MP), Archbishop Evstratil (UOC KP), Konstantine Sigov (UOC MP), and Cyril Hovorun (UOC MP). He also included the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Karen McBride of the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) in that list.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN WORLD CONGRESS AND THE WORLD FEDERATION OF UKRAINIAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION - TORONTO

On Friday, March 27, I met with Yuri Bilinsky of *New Pathway* and then with World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organization (WFUWO) President, Irene Sushko; United Nations Economic and Social Council representative for the group, Martha Kebalo; and, Executive Administrator for the Canadian branch of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC), Aleksandra Szubelak. Ms. Sushko served as President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) from 2004 to 2007, and, as of 2014, was named one of the top 25 influential women in Canada by the magazine *Women of Influence*.



The WFUWO, established in 1948 in Philadelphia, is now based in Toronto and unites 27 organizations from 17 countries on four continents. At its core, WFUWO supports the dignity and integrity of women in Ukraine and Ukrainian women in the diaspora by supporting international standards of human rights, and raising public awareness of problems and violations; maintaining Ukrainian language and culture; cultivating awareness of Ukrainian history, family and social traditions; as well as efforts that support modern Ukraine's development into an independent, stable democracy with respect for rule of law.

Ms. Sushko was intrigued with and supportive of my project. I explained to her that Orthodox unity in Ukraine not only protects Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian people, but it also looks after freedom of religion and provides an outlet for national reconciliation, strengthening Ukrainian unity and its national identity. I also told her of my 10 day mission to Ukraine in January, when I met with his All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, the late-Metropolitan Mefodiy of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP), Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), and Metropolitan Antony who is Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). Given her affinity towards and connection to Ukrainians and Ukrainian-Canadians, having advocated and lobbied on their behalf for decades, she lent her support for my initiative. Ms. Sushko stated that unity, in whatever manifestation, is necessary for forward, democratic, and culturally enriching progress. A unified religious administration to which the majority of Ukrainians adhere is one of the surest ways of achieving this, especially considering Orthodoxy holds a special place in Ukrainian and Slavic identity and nationalism.

The UWC is the international coordinating body for Ukrainian diaspora communities and represents over 20 million Ukrainians worldwide.

The UWC's main goals and objectives are to:

1. Represent the interests of Ukrainians in the diaspora.
2. Coordinate an international network of member organizations that support and promote the Ukrainian national identity, spirit, language, culture, and achievements of Ukrainians throughout the world.
3. Promote the civic development of Ukrainians in their countries of settlement, while fostering a positive attitude towards Ukrainians and the Ukrainian state.
4. Defend the rights of Ukrainians, independently of their place of residence in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The UWC works actively to address questions that define Ukrainian community life, something that I can associate with. Indeed, Ms. Szubelak was well aware of my Orange Revolution tour-of-duty in Ukraine, and many visits to Ukraine since. In addition to this, I explained that I have worked to promote Holodomor awareness, spoke on stage once again at EuroMaidan, and have been campaigning to help the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta (UCAMA). These are, of course, in addition to my work on Ukraine today, my activism surrounding the EuroMaidan, and my two most recent missions of 30 days in May 2014 and 10 days in January 2015.

We both believe that Orthodox unity is necessary in Ukraine, and a show among the diaspora is a strong symbol to bring together Ukrainians spiritually, culturally, and in regards to national identity. The founding of Orthodoxy in Eastern Europe is said to mark the birth of a cohesive Ukrainian nation. Ensuring Orthodox unity among Ukrainians – under one banner – would protect the integrity and life of a Ukrainian people for centuries to come.

Ms. Szubelak and I agreed that we share much common ground when it comes to our work in the Ukrainian community. Ms. Sushko expressed great interest in my project and requested that once my report is finished that she receive a copy. Ms. Szubelak also seems to be supportive of my Ukrainian Orthodox unity project.

MEETING WITH *NOW* MAGAZINE – TORONTO

On Wednesday, April 8, 2015, I spoke with Susan Cole, editor of *Now Magazine*, Toronto's weekly news and entertainment voice. On April 7, it was announced that Valentina Lisitsa, a world-renown Ukrainian pianist, would not play Rachmaninoff with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) on April 8 and 9 due to 'offensive' statements made on her Twitter account. Ms. Cole and I discussed her motives and the repercussions associated with her lewd and very controversial – albeit considered by some to be satirical – comments.



Ms. Cole found most worrisome Ms. Lisitsa's comments on Russia's annexation of Ukraine's east, but understands that the while the comment was only meant to garner attention for the 'atrocities' against the Russian speaking minority there, this is what sealed Ms. Lisitsa's fate. Ms. Cole notes that the Ukrainian pianist's mission is to shed light on the side not highlighted on, or even touched by Western media: the Russian (speaking and national) component in Ukraine. Her demeanor, unfortunately, might just be her undoing. Her stated support for Russia's annexation was only a means to lend public attention to not only the sufferings of Ukrainian-speakers but also Russian-speaking Ukrainians who have been repressed by invading forces, Ukrainian forces and militias, and by what she considers to be a corrupt bureaucratic administration.

Even Ms. Lisitsa's comments on Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk statement made on April 6, 2015, appear to be correct. He was quoted as saying, 'Killed by invaders and sponsored by subhumans.' These killers and sponsors he is referring to are Russians in both Ukraine and Russia. This was later corrected on April 21, 2015, as an apparent mistranslation. The script now reads 'Killed by invaders and sponsors by their inhumans.' Again, the language is take by some as offensive. Her comments do make the point that language is important for linguistic and cultural sensitivities of all concerned.

I stated that Ms. Lisitsa seems to have the right intentions but her rhetoric is over the top. When considering rational discourse, there needs to be more clarity and transparency when assessing the war/crisis in Ukraine, otherwise a sense of Russophobia might emerge. And, because the situation clearly indicates Russia's aggression, based on orders from Russia's President Vladimir Putin, the situation must not be confused on linguistic grounds. We need to understand what is really happening. It is our responsibility as social and aware citizens.

Ms. Cole expressed that she is not a free-speech absolutist and that in the past her support for publically mandated silencing (or movements to silence) certain groups has

caused her difficulty. Ms. Lisitsa's case should be no different. While the TSO, and those parties that lobbied the TSO to have her rejected, consider her statements and claims to be 'inciting hatred' or 'hate speech', Ms. Cole noted that this is hardly the case. However, here in Canada, Ms. Lisitsa's verbosity and language is more difficult to accept.



She is, after all, a member of a minority group fearing for the future of her people. Indeed, she is a Russian speaking Ukrainian national. As a public figure, by bringing forward her political opinions she must balance the ethnic difficulties she is attempting to expose and the biases of the diaspora, which, through Twitter, she did not do as effectively as hoped. Her Tweets, intended as impact statements, were received as outrageous by many of Toronto's Ukrainian community and thought provoking

by others who are concerned based on their ethnicity. Though protected by free-speech (hence her lack of official prosecution), she was publically scorned in the name of 'political correctness'.

Ms. Cole intimated that the controversy might extend further. There are whispers that the TSO was faced with a significant donor backlash for having Ms. Lisitsa on the billet. Many high profile and lucrative donors, part of a small but aggressive lobby, have threatened to cut-off funding should the pianist perform.

Twitter is no place for nuance, Ms. Cole stated. 'Only being able to use 140 characters is limiting, and one must make the biggest impact possible with such little space.' I have spent a considerable amount of time in Canada, the United States, and Ukraine speaking to Ukrainians of Russian linguistic background. I would like to speak with Ms. Lisitsa personally, to give her the opportunity to explain herself further, and to shed more light on the situation as it concerns Russian speaking Ukrainians. After all, my efforts have been directed towards seeking to establish a better understanding from all concerned with national unity efforts, when it comes to Ukraine.

Society will never learn if its critics are silenced. However, just as it is important for individuals to uphold their rights, not only for themselves but for the common good, they must also keep in mind that well-reasoned and strongly-delivered arguments are more powerful and effective than angry rhetoric.

MEETING WITH PROFESSOR LUCAN WAY, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - TORONTO



On Friday, April 17, I joined Dr. Lucan Way in his office at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto. We met to discuss a Ukraine's controversial Law No. 2558 'On condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist totalitarian regimes in Ukraine and banning the promotion of their symbols,' passed by Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk's government. These proposed laws, passed in the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) on April 9, when signed into being by President Petro

Poroshenko, will restrict historical memory in Ukraine and alienate the Russian speaking population. We agreed that while the law is thought to be necessary in order to fully-complete decommunization in the country – a process already completed in neighbouring Poland and the Baltic states – its timing, during the ongoing crisis, is inopportune and potentially problematic.

Dr. Way currently studies authoritarianism, democratization, and post-communist politics in Eastern Europe, notably in Ukraine. He is currently working on a book - *The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes* (with Steven Levitsky) – that explores why certain autocracies – such as the USSR, Cuba, Iran, North Korea – have been so durable in the face of extreme outside pressure, and examines the ways in which national and cultural origins in violent revolutionary struggle generate robust authoritarian institutions.

In his works and in our discussion, Dr. Way pointed out that in Ukraine rejection of autocracy and the phasing out of oligarchs in the country are found within the democratic or electoral cycle. Often, anticipation of such change is found far in advance. For instance, in 2004, political scientists like Dr. Way expected the Orange Revolution long before the corresponding and triggering election. The event was triggered after former President Leonid Kuchma's approval ratings dropped into the single digits, corruption became rampant, and the pure authority that the oligarchs had in the country became destructive.

During the Orange Revolution, President Kuchma supported Viktor Yanukovich, rallying his supporters behind the candidate and attracting those who did not favour dramatic change. Yanukovich did not win the contested election, although numbers indicate that he had, but wholesale voter-fraud was practiced, resulting in a failed election. President Kuchma was succeeded by President Viktor Yushchenko following the Orange Revolution and the latter's non-violent and anti-Kuchma 'Our Ukraine' campaign.

President Yushchenko was also burdened by the lack of authority and effective federalization of powers in the face of powerful oligarchs. In 2010, he was succeeded by

President Viktor Yanukovich, who, as was recently revealed, was notoriously corrupt and endorsed the power of the oligarchs. According to Dr. Way, 'While corruption in Ukraine became deeper and endemic during President Viktor Yushchenko's presidency, it has grown considerably worse under President Viktor Yanukovich.'

In the context of contemporary politics in Ukraine, Professor Way offered two possible conceptualizations of what an oligarch could be: (1) the 'warm fuzzy' view of oligarch as proto-bourgeoisie (meaning first among the bourgeoisie), and (2) an anti-democratic force. The proposed laws, he said, passed on April 9, were done so without debate and without amendment, contributing to the notion that the ruling elite under President Poroshenko are increasingly becoming like oligarchs. These individuals solely favour the Ukrainian-speaking population, given the government's majority stance as ardent nationalists.

Dr. Way pointed out that these laws should have been introduced at a later date. If that was the case, they might not have been so restrictive and would be better received by the Ukrainian population. Less of a demographic split in popularity among Ukrainian and Russian speakers would ensue. At the time of our meeting, and the nature in which the laws were passed – without debate or notice to elected representatives – it appeared that there would be no change for amendments to be proposed and voted on.

He stated that because militias are present in nearly every Oblast (province) serving as *ad hoc* police forces, due to a lack of faith in the corrupt and ill-trained/equipped Ukrainian military, these 'pro-Ukrainian' laws will cause greater rifts and increased tension between the Russian and Ukrainian populations. He sees a power vacuum forming in each region, and human rights abuses and war crime numbers going up as a power-struggle takes shape following the end of the Ukrainian-Russian struggle. He stated that the crisis will end, and because these laws *de facto* empower local authorities and oligarchs, these individuals will cause unrest and challenge the central government, placing great strain on democratic processes. Dr. Way predicted that in 2020 President Poroshenko will be voted out, receiving very little of the popular vote, and another regime will take over based on the platform of 'peace and prosperity', effectively altering the political status quo.

Note: As of April 23, 2015, the Ukrainian Rada passed a series of amendments on the laws. They were accepted by a vote margin of 233(Yeas) to 40 (Nays). 273 members were present out of a total 450 Rada Deputies. The governing coalition decided to amend the de-communization law in order to eliminate inconsistency and clarify the government's aims. Amendments concluded that the law will not be applied to cases when symbols are used on documents issued by national and local government agencies, schools, institutes, universities, organizations, institutions, enterprises before 1991. The ban will not be enforced when symbols are used in museums, exhibitions, on different media at libraries' funds, on originals of battle flags, on state awards, commemorative medals and other insignia, awarded to a person before 1991 and during the 1991-2015 years.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN EMBASSY - OTTAWA

On Wednesday, April 22, 2015, I met with the Ukrainian Chargé d’Affaires to Canada, Shevchenko Marko, and Ukrainian First Secretary, Nadiia Vozdigan, at the Ukrainian Embassy in Ottawa to discuss my ongoing Kyivan-Rus’ Orthodoxy project. In addition to this, we talked about the release of RADARSAT2 images, which are provided to the Ukrainian military by the Canadian government.



Regarding RADARSAT2, Canada’s earth observation satellite system, both Mr. Shevchenko and I agreed that people will want to see satellite imagery of Russia’s military in Ukraine. Publically accessible photo evidence will dispel Russia’s propaganda, which explicitly promotes the notion that Russia is remaining neutral on the Ukrainian crisis – providing no military provisions. Mr. Shevchenko noted that it will be difficult to break the power of Russia’s propaganda, especially in Ukraine’s east, as a

large portion of the Russian ethnic community believes what Russia’s government and the country’s news agencies are saying. There is currently considerable of proof that suggests otherwise, but this is justified by the notion that Russia is protecting ethnic-Russians in Ukraine, and that the Donbass region is no longer part of Ukraine. Russia’s propaganda is transforming the Ukrainian border into a shifting and moveable social construct. According to this premise, in the minds of pro-Russia supporters, there are no Russia’s-soldiers in Ukraine and Russia is not providing provisions or weapons to the conflict *in* Ukraine. There are, however, soldiers and military supplies from Russia in the disputed Donbass Republic.

Respectful of Ukrainian sovereignty, according to Google Earth imaging and reports released in 2013 and in 2014, Russia’s forces and weaponry have clearly made their way into Ukraine and are being used against the Ukrainian army (and local Ukrainian militias). This has been made public through several reports by Bellingcat, one of which can be found at the end of this report.

We then moved on to discuss my Kyivan-Rus’ Orthodoxy project, something I proposed to the Prime Minister over a year and a half ago. I explained to the Chargé that I am Russian Orthodox through marriage, to which he joked: ‘As Russian Orthodox you run the risk of having Moscow try to *protect* you.’ This was a direct reference to Russia’s presence in eastern Ukraine, where Russia’s weapons, pro-Russia rebels, and the Russia’s military are ‘protecting’ ethnic-Russians in Ukraine from Ukrainianization.

When we delved further into the subject at hand, the Chargé agreed that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) is acting as a catalyst for Russia’s influence in Ukraine. Though, we cannot generalize, rather, he noted that it is

only some of the UOC MP priests are involved in advancing Russia's interests in Ukraine. Russia's initial activities in Ukraine, around the time of EuroMaidan, took place in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. In 2013, a UOC MP priest was arrested for importing and distributing weapons, and promoting Russia's influence in Ukraine's east. He was a former Afghan veteran with strong links to Moscow. After 20 years as a cleric, he strengthened his show of loyalty to Russia by becoming a conduit for illicit trade into Ukraine. Ukrainian authorities arrested him and trailed him. The UOC MP continues this type of a relationship in Ukraine's east, at least among some of its priests, and at a more central level.

If a united Orthodox Church in Ukraine were to be pursued, Mr. Shevchenko noted. Uniting congregations from the UOC MP, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church (UAOC) will be difficult and must be based on consent. It is said that unity must be based on legal and democratic grounds. The congregations must choose through voting to join a unified church. People must be presented with the option to switch churches and cannot be forced to do so by external forces. Given the stance of pro-Ukrainian militias – like the Right Sektor, the Kyivan-Rus' Battalion, or the Azov Battalion – this cannot be guaranteed at this very moment. Great difficulty might ensue, based on the role that the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) plays in the Orthodox world. The ROC MP is the most influential church, and the fact that it is a purely Eastern European administration makes it even more powerful in Ukraine. Indeed, the majority of ROC MP parishes are concentrated in Ukraine. I explained, however, that because moving from one church to a new united and recognized Orthodox church would be based on consent, it is expected that possibly 50 to 70 percent of Ukrainians would move to a new Orthodox church.

The Chargé explained that the ROC MP's greatest source of revenue is Ukraine, through the UOC MP. In the ROC MP hierarchy, all funds collected by UOC MP parishes move up the ladder and are eventually aggregated in Moscow. Revenue is collected in the form of offerings, which he suggested were sizeable, given the high religious nature of Ukrainians (as opposed to people in Russia), as well as the link between Orthodoxy and the conversion of 988 and Ukrainian national identity. The two are intrinsically linked.

While the ROC MP generates revenue in Russia through the sale and control of oil resources, cigarettes, alcohol, and automobiles, it does not do this in Ukraine, Mr. Shevchenko stated. The reason for the ROC MP's involvement in these business fields is because in Russia the church is tax exempt, and has lower levels of church attendance – compared to Ukraine.

In Ukraine, churches do not receive money from the government. The construction and renovation of churches, it is suspected, is funded through special funding from the Russia's government and its oligarchs (e.g. politicians), and donations from Russia's businessmen who work in or have interests in Ukraine such as Konstantin Malfeev (considered the founder of the breakaway Donbass Republic) and Vadim Novinsky.

Both of these men present themselves as ‘Orthodox businessmen’ and both openly invest in church construction and renovation in Ukraine, as well as invest in the pro-Russia militias of eastern Ukraine.

The Chargé said that according to Orthodox tradition, the myth that surrounds the conversion of 988 suggests that Vladimir the Great chose Orthodoxy as a state religion because according to Orthodox tradition, the government is found above the church. In Catholicism, on the other hand, the church is above the government, and in Islam the church is the government. In Ukraine today, the Orthodox Church should not be controlled from the outside, he contended, but from within Ukraine so as to complement the government’s direction and abide by Ukrainian rule.

Mr. Shevchenko stated that the timing is right to pursue this project, and that I am correct in raising the issue through discussion. There is a large gulf between Ukrainian and Russian characteristics in Ukraine, more so than before EuroMaidan. It is most apparent today.

MEETING WITH DR. TARAS KUZIO – TORONTO

On Sunday, May 3, 2015, I met with Dr. Taras Kuzio in Toronto. We discussed the current crisis in Ukraine as it pertains to nationalism, the far-right, and encouraging Orthodox unity in Ukraine. Dr. Kuzio is a prolific scholar whose primary area of focus is nationalism in Ukraine, and his works, throughout the course of writing this report, have been instrumental. He pointed out, as I have been professing all along, that the Right Sektor is a real force and that it is not the Russian people who are to blame for the situation but the imperialist administration of President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

Dr. Kuzio is a Senior Research Associate with the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Alberta, Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto, and a Non-Resident Fellow at the Centre for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University. He is author and editor of many books and articles published in a wide range of academic journals on post-Soviet and Ukrainian politics, inter-national relations, and nationalism. Dr. Kuzio has published on topics such as the



Orange Revolution, the political boundaries of Eastern Europe (defining the region),

theories of nationalism, foreign and security policy in Ukraine, and Orthodox unity in Ukraine. Some of his most noted works include: *The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?*, *Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives on Nationalism, Ukraine - Crimea – Russia, Triangle of Conflict*, 'The Struggle to Establish the World's Largest Orthodox Church,' 'In search of unity and autocephaly: Ukraine's Orthodox Churches,' and *Politics & Society in Ukraine*.

We began by discussing Orthodoxy in Ukraine. He stated that of the 14,000 Orthodox parishes in Ukraine, 8,000 are administratively controlled by the Moscow Patriarchate. The remaining 6,000 are controlled by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). In the past year, these numbers have altered, as Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) parishes are gravitating towards either the UOC KP or the UAOC, changing banners amid political tumult. This poses a real political problem for Moscow, as the UOC MP is perhaps the largest Orthodox community in the world (without the UOC KP and UAOC), placing a huge power drain on the Moscow Patriarch. According to the Oxford University's Keston College, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) only controls 7,000 inside of the Russian Federation. The Moscow Patriarch, currently Kirill, is closely linked to the Russian government, and the Kremlin often uses the ROC MP to exert influence and power.

The combined total of nearly 15,000 ROC MP parishes within the former USSR (including Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine) substantiates the ROC MP's historical claim of leadership within the Orthodox world as the 'Third Rome', but not first among equals. The 'Second Rome' and first among equals of the Orthodox World is Constantinople (known by its Turkish name Istanbul). Ukraine, with its large Orthodox community, is key to the struggle between the ROC MP and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew, for leadership and influence over the world's Orthodox believers. The ROC MP needs to retain its influence and power in Ukraine in order for the status quo to be sustained. This status quo also grants Moscow nominal authority over most of Eastern Europe.

Of particular concern to the ROC MP is Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's June 2000 declaration that Ukraine lies within Constantinople's canonical territory. That claim, which is backed by the Greek, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Georgian Orthodox Churches, is based on Constantinople's non-recognition of the forcible transfer of the Kyiv Orthodox Metropolitanate to Moscow in 1686, making the ROC MP's control over Ukraine uncanonical in the eyes of Constantinople. In 1924, Ecumenical Patriarch Grygorii revived the Kyiv Metropolitanate by creating the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church (PAOC) at a time when 6 million Ukrainians lived in Poland. The number of Ukrainians in Poland has since dropped to around 51,000 since the beginning of the Second World War. The UOC-KP and UAOC claim to be canonical descendants of both the Kyiv Metropolitanate and the PAOC and thus back Constantinople's jurisdiction over Ukraine.

Dr. Kuzio stated that the ROC MP rejects any claims by Constantinople over Ukraine and describes its two rivals in Ukraine – UOC KP and UAOC - as ‘schismatics’ who are dividing the population, watering-down Moscow’s influence, and the UOC MP demands that the congregants of these two administrations return to the only ‘canonical’ Church – the UOC MP. As in Belarus, the ROC MP in Ukraine has allies among the left and pro-Slavic union political groups, and, ironically, its most ardent supporter is the Communist Party of Ukraine (which has since become nominally outlawed by the April 9, 2015, Law No. 2558 ‘On condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist totalitarian regimes in Ukraine and banning the promotion of their symbols’. In August 2000, the ROC MP refused to even to discuss a request by President Leonid Kuchma, the metropolitan, and all but two of the bishops of the ROC in Ukraine to grant it autonomy. Since then, many politicians and experts (ecclesiastical, sociological, and cultural) have attempted to guarantee autocephalous status from the Ecumenical Patriarch for the UOC KP, including former-President Viktor Yushchenko.

He noted that with the crisis and the need for brotherhood, today, conditions for the unity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches under the Ecumenical Patriarch are ideal.

There is a nationalist element on the rise and the Right Sektor is very real, Dr. Kuzio said. However, contrary to what many news agencies and pundits are publically advertising, the Right Sektor is mainly and heavily engaged on the eastern Ukrainian front in the Donbass region, and exerts no real (read extensive) threat to stability or society. In many cases, the Right Sektor even works alongside police units throughout Ukraine, many of which are deemed to be weak and ineffective by those they protect. Indeed, they are one of the most engaged paramilitary organizations fighting alongside the Ukrainian military. The Right Sektor actually might be the most-engaged and is, perhaps, the only major organization making any progress. Dr. Kuzio commented that this is most likely why Josef Zissels, leader of Ukraine’s Jewish community, has been a quiet supporter of Right Sektor and has not publically condemned them, despite rising instances of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is a long-standing structural and systemic problem that can be dealt with once stability is achieved and the war with Russia has finally ended.

In concluding, Dr. Kuzio stated that he most assuredly wants to assist with my project, and will provide a list of names of people to talk to when furthering my cause. He also advised that I visit Ukraine in September, the same month that he will be there; we can then conduct joint meetings and discussions.

MEETING WITH DR. DAVID R. MARPLES, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA – EDMONTON

On May 8, 2015, I met with Dr. David R. Marples, a distinguished professor with the Department of History and Classics at the University of Alberta. We discussed Ukraine's controversial Law No. 2558 'On condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist totalitarian regimes in Ukraine and banning the promotion of their symbols.' This law was passed by Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk's government in the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) on April 9. He stated that, overall, it politicizes history in Ukraine and unnecessarily alienates many Ukrainians in an attempt to complete decommunization in the country 24 years after the fall of the Soviet Union.



Dr. Marples holds a PhD in Economic and Social History from the University of Sheffield, and has been employed at the University of Alberta since 1991, where he has been awarded several awards including the University Cup, the university's highest honor. His areas of expertise and research include historical memory and social history in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. At the time of our meeting, his ongoing project centred on the topic of 'History, Memory, and World War II in Belarus', assuming the same title as well. Dr. Marples is currently Chair of the Department of History and Classics as well as a member of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS).

Dr. Marples is author of fifteen single-authored books and two edited books on topics ranging from 20th Century Russia, Stalinism, contemporary Belarus, and contemporary Ukraine. His recent books include *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008) and *The Lukashenka Phenomenon* (Trondheim, Norway, 2007).

Dr. Marples, along with 59 other scholars, signed an open letter appealing to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko not to sign the law into being. They argued that the content and spirit of the legislation contradicts the right to freedom of speech, one of the most fundamental political freedoms. They stated that the adoption of these laws 'would raise serious questions about Ukraine's commitment to the principles of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, along with a number of treaties and solemn declarations adopted since Ukraine regained its independence in 1991...Not least of all, the laws would provide comfort and support to those who seek to enfeeble and divide Ukraine.'

Dr. Marples also expressed concern about the nationalistic Right Sektor and Svoboda Party, although he is cognizant of the fact that the Right Sektor is commendably carrying a great amount of the fight in eastern Ukraine on its back. Law No. 2558 will embolden nationalist fervour and exacerbate tensions between such Ukrainian groups and the Russian speaking population. The Law, he stated, can be considered an

attempt to lessen Russian language protection in Ukraine as well as undermining their cultural foundation and identity.

We also discussed my work with the divided Ukrainian Orthodox community. He found my work promoting Orthodox unity very interesting and agreed with my concerns. He then offered names of community figures and colleagues to meet with to discuss the matter further.

He feels that there are problems on both sides of the Ukrainian issue and that our Prime Minister and the Canadian government are not being informed as to the dynamics of the politics of Ukraine that affect strive. This, he says, can be seen in the government's approach to the situation and their only siding with the Ukrainian government and mostly the 'Ukrainian-speaking people'. He went on to offer to appear before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, should Ukraine be debated again. Dr. Marples has since submitted a request to appear before the Foreign Affairs Committee (which can be found on page ____).

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Below is a copy of the open letter signed by 60 international scholars appealing to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko not give assent to Law No. 2558.

The letter is followed by a joint request to appear before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, submitted by Dr. David Marples, Dr. Lucan Way, and Dr. Dominique Arel.

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LETTER TO UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT PETRO POROSHENKO

To the President of Ukraine, Petro O. Poroshenko, and to the Chairman of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada, Volodymyr B. Hroysman:

We, the undersigned, appeal to you not to sign into law the draft laws (no. 2538-1 and 2558) adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on April 9, 2015. As scholars and experts long committed to Ukraine's regeneration and freedom, we regard these laws with the deepest foreboding. Their content and spirit contradicts one of the most fundamental political rights: the right to freedom of speech. Their adoption would raise serious questions about Ukraine's commitment to the principles of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, along with a number of treaties and solemn declarations adopted since Ukraine regained its independence in 1991. Their impact on Ukraine's image and reputation in Europe and North America would be profound. Not least of all, the laws would provide comfort and support to those who seek to enfeeble and divide Ukraine.

We also are troubled by the fact that the laws passed without serious debate, without dissenting votes and with large numbers of deputies declining to take part. In particular we are concerned about the following:

Concerning the inclusion of groups such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as “fighters for Ukrainian independence”: Article 6 of this law makes it a criminal offense to deny the legitimacy of “the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the 20th century” and public denial of the same is to be regarded as an insult to the memory of the fighters. Thus questioning this claim, and implicitly questioning anything such groups did, is being made a criminal offense.

Law 2558, the ban on propaganda of “Communist and National Socialist Regimes” makes it a criminal offense to deny, “including in the media, the criminal character of the communist totalitarian regime of 1917-1991 in Ukraine.”

The potential consequences of both these laws are disturbing. Not only would it be a crime to question the legitimacy of an organization (UPA) that slaughtered tens of thousands of Poles in one of the most heinous acts of ethnic cleansing in the history of Ukraine, but also it would exempt from criticism the OUN, one of the most extreme political groups in Western Ukraine between the wars, and one which collaborated with Nazi Germany at the outset of the Soviet invasion in 1941. It also took part in anti-Jewish pogroms in Ukraine and, in the case of the Melnyk faction, remained allied with the occupation regime throughout the war.

However noble the intent, the wholesale condemnation of the entire Soviet period as one of occupation of Ukraine will have unjust and incongruous consequences. Anyone calling attention to the development of Ukrainian culture and language in the 1920s could find himself or herself condemned. The same applies to those who regard the Gorbachev period as a progressive period of change to the benefit of Ukrainian civil society, informal groups, and political parties, including the Movement for Perestroika (Rukh).

Over the past 15 years, Vladimir Putin’s Russia has invested enormous resources in the politicization of history. It would be ruinous if Ukraine went down the same road, however partially or tentatively. Any legal or ‘administrative’ distortion of history is an assault on the most basic purpose of scholarly inquiry: pursuit of truth. Any official attack on historical memory is unjust. Difficult and contentious issues must remain matters of debate. The 1.5 million Ukrainians who died fighting the Nazis in the Red Army are entitled to respect, as are those who fought the Red Army and NKVD. Those who regard victory over Nazi Germany as a pivotal historical event should neither feel intimidated nor excluded from the nation.

Since 1991, Ukraine has been a tolerant and inclusive state, a state (in the words of the Constitution) for ‘citizens of Ukraine of all nationalities’. If signed, the laws of April 9 will be a gift to those who wish to turn Ukraine against itself. They will alienate many Ukrainians who now find themselves under de facto occupation. They will divide and dishearten Ukraine’s friends. In short, they will damage Ukraine’s national security, and for this reason above all, we urge you to reject them.

Signatories (in alphabetical order):

- David Albanese, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Soviet and Russian History, Northeastern University, USA
- Tarik Cyril Amar, Assistant Professor of History, Columbia University, USA
- Dominique Arel, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa, Canada
- Eric Aunoble, Researcher and Senior Lecturer in Ukrainian History, Geneva University, Switzerland
- Martin Aust, Visiting Professor of History, University of Basel, Switzerland
- Mark R. Baker, Assistant Professor, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey
- Omer Bartov, John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of History and Professor of German Studies, Brown University, USA
- Harald Binder, Ph.D., Founding President, Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv, Ukraine
- Marko Bojunc, Director of the Ukraine Centre, London Metropolitan University, UK
- Uilleam Blacker, Lecturer in Comparative East European Culture, University College London, UK
- Jeffrey Burds, Associate Professor of Russian and Soviet History, Northeastern University, USA
- Marco Carynnyk, Independent Scholar, Toronto, Canada
- Heather J. Coleman, Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor, Department of History and Classics, University of Alberta, Canada
- Markian Dobczansky, Ph.D. candidate, Department of History, Stanford University, USA
- Sofia Dyak, Director, Centre for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv, Ukraine
- Maria Ferretti, Professor of Contemporary History, Università della Tuscia, Viterbo, Italia
- Evgeny Finkel, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, George Washington University, USA
- Rory Finin, University Senior Lecturer in Ukrainian Studies, University of Cambridge, UK
- Christopher Ford, Lecturer in Trade Union Education, WEA London, UK
- J. Arch Getty, Distinguished Professor of History University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), USA
- Christopher Gilley, Research Fellow, University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
- Frank Golczewski, Professor in the Program in History, University of Hamburg, Germany
- Mark von Hagen, Professor of History, School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies, Arizona State University, USA
- André Härtel, Lecturer in International Relations, Department of Political Science, University of Jena, Germany
- Guido Hausmann, Ludwig-Maximilian University, Munich, Germany
- John-Paul Himka, Professor Emeritus, Department of History & Classics, University of Alberta, Canada

- Adrian Ivakhiv, Professor of Environmental Thought and Culture, University of Vermont, USA
- Kerstin S. Jobst, Professor of East European History, University of Vienna, Austria
- Tom Junes, PhD (historian) - Imre Kertész Kolleg, Jena, Germany
- Andreas Kappeler, Professor Emeritus of History, University of Vienna, Austria
- Ivan Katchanovski, Adjunct Professor, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa, Canada
- Padraic Kenney, Professor of History, Indiana University, USA
- Olesya Khromeychuk, Teaching Fellow, University College London, UK
- Oleh Kotsyuba, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Harvard University, USA
- Matthew Kott, Researcher at Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Uppsala University, Sweden
- Mark Kramer, Program Director for Cold War Studies, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University, USA
- Nadiya Kravets, Postdoctoral Fellow, Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, USA
- Olga Kucherenko, Independent Scholar, Cambridge, UK
- John J. Kulczycki, Professor Emeritus, Department of History, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA
- Victor Hugo Lane, York College, City University of New York, USA
- Yurii Latysh, Taras Shevchenko National University, Kyiv, Ukraine
- David R. Marples, Distinguished University Professor, Department of History & Classics, University of Alberta, Canada
- Jared McBride, Visiting Assistant Professor of History, Columbia University, USA
- Brendan McGeever, Early Career Research Fellow, Birkbeck, University of London
- Javier Morales, Lecturer in International Relations, European University of Madrid, Spain
- Tanja Penter, Professor of Eastern European History, Heidelberg University, Germany
- Olena Petrenko, Ph.D. Student, Department of East European History, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany
- Simon Pirani, Senior Research Fellow, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, and Lecturer on Russian and Soviet History, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK
- Yuri Radchenko, Senior Lecturer, Kharkiv Collegium Institute of Oriental Studies and International Relations, and Director of Center for Inter-ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe, Kharkiv, Ukraine
- William Risch, Associate Professor of History, Georgia College, USA
- Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, Research Fellow, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
- Blair Ruble, Political Scientist, Washington, DC, USA
- Per Anders Rudling, Associate Professor of History, Lund University, Sweden

- Martin Schulze Wessel, Chair of Eastern European History, Ludwig-Maximilian University, Munich, Germany
- Steven Seegel, Associate Professor of History, University of Northern Colorado, USA
- Anton Shekhovtsov, Visiting Senior Fellow, Legatum Institute, London, UK
- James Sherr, Associate Fellow, Chatham House, London, UK
- Volodymyr Sklokin, Researcher, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe, Lviv, Ukraine
- Iryna Sklokina, Researcher, Center for Urban History of East-Central Europe, Lviv, Ukraine
- Yegor Stadny, Ph.D. Student, Department of History, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine
- Andreas Umland, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation, Kyiv, Ukraine
- Ricarda Vulpius, Research Fellow, Department for the History of East- and Southeastern Europe, Ludwig-Maximilian University, Munich, Germany
- Lucan Way, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Toronto, Canada
- Zenon Wasyliv, Professor of History, Ithaca College, USA
- Anna Veronika Wendland, Research Coordinator, The Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg, Germany
- Frank Wolff, Assistant Professor of History and Migration Studies, Osnabrück University, Germany
- Christine Worobec, Professor Emerita, Northern Illinois University, USA
- Serhy Yekelchik, Professor of Slavic Studies and History, University of Victoria, Canada
- Tanya Zaharchenko, Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for Historical Research, Higher School of Economics, Saint Petersburg, Russia
- Sergei Zhuk, Associate Professor of History, Ball State University, Indiana, USA



REQUEST TO APPEAR

PREMISE

The situation in Ukraine has become increasingly complex. In the east, a frozen conflict approaches. The Russian Federation has expressed a wish that the Donbas—now partly occupied by separatist forces that control the two major cities Donetsk and Luhansk—remain part of a federated Ukraine with extensive powers and autonomy. At the same time it supports the two breakaway governments, the so-called Donetsk National Republic (DNR) and Luhansk National Republic (LNR) with some 12,000 troops and weapons.

The Minsk Agreement, version two, signed in February of this year, theoretically remains in place but both sides have consolidated forces and there have been few days without conflict and casualties. The European Union has generally supported Ukraine but lacks the military largesse to counter the separatist arms buildup, and some EU countries wish to keep open the lines of dialogue with Russia. The United States and Canada have offered vocal support for Ukraine and denunciations of the actions of President Vladimir Putin of Russia. They have not, however, attempted to analyze in depth the origins of the conflict or the alternative paths for the government of Ukraine.

Our proposal brings together three highly experienced experts on Ukraine, one historian and two political scientists, who between them have a wealth of knowledge, have spent considerable time conducting research there, and are widely published. We would offer an in-depth analysis of the current situation, along with some suggestions for government policy and Western responses.

BRIEFING

Dominique Arel, University of Ottawa, “The War in Donbas”

Lucan Way, University of Toronto, “Responses to the War in Donbas: Russia and the West”

David R. Marples, University of Alberta, “Ukraine’s Alternatives”

Dominique Arel is Associate Professor and Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa. He has published widely on language, regionalism, census politics, and constitutionalism in Ukraine and co-edited *Census Identity, Rebounding Identities: The Politics of Identity in Russia and Ukraine* and *Le gouvernement des langues*. His latest paper, “Russian Revisionism and Ukraine’s ‘Civil War’,” co-written with Jesse Driscoll (UC San Diego), was presented at the conference “Analyzing Violence in Ukraine,” George Washington University, on May 19.

Lucan Way is an associate professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto. He has written extensively on authoritarianism, democratization and post-Soviet politics. He is the author (with Steven Levitsky) of *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). His book, *Pluralism by Default: Weak Autocrats and the Rise of Competitive Politics*, examines the political transition in Ukraine and will be published this Fall with Johns Hopkins University Press.

David R. Marples is Distinguished University Professor of East European history at the University of Alberta and author of 15 single-authored books and over 200 scholarly articles on contemporary Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus. Until August 2014 he was also Director of the Stasiuk Program for the Study of Contemporary Ukraine, at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, and he is the author of the blog site “Current Politics in Ukraine”.

THOSE THAT DENY THE PAST RISK REPEATING IT

On April 9, 2015, the government of Ukraine under Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, who presides over Ukraine's internal matters, passed Law No. 2558 'On condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist totalitarian regimes in Ukraine and banning the promotion of their symbols.' It is a controversial move designed to leave Ukraine's Soviet and Moscow dominated past behind. Indeed, even according to officials in Russia, the law will 'create divisions' and promote a 'nationalist ideology'. The move promises to turn the Russian speaking population who have a connection to Ukraine's Soviet past against the country and its government.



Marked as the beginning of national 'de-communization' in Ukraine, the legislation declares the former Communist regime, its state policies, and subversion to be criminal, alongside Nazism. The bill bans all forms of 'public denial' of the 'criminal character' of both Soviet and Nazi rule. The legislation also outlaws the production, circulation, or public utilization of Soviet or Nazi symbols, with the exception of use in schools or for academic or legal work. It has even been referred to as an act of Russophobia hidden under anti-communist flare.

As of April 23, 2015, the Verkhovna Rada (Ukraine's Parliament) passed amendments designed to eliminate inconsistency and clarify the government's aims. Accepted by a vote margin of 233 (Yeas) to 40 (Nays), amendments concluded that the law will not be applied to cases when symbols are used on documents issued by national and local government agencies, schools, or organizations before 1991. And, the ban will not be enforced when symbols are used in museums, exhibitions, on different media at libraries, on original battle flags, state awards, commemorative medals, and other insignia awarded before 1991 and between 1991 and 2015 years.

The original legislation was passed by 261 (of 450) Deputies - all of whom are from President Poroshenko's 305 member ruling coalition - with little to no debate. This signals that elected representatives are speaking directly for all Ukrainians. It was the international public outcry that forced amendments to be proposed. Some believe that the bill comes at the expense of civil liberty and historical memory. Oleh Tyahnybok, leader of the Svoboda Party, has even called on the Poroshenko coalition to pass a ban on communist ideology, cancel pensions of former Soviet officials, and completely prohibit the Communist Party from further activities.

The legislation prohibits the use of Soviet and Nazi symbols and propaganda, and the embellishment of either system's values or activities in Ukraine. The ban applies to

monuments, statues, and all place and street names are to be removed or changed within six months of the law gaining Presidential assent.

This means that in a country with over 500 Vladimir Lenin statues, popularly deemed by many to be founder of modern Ukraine, the removal of such a historical symbol will heighten tensions among Ukrainians, both Russian and Ukrainian speaking.

The city of Zaporizkya, for example, is a major industrial hub in Ukraine's southeast with a population of over 800,000; 25% or 207,000 are Russian speaking. Under Communism, the city was heavily industrialized and transformed into its current prosperous state. The result was that the city's main square, hydroelectric dam, local lake and adjoining island, and the city's most prominent district all bear the name 'Lenin'. Removing the importance of Soviet history and symbolism here will profoundly affect not only Russian speakers, but Ukrainian speakers as well. The bill, to an extent, strips many Ukrainians of their identity.

Before this law, de-communization was a local concern. Now, the Ukrainian government seeks to speed up the process. After the Soviet Union fell in 1991, individual municipalities voted to change street signs, remove memorials and statues, and change the names of their towns. Doing this was based on the consensus of a local population, and premised on their identity and links to the past. In 1991, 92% of Ukrainians wanted independence from the Soviet Union but did not want to disassociate with Russia. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians work in Russia, and millions have family and friends there still. Russia is still a popular vacation destination for Ukrainians as well, at least up until the recent crisis. Unfortunately, with Law No. 2558, the status quo has been disrupted, providing yet another reason for Russia's President Putin to intervene in Ukrainian affairs, annex Ukraine's east, and 'protect' Russian speakers.

I visited Kherson in May 2014, a city of 330,000 in Ukraine's south, divided between Ukrainian and Russian speakers. Kherson is an important port and the home of a major ship-building industry. Losing the city to infighting would be a major blow to Ukrainian industry, which is already flagging due to the continuing crisis in the eastern-border region.

Kherson was occupied by Germany during World War Two, from August 21, 1941 to March 13, 1944. During this time, the Nazi regime drastically reduced the Jewish population and heavily persecuted the Slavic population. The liberation of the city by Russia's Red Army meant the end of suffering and increased industrialization, making the city a key shipbuilding center. But, the reversion to Soviet rule also meant a return to the previous repressive regime under Josef Stalin. Soviet symbolism and history in Kherson is a major part of its identity, and many of Kherson's citizens' lives.

Nationalistic divisions already exist. I visited Odessa in May 2014 after the tragic event when pro-Russia supporters were killed by pro-Ukrainian protestors in the city's Trade Union Building. Odessa, another transportation hub with strong ties to Russia, is a city of over one million people. With a similar linguistic make-up as Kherson, as with the



majority of Ukraine's major cities in the south and eastern regions (with the exception of Kharkiv, which has a much higher Russian speaking population), there is no denying that this law will cause serious concern.

In recognizing that a historic link exists between Ukraine and Russia, specifically in regards to Ukraine's military past, through Law No. 2558 the Yatsenyuk administration granted special legal status to veterans of the 'struggle for Ukrainian independence' from

1917 to 1991. This means that the wearing of Soviet war medals by veterans would not be made illegal and veterans will be viewed as combatting against the tyranny of opposing and more destructive regimes. Ukraine's military personnel history will remain neutral in historical memory.

There is concern that this law will result in heightened tensions between Ukrainian and Russian speaking factions. Most Oblasts (regions) in Ukraine have formed militias to protect civilians in their 'jurisdictions' because of a lack of trust in the Ukrainian military to protect citizens. Many of these groups are state funded though report directly to the Ukrainian central administration. Instead, they act like private policing units enforcing their interpretation of Ukraine's laws.

The bill itself neglects to provide sensitivity towards the situation or predilections of the country's Russian speaking population. Historian David Marples comment that, 'Friends of Ukraine will have a difficult time accepting both the wisdom and timing of such a facile and asinine decree.' Censoring historical memory and symbolism is not the proper or moral way of turning Ukraine westward. It is a way of forgetting the past and risking repeating the same mistakes. The recently passed legislation is just one of those mistakes.

WHAT TO BELIEVE, WHO TO BELIEVE

I have often expressed concern at the nature of reporting and how the West views the crisis in Ukraine. The hesitation of news agencies and other reporting bodies to comment on pro-Ukrainian violence is beguiling. Western countries, like Canada, have openly expressed full support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, a dynamic echoed by news agencies. However, the people often only hear one side of the story. We must be careful not to fall into Russia's propaganda trap, believing an outrageous lie with very little truth. We still have a responsibility to understand the truth as it is and not as it is created by Moscow.

On February 20, I met with several founding members of the Russian Congress of Canada (RCC). We discussed violence against the various Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in Ukraine. The meeting stemmed from concerns that the RCC, notably Father Vladimir Malchenko of Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church in Toronto – part of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROCMP) – had in regards to remarks that Dr. Andrew Bennett, Canadian Ambassador for Religions Freedoms, made in a *Globe and Mail* article last October (2014).

In the article Ambassador Bennett expressed that 'Russia's President Vladimir Putin is orchestrating the persecution of Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Muslim Tatars.' He stated that Russia's actions are systematic where pro-Russia militias are active, as well as in Crimea. As well, he noted that 'Russia's forces have kidnapped priests, detained nuns, firebombed churches and intimidated worshippers.' Dr. Bennett later called for dialogue and discussion.

Russia is understood to have implemented an aggressive public relations campaign (propaganda) in Ukraine and in the media – influencing public perception through agencies like *Russia Today (RT News)*, the *Moscow Times*, and, to a lesser degree, *Interfax-Russia*. A recently leaked government document (released February 25, 2015) tells us this. It outlines Russia's blueprint for a progressive annexation of Ukrainian territory. The propaganda has evaded our understanding of the current crisis, as was exemplified in the RCC's open letter responding to Dr. Bennett's article and in the meeting.

The RCC's open letter appeared to be one-sided, as were Ambassador Bennett's comments. During the meeting, I addressed this, stating that crimes have been committed on both sides. Indeed, the West rarely reports the crimes of para-military groups like the Right Sektor, Svoboda Party, and, most recently, the Radical Party under Oleh Lyashko. 'We cannot look exclusively at the actions of pro-Russia groups in Ukraine. We agreed that there needs to be more discussion and greater transparency. Ukraine is a war-zone and wars are never black-and-white phenomenon, but a haze of grey in which damage and crimes occur on both sides.'

Ambassador Bennett's comments were fairly representative of reports by many media outlets that are otherwise considered reliable sources. Even the comment about

Russia's President Vladimir Putin having a calculated plan was somewhat substantiated after the murder of opposition leader and former Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Boris Nemtsov. Admittedly, Ambassador Bennett's comments were devoid of blame for any problems in Ukraine for which there is some substantiation. This point is evidenced by the case in which Father Vladimir Navozenko of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) was assaulted, threatened, and coercively removed from his parish and home by Right Sektor and Svoboda Party supporters, as well as Verkhovna Rada Deputy and Radical Party leader Oleh Lyashko. We often think of violence in Eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russia rebels and Russia's forces are the aggressors, but this instance took place at the Church of the Holy Intercession in the village of Chervonaya Motovilovka outside of Kyiv and was instigated by pro-European Ukrainians. Surely, there are many more cases like this.

Certainly, the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and mainline Protestant Churches, as well as the Moslem and Jewish faiths retain full equality under Chapter 2, Article 19 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The document states: 'All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, linguistic or religious grounds shall be banned.' Minorities – religious or otherwise - enjoy the full protection of the law.

As well, the Constitution of Ukraine, Articles 21 to 50 specifically ensures the protection of individual rights, particularly in the case religions and religious assembly. I also point out that Articles 36 and 37 states that Ukrainian citizens have the right to freedom of association in political parties and public organisations for the exercise and protection of their rights and freedoms. The bodies, it goes on to note, shall not have paramilitary formations. Obviously the rules are in place in both Ukraine and Russia. But, has there been the will by their governments to enforce these rules?

In Ukraine, as in the case of many armed struggles, everything remains in a grey zone in which both sides – and various intermediaries – play different parts and incur damage of their own. However, it is impossible to believe that rebels in Ukraine could arm themselves sufficiently through local sources without Russia's help. Rebels armed with far superior and modern guns, heavy artillery, and tanks, have been successful in holding off Ukraine's army thus far.

I am attempting to compile a working list of instances in which parishes have been forcibly transferred from one Ukrainian Orthodox Church to another - whether the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), or Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) – or where they have been purposely attacked, vandalized, or cases where clergy have been assaulted or harassed. 'Shedding light on these events is the only responsible thing to do, as no religious leader – or a church, synagogue, temple, or mosque – should suffer threats or attacks. In Eastern Europe, religion and spirituality is an integral and inseparable part of culture and everyday life.'

Father Malchenko provided a compendium of news clippings. Clearly, the images were disturbing, but we cannot forget the crimes against the UOC KP and other religious groups like Jews and Tatars, as well as the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP) and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rome (UGCC Rome).

In the course of compiling this list, as well as accessing general media reports, we must be cognitive of our sources. Russia's President Vladimir Putin's vast media and public-relations campaign extends beyond Russia and Ukraine, and into the materials we access daily here in North America, while Western media has been omitting, or minimalizing, coverage of some serious situations for inexplicable reasons. We must remain critical of what we read and actively seek the truth.

Certainly, there have been excesses by Ukrainian nationalists, Russia supporters in Ukraine, and Ukrainian religious factions, but overwhelmingly the war is not being caused by the people of Russia (nor their desire for war) but the Kremlin and orders directly from President Vladimir Putin.

Someday, Ukraine's relationship with Russia will normalize and relations between the two nations will become amicable, but only after the end of aggression and the withdrawal of Russia's troops from Ukraine and the end of President Putin's reign.

I would like to add that for those who are espousing Moscow's viewpoint that there are no soldiers from Russia in Ukraine, that Russia's missiles did not down a Malaysian civilian airliner, and that Russia's army is not shelling Ukrainian forces from within Russia, I invite you all to read the following three reports. I also invite everyone to form their own opinions and conclusions based on these documents; everyone's will differ. I believe that these reports are credible and help to dispel 'he said, but, he said' confusion, intended or not. What do you think?

MEETING WITH DR. FRANK SYSYN, PETER JACYK CENTRE FOR UKRAINIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH - TORONTO



Dr. Frank Sysyn is the Director of the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) and Editor-in-Chief of the Hrushevsky Translation Project. He is also a faculty member at the University of Alberta and the University of Toronto.

Dr. Sysyn is known to his colleagues as a prominent figure in the study of Eastern European nationalism, identity, and religion, having comprehensively studied and analyzed these facets of Belarusian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian society. It was through Dr. David Marples at the University of Alberta who referred me to Dr. Sysyn, noting that he is the ideal candidate for discussion on Ukrainian religious affairs. Dr. Sysyn and I met at his office in Toronto on May 19.

Dr. Sysyn has been widely published, producing such works as *Culture, Nation and Identity: The Ukrainian-Russian Encounter (1600–1945)*, *Between Poland and Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653*, *Mykhailo Hrushevsky: Historian and National Awakener*, and (with Serhii Plokyh) *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine*. He also serves on the editorial boards of the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, and the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*.

Understanding the importance of religion in the current crisis, Dr. Sysyn has remained a vocal critic. Responding to reporter Jackson Doughart's February 27, 2014 OpEd in the *National Post*, Dr. Sysyn commented, 'Polls and internal statistics would show that Catholics in Ukraine are about 6 to 8 percent of the entire population while Orthodox are about 50 to 60 percent. In general, religious practice and identification is higher in the West and Centre of Ukraine, where Ukrainians are the overwhelming majority.' There is no denying the strong influence that the Orthodox population has on everyday life and politics, he noted in our meeting. The fragmentation of Ukrainian Orthodoxy only creates another power struggle in the already divided country. Historically speaking, this division is new.

In the past, there has never been a variety of strong Orthodox administrations vying for the same spot – being the position as Ukraine's national church. Dr. Sysyn is, of course, referring to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). There has almost always been one monolithic political force at play instituting the primacy of one Orthodox administration or another above all others, whether Kyivan-Rus', the Czarist Russian Empire, or the Soviet Union. Only since the beginning of Ukraine and contemporary international

relations (and international spheres of influence) has Russia exerted indirect semi-control over one of the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine (the UOC MP), generating a state of competition.

Dr. Sysyn has pointed out, 'Increasingly, religious loyalties were looked to as defining civilizations, providing alternative value systems to global capitalism, and mobilizing political challenges to the liberal secular establishment.' In the perspective of Ukrainian history, religion and nation and interacted at various levels. Both religious and national consciousness vary with social class, urban and rural context, and regional identity. Religion is manifested not only as individual consciousness, but also as group identity and institutional loyalty. National allegiance can mean adherence to a language, a culture, a distinct social group, a state, and usually some combination of these. This means that with a large minority of Ukraine's population associating with Russia, combined with the strong influence emanating from Russia through the UOC MP and the current conflict, Orthodox Church politics in Ukraine is even more important than it has ever been in recent memory. This, Dr. Sysyn contended, is why Orthodox unity is needed. Without unity, Ukrainian identity will remain in a state of entropy, continually degrading and fracturing until there is no real or cohesive basis for a Ukrainian state to exist. Russia will become the dominant force in the country and among the Ukrainian people.

As a token of our mutual understanding on the topic, and of his appreciation for meeting, Dr. Sysyn presented me with two of his books – which were fitting given the nature of our discussion. They were *Religion, Nation, and Secularization in Ukraine* (with Martin Schulze Wessel) and *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* (with Serhii Plokyh).

DANIIL STUDNEV – TASS, NEWS AGENCY OF RUSSIA

On May 15, 2015, Daniil Studnev of TASS News Agency and I met in my office on Parliament Hill. I invited him to discuss the situation in Ukraine as it concerns Russia and Russia's actions against both the people and government of Ukraine.

I began by stating that the Ukrainian Congress of Canada has heavily influenced the Parliamentary debate on Ukraine and that there is a need to balance the information being presented. Both sides, pro-Ukraine and pro-Russia use strong public relations mechanisms (news, print media, reports, etc.) to influence popular opinion. There is fault on both sides, however Russia's involvement is tantamount to an invasion by a belligerent state, while Ukraine's faults are very minor by comparison. This dynamic is something that is not generally understood in Western Europe and North America.

I explained to Mr. Studnev that I have come to my conclusions after embarking on two special missions to Ukraine (May 2014 and January 2015) as a Special Envoy representing the Minister of Foreign Affairs, meeting with His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, and through having 80-plus meetings with academics, and religious and cultural leaders in Canada, the United States, Ukraine, and Turkey. My findings are based on popular consensus and opinion of these individuals and those they represent and study. Indeed, there is fault on both sides, but much more so by Russia, to which I referred to Russia's 'Little Green Men' in Crimea.

I then referred to the Bellingcat reports, which examine the placement and barrages of Russian artillery from within Russia. He stated that Bellingcat's findings are disputable, as both Ukraine and Russia have the same or similar equipment. He went on to note that the fighting in Ukraine is a civil war, and that 'yes' the Russian-speaking population is receiving support from Russia but that it is not what the West has been asserting (military and lethal aid). Ukraine, on the other hand, has been receiving both military and lethal aid (either monetary or direct aid) from Canada, the United States, and other Western states like Poland. Donbass wants autonomy from Ukraine but to remain a part of Ukraine. Mr. Studnev contends that the people of Donbass, especially the Russian-speaking population, want a devolved federalism in Ukraine with more regional authority over local affairs, similar to what is characteristic of Canada's provinces.

Mr. Studnev stated that if Russia's soldiers are in Ukraine they are 'soldiers of fortune', that the Russian government is playing no official role in the ongoing conflict. As a representative of a Russian government agency, Mr. Studnev seemed to echo the party line. He even went so far as to state that many in Russia and in Ukraine see Prime Minister Stephen Harper's and the Canadian Government's sanctions against Russia as being a political move influenced by the Ukrainian Canadian community. I responded that Canada has a responsibility to the people of Ukraine – we have strong diplomatic and historic ties to the country, and one-quarter of all Canadians can draw their heritage to Ukraine.

When I exclaimed that Russia's 'soldiers of fortune' in Eastern Ukraine and the Little Green Men in Crimea come with the latest of Russia's military kit, weaponry, tanks, artillery, and thousands of military vehicles with Russian military license plates, nobody believes that they are volunteer soldiers of fortune. Daniil Studnev of TASS smiled. It was very obvious that Mr. Studnev does not believe Russia's propaganda.

I further explained that we were friends with both Ukraine and Russia before the crisis in Eastern Europe commenced. But, I continued, a friend who hurts another friend is no longer a friend. Indeed, Russia has invaded and occupied Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine losing Canada's support. Peaceful exchanges are no longer the order of the day, as a result, sanctions are and they will continue until amicable relations and non-aggression resume.

ELIOT HIGGINS – BELLINGCAT



Eliot Higgins of Bellingcat and I discussed, over the phone, Bellingcat's analysis of the origin of artillery attacks on Ukrainian military positions in eastern Ukraine, new evidence of the shooting down of MH17, and proof of Russia's soldiers fighting in Ukraine.

Mr. Higgins expressed that the satellite reports used are absolutely accurate, and have only a tiny margin of error (centimetres in distance). The same methods that were used in the first report on Russia's artillery attacks has since been used to identify 100 crater sites. Because of funding restrictions – and his staff being composed completely of volunteers – Mr. Higgins is working alongside several British universities who have the financial means and manpower to help complete his mission. He has also worked with NATO, the British Foreign Service, *The Economist*, Google, and other notable institutions and government divisions throughout Europe and North America on similar projects.

Currently, Mr. Higgins is completing a project with the Atlantic Council. The two will be releasing 'Hiding in Plain Sight: Putin's War in Ukraine' and the English translation of Boris Nemtsov's 'Putin. War.' by the end of the summer.

He explained that Bellingcat began as a crowd-funded initiative to examine and shed light on the situations in Syria, Libya, and Ukraine. And, that the organization – as it stands today – continues to do so at an international level. Funding currently comes from government agencies and private enterprise, but also from its roots in crowdfunding. That way, he said, Bellingcat remains committed and responsible to those who oversaw its conception.

True to its social justice roots, several of Bellingcat's findings have been used in the MH17 case by Australian and Dutch authorities. As a result, Bellingcat has produced several reports on the downing of the civilian airliner, including one 52-page report entitled 'Routes, Destinations, and Involvement of the 2nd and 147th Automobile Battalions in the June and July 2014 Buk Convoys'.

Mr. Eliot stated that he has been planning a visit to Ottawa in early autumn, notably around election time. I proposed the idea of having him present to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, as he stated that over the course of the summer he would be presenting his methods and findings to other governments around the world. He was intrigued and accepting of the idea. I asked him if he would speak to the committee on his valuable work, as it concerns Ukraine, and he readily agreed.

Concluding our conversation, Mr. Eliot commended me for my work and continued interest in the Ukrainian topic, and stated that anything that is available on his website I can freely use.

THE TRUTH ABOUT RUSSIA

On Wednesday, April 22, 2015, I met with the Ukrainian Chargé d’Affaires to Canada, Shevchenko Marko, and Ukrainian First Secretary, Nadiia Vozdigan, at the Ukrainian Embassy in Ottawa. The Chargé has been the acting Ambassador to Canada since Vadym Prystaiko was recalled to Kyiv to serve as Assistant Deputy Minister of National Defense in December 2014. It was my intention to discuss my ongoing Kyivan-Rus’ Orthodoxy project and Russia’s involvement in Ukraine. I explained that I believe that it would be helpful if Radarsat2 images are released to the general public. Unfortunately, Canada’s Department of National Defense, which operates Radarsat2, has not done so. However, Mr. Shevchenko provided me with the *Bellingcat*¹ reports, which are based on satellite imaging.

Mr. Shevchenko agreed that people should be shown satellite imagery of the Russia’s military in Ukraine. Publically accessible photo evidence will help dispel Russia’s propaganda, which explicitly promotes the notion that Russia is remaining neutral on the Ukrainian crisis – providing no military provisions. Mr. Shevchenko noted that it will be difficult to counter Russia’s propaganda, especially in Ukraine’s east, as a large portion of Ukraine’s Russian speaking community believes what Russia’s government and news agencies are saying. There is currently a great deal of indications that suggests otherwise, but with very little proof, and what proof there is of Russia’s volunteers and ‘aid’ convoys is justified by the notion that Russia is protecting Russian speakers in Ukraine. Accordingly, in the minds of pro-Russia supporters, Russia’s military is not in Ukraine and Russia is not providing provisions or weapons to the conflict *in* Ukraine. Typically, when presented with pictures of tanks and military supplies, the Russian speaking population says that they could have been taken anywhere and at any time. Satellite images clearly delineating border areas, however, are much more conclusive.

According to the *Bellingcat* reports imaging and reports released in 2013 and in 2014, Russia’s troops and weaponry have clearly made their way into Ukraine and are being used against the Ukraine, the Ukrainian army, and local Ukrainian militias. As has been widely advocated, Russia is attempting to ‘protect’ the Russian speaking population in Ukraine from cultural degradation and Westernization amid a period of ‘Ukrainianization’. According to Russia’s authorities, Ukrainianization would result in the limiting of Russian culture and language in the beleaguered Ukrainian state. And, Russia’s motives for invading Ukraine are to regain territorial control over former Soviet countries and territories. This is as much economic, religious, and tactical as much as it is social.

The first of three *Bellingcat* reports released – ‘Origin of Artillery Attacks on Ukrainian Military Positions in Eastern Ukraine’ – relies on local media sources, local sources, and Google satellite images to determine the origin of artillery attacks on the Ukrainian

¹ Bellingcat is an open forum for investigative journalism as they pertain to international topics.

military between July 9 and September 5, 2014. After reviewing and analyzing satellite images, the analyst team determined that the origin of nine attacks was from within Russia.

In July of 2014, Ukrainian forces launched an 'anti-terrorist operation' against pro-Russia separatists and made significant gains in eastern Ukraine. In the process they regained a significant portion of territory along the Russia-Ukraine border. However, on July 11, a massive and unexpected artillery barrage on Ukrainian forces in Zelenopillya saw 30 soldiers killed and one hundred more wounded. In the following weeks, Ukrainian troops were subject to dozens of artillery barrages that saw their offensive turn into a defeat.

What was determined, through the examination of satellite images and shell-blast patterns, trajectories, and topography, was that pro-Russia separatists were not attacking, rather it was Russia's regular forces with mobile multiple rocket launchers from across the border and well within Russia. This same scenario was true for nine of the following ten attacks, the exception being an attack by Russia's forces near Chervonopartyzansk, Ukraine.

Satellite images of Eastern Ukraine clearly show 330 craters, created by shelling, in one area. Triangulation determined the five distant sources of the shelling. Artillery, Bellingcat concluded, was launched from mobile Multiple Rocket Launcher Systems (MRLS) by Russia's military. The MRLS used could have been the BM 21 Grad (or Tornado), the BM 27 Uragan, or the BM 30 Smerch. Because the track width determined by satellite imaging is suggestive of a smaller vehicle, the BM 21 Grad (or Tornado) was most likely used. In addition, only the BM 21 Grad has a single set of tires on its front axis, meaning a smaller turn radius (14m), while the BM 27 and BM 30 each have two sets of tires at the front of the vehicle. There was no indication that the vehicle being used had two sets of tires in its front; tracks also showed no signs of overlapping tire patterns. The BM 21 was most likely used, but, as Bellingcat concluded, this is not conclusive based only on satellite imaging. Burn patterns in the soil and satellite images showing the routes, directions, and positions of the MRLS attest to this. Launch sites were well within Russia's borders and are identifiably shown, in detail, through satellite imaging. As global citizens we must acknowledge this evidence and act upon it.

The second *Bellingcat* report implicates Russia's involvement around the downing of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 on July 17, 2014. The outlet tracks the Buk anti-aircraft system that likely shot down the civilian plane moving from Donetsk back to Russia. A Buk missile system is a family of self-propelled, medium-range surface-to-air missile systems developed by the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. They were designed to shoot cruise missiles, smart bombs, fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, and unmanned aerial vehicles. However, in this case, loaded on the bed of a Volvo low-loader transport truck, the Buk was used to attack a high-flying commercial airliner.

Furthermore, the third report – 'How EchoSec Found Evidence of a Russian Fighting in Ukraine' – presented viable data analysis showing that Russia's soldiers are fighting in

Ukraine, as well as the command, control, communication and coordination structures in Ukraine. In the particular case put forward by *Bellingcat*, a soldier known under the pseudonym Amigo Desperado was tracked from his home well within Russia in early December to his deployment area in the Donbass region. He was tracked using VK, a popular social media platform popular in Russia and similar to Facebook.

As is common practice in warfare, Russia's soldiers are not told where they are *en route* to their destination. So, the stationing of Amigo Desperado in Ukraine is not indicative of Russia's population's support for the war in Ukraine, but rather the inclinations of the Putin administration and President Putin's imperialistic foreign affairs and defense aims.

The Department of National Defense has not released Radarsat2 images to the public. However, images in these these *Bellingcat* reports, arguably, perform a similar (if not the same) task. These reports conclusively prove that Russia is intentionally violating Ukraine's borders and sovereignty all while deceiving the international community. Ukraine's Chargé d'Affaires, Shevchenko Marko, hopes that the *Bellingcat* reports will help demonstrate Russia's military's direct military participation in Ukraine and influence a change in perspective when addressing the crisis in Ukraine in the future.

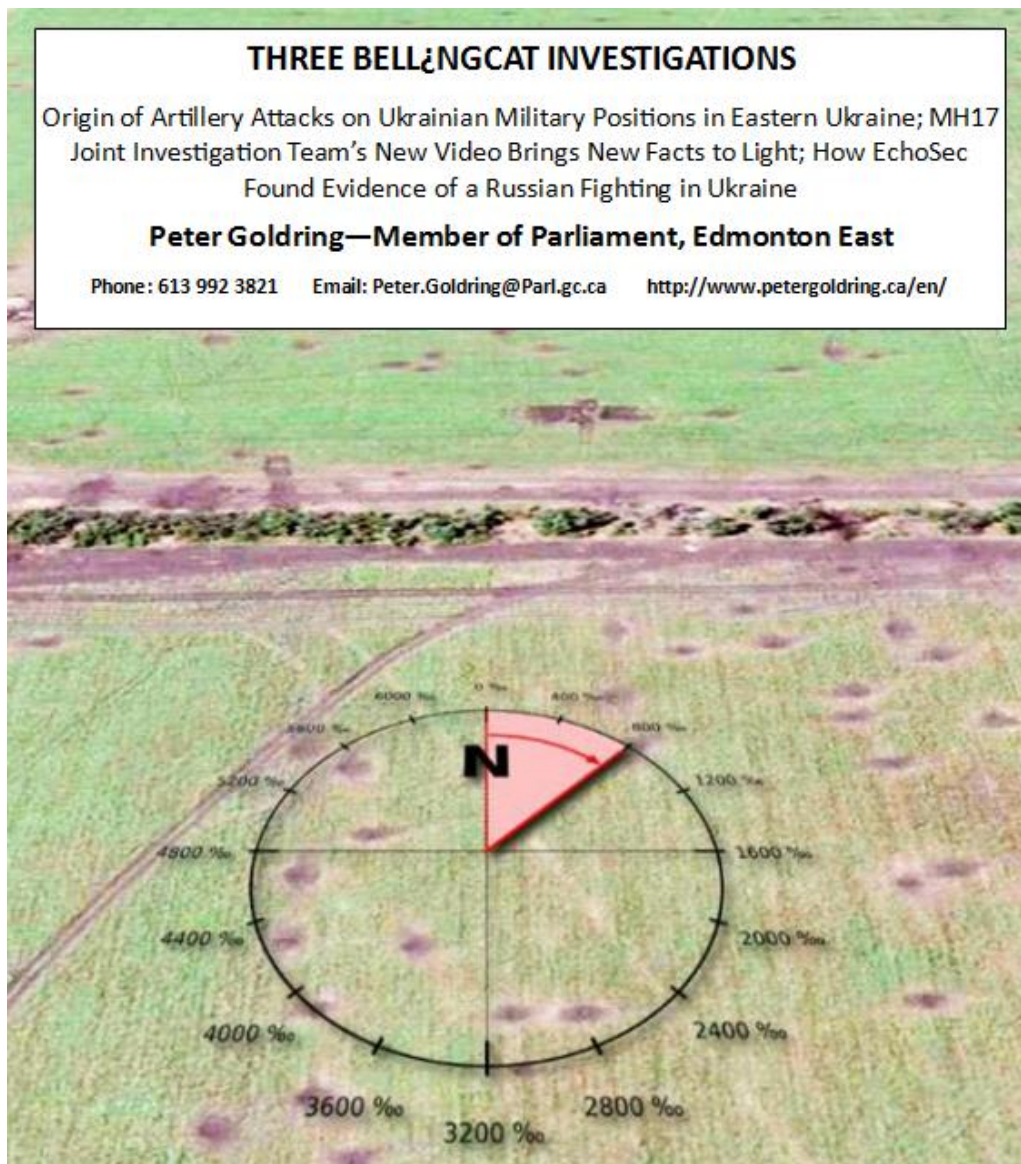
The reports can be found in the following pages or at: <https://www.bellingcat.com/>

‘ORIGIN OF ARTILLERY ATTACKS ON UKRAINIAN MILITARY POSITIONS IN EASTERN UKRAINE BETWEEN 14 JULY 2014 AND 8 AUGUST 2014’

A Bellingcat Investigation

The following is a set of reports produced by Bellingcat, an open reporting forum for and by investigative journalists from throughout the world. The reports have been used by the Ukrainian Embassy in Ottawa and were given to me by Chargé d’Affaires Shevchenko Marko during our meeting. The reports conclusively contend that Russia’s military is actively engaged in Ukraine and is acting as an aggressor from within its own borders.

The reports can also be found at: <https://www.bellingcat.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/bellingcat-origin-of-artillery-attacks-02-12-15-final1.pdf>



Origin of Artillery Attacks on Ukrainian Military Positions in Eastern Ukraine between 14 July 2014 and 8 August 2014

This report examines Russia's army's artillery attacks from 'inside' Russia, bombarding Ukrainian military positions. It uses local and international news sources, satellite mapping, and an analysis of military technology and topographical patterns to draw its conclusions.

Summary

Ukrainian armed forces positioned near the Russian-Ukrainian border were attacked by artillery fire in the summer of 2014. Between 9 July and 5 September 2014, the Ukrainian Border Service and the National Security and Defense Council reported more than 120 artillery attacks from Russia. Russian officials, however, have denied the existence of any artillery attacks on Ukraine originating from its territory.

The pressure of sustained artillery attacks through early August led Ukrainian armed forces to lose control of hundreds of kilometers of border territory¹. Google Earth satellite images of eastern Ukraine from July, August, and September 2014 have enabled the Bellingcat investigation team to find evidence of these artillery attacks, determine their origin, and compare them with local sources.

After reviewing and analyzing these satellite images as well as videos from social media, local media reports, and the shifting maps of the ongoing conflict, the Bellingcat investigation team has determined that there is compelling evidence that artillery attacks on Ukrainian territory and against Ukrainian armed forces originated from the territory of Russia.

¹ <http://russian.rt.com/article/43677#ixzz39JNVe6AU>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210142502/http://russian.rt.com/article/43677>

Introduction

In July 2014, Ukrainian armed forces launched an "anti-terrorist operation" against pro-Russian separatists and made significant territorial gains in eastern Ukraine, regaining control over a large portion of the Russian-Ukrainian border.



The situation in the eastern regions of Ukraine on 11 July 2014. Image courtesy of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine².

However, on the morning of 11 July 2014, the situation suddenly changed. A massive and unexpected artillery attack on units in the Zelenopillya region killed 30 and wounded over 100 soldiers³. In the days and weeks that followed, the units at the border were subjected to

² http://www.rnbo.gov.ua/files/2014/RNBO_map_11_07_eng.jpg
http://web.archive.org/web/20150210142635/http://www.rnbo.gov.ua/files/2014/RNBO_map_11_07_eng.jpg

³ <http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-144-30-ukrainian-soldiers-killed-near-russias-border/>

dozens of additional artillery attacks. By late July 2014, the massive bombardment reversed Ukrainian gains and contributed to the encirclement of portions of the Ukrainian armed forces. A separatist offensive across eastern Ukraine began simultaneously with the artillery attacks, leading to the separatists capturing much of the Russian-Ukrainian border along with vast areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts.

Artillery attacks on Ukrainian forces near the border proved to be an important factor in turning the conflict in favor of the separatists. Using in-depth analysis of satellite imagery and social media sources, this Bellingcat investigation brings new evidence to help clarify to the origins of these artillery attacks against Ukrainian armed forces.

Research methods and sources

The starting point for this Bellingcat investigation was the distribution of updated satellite imagery from Google (DigitalGlobe satellite imagery) with a panchromatic resolution of 0.5m from the territory of eastern Ukraine and its border regions with Russia (17 July to 31 August 2014 satellite images). Additionally, the Bellingcat investigation team analyzed videos shared on social media (YouTube and VKontakte) and geolocated the events captured in these videos to key sites involved in the artillery attacks on Ukraine.

From the satellite imagery, the Bellingcat investigation team located artillery impact crater fields from artillery fire and conducted extensive analysis on a crater-by-crater basis. In the examination of each area, our team created a novel analysis method based on internationally-recognized 'on-the-ground' procedures to determine the trajectory of the artillery fire.

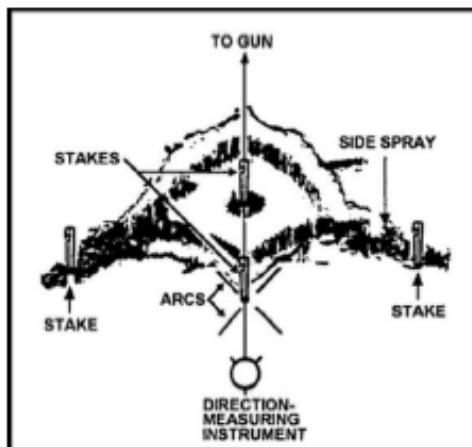


Figure J-3 side-spray method⁴

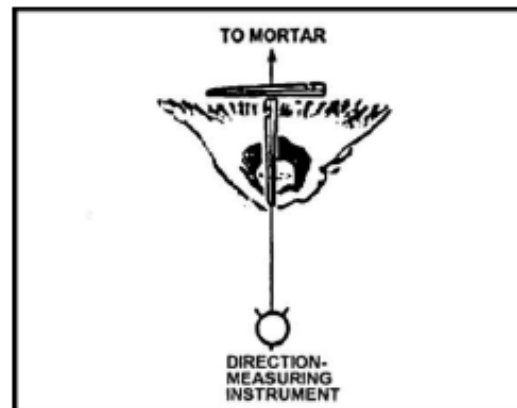


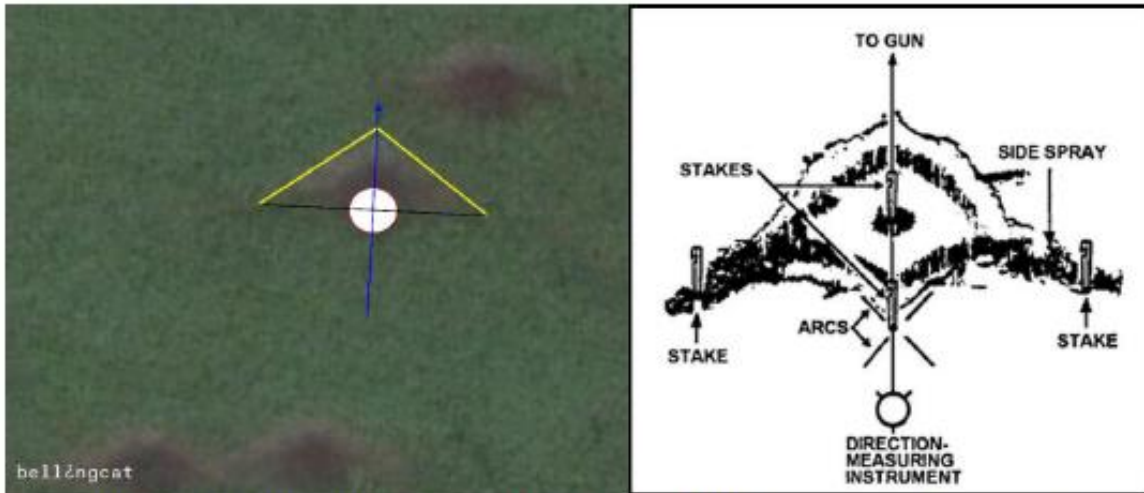
Figure J-6 splinter groove method⁵

<http://web.archive.org/web/20140711204743/http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-144-30-ukrainian-soldiers-killed-near-russias-border/>

⁴ http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/6-50/Appj.htm#figj_3

⁵ <http://web.archive.org/web/20020215215239/http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/6-50/Appj.htm>

The satellite images from eastern Ukraine show two main types of craters, low-angle fuze quick craters (with distinctive 'side spray' areas projecting diagonally from a central crater) and high-angle shell craters (triangular-shaped craters that spread outwards towards the origin of fire):



Low-angle fuze quick craters (e.g. low-angle artillery or Multiple Launcher Rocket Systems fire)



High-angle shell craters (e.g. mortars, high-angle Multiple Launcher Rocket Systems fire)

Both types of craters are suitable for determining the trajectory of artillery fire. In reality, the trajectory of the projectile is determined by a variety of factors, such as the type and hardness of the ground struck, wind direction and speed, and the type of projectile. Our team adopted a simple linear trajectory in our analysis, but the actual trajectory may vary somewhat due to these factors.

⁵ http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/6-50/Appendix_6.htm
http://web.archive.org/web/20020215215239/http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/6-50/Appendix_6.htm

The Amvrosiivka attack 14 July 2014

In a 14 July 2014 summary of the "anti-terrorist operation," Ukrainian media reported that an attack took place on positions of the Ukrainian armed forces in the vicinity of Amvrosiivka⁶. It was suspected that the origin of this attack was from the territory of Russia⁷.

On the satellite image below, taken on 16 July 2014, an extensive crater field south of Amvrosiivka is visible, located at the coordinates 47°45'52.38"N 38°30'47.65"E.



The crater field near Amvrosiivka from the 14 July 2014 attack, positioned at 47°46'1.07" N 38°30'43.16" E. Google Earth satellite image date 16 July 2014.

The Bellingcat investigation team counted a total of 330 craters in this crater field and determined the observable direction of each impact crater based on the analysis methods previously described. From these 330 craters, the average trajectory was calculated and was determined to be 193.97°, i.e. from the south-south west (180 ° being due south). When screening for possible firing positions from this trajectory, the Bellingcat investigation team found a firing position 14.6km from the crater field. Burn marks are visible at this location, which is on Russian territory and approximately 750m from the border near the Russian village of Seleznev at the coordinates 47°38'13.52"N 38°28'9.69"E.

⁶ <https://en.informnapalm.org/anti-terrorist-operation-summary-for-july-14-2014/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210142924/https://en.informnapalm.org/anti-terrorist-operation-summary-for-july-14-2014/>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/v.parasyuk/posts/675221185878989>



Crater field and firing position, viewing north-north-east

Based on our crater analysis, we judge that these were very likely the five firing sites that caused the craters near Amvrosiivka. There are several pieces of evidence that lead us to believe that these strikes were carried out by five 122mm BM-21 Grad or 9K51M Tornado-G Multiple Rocket Launcher Systems (MLRS) as opposed to the BM-27 Uragan, BM-30 Smerch, or other types of field artillery.

It is well known that BM MLRS create large areas of smoke behind them during and after firing. Many examples of this are available online⁶. This area of intense smoke and heat results in burned/singed ground behind the MLRS and are visible from Google satellite images. Such burned areas are visible at the firing position considered for the Amvrosiivka attack, and so we judge that these were very likely MLRSs.

⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly6_2ojur0Q



Firing position near Seleznev. Position: 47°38'14.38"N, 38°28'9.77"E.
 Google Earth satellite image date 16 July 2014.

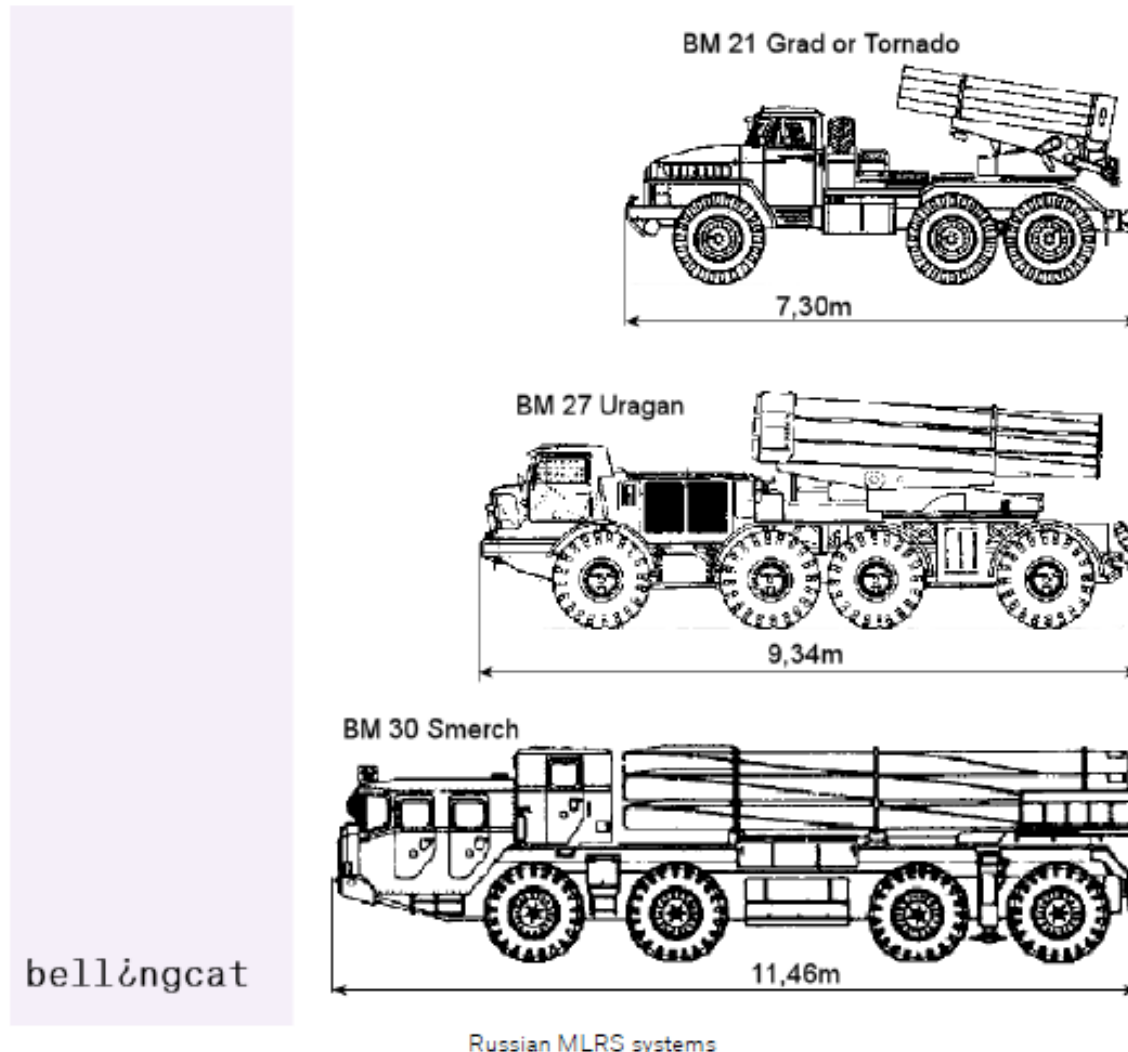
Analyzing the satellite imagery of the firing position also gave us evidence for determining the type of MLRS most likely used to conduct the artillery attack.



The visible tracks that lead to the site come from farther inside Russian territory.

The tracks of the vehicles that entered and exited the field to reach their firing positions are visible from the satellite imagery. This leads us to believe that there was no cross-border (Ukraine to Russia) movement of military equipment for this particular location.

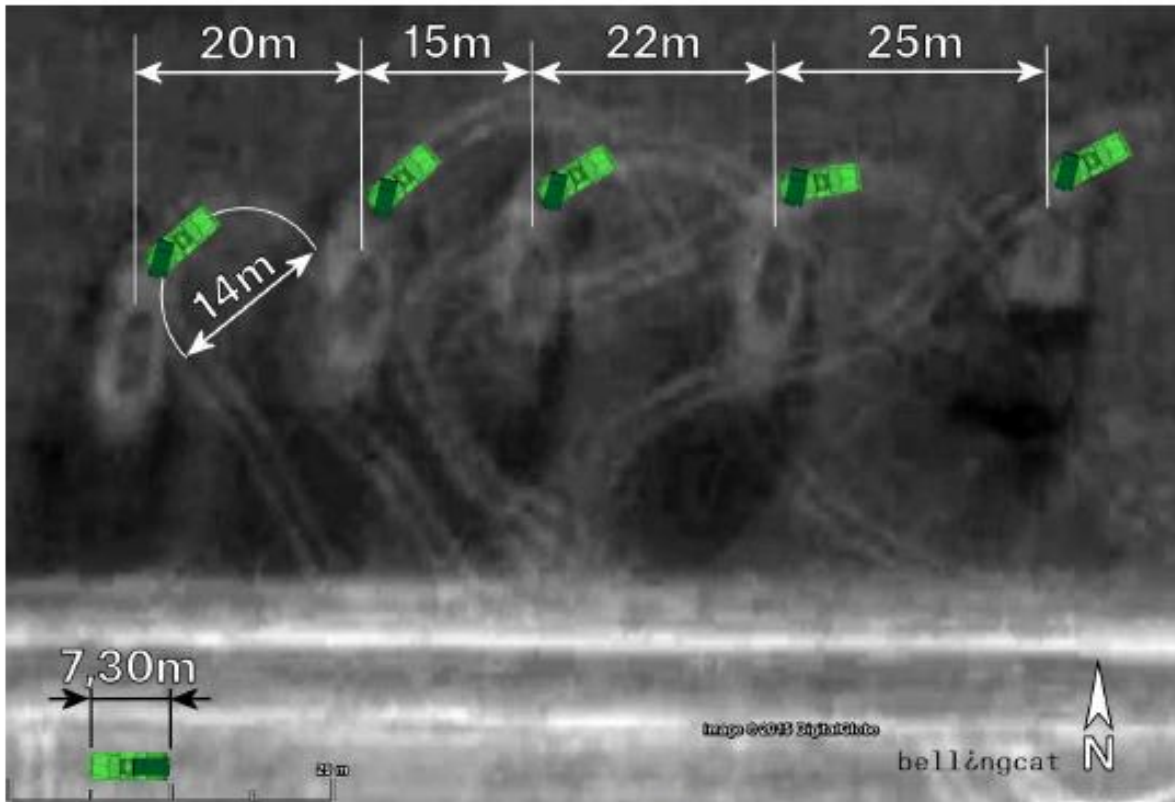
Three MLRS systems are primarily used by the Russian military (see Russian MLRS systems figure below).



The measurement of the average track width from the satellite images yielded an average value of 2.40m. As the resolution of the satellite images is 0.5m, the tolerance for this measurement is 1.9 to 2.9m. In comparison, the widths of the BM-21/Tornado-G, BM-27, and BM-30 are 2.4, 2.8, and 3.1m, respectively. The track width determined from satellite imagery is suggestive of a smaller vehicle, but because of the potential error due to imagery resolution, this is not conclusive.

Using the satellite images, we were able to determine the turning radii of the vehicles. The smallest turning radius was measured as 14m. The BM-27 and BM-30 MLRSs have two steered front axles, so if they were used in this instance, we would expect to see evidence of two overlapping sets of wheel tracks in the turns leading to or from the firing position. However, the satellite image shows only the traces of one clear, single track. Based on this

evidence, we conclude with high probability that a BM-21 Grad or 9K51M Tornado-G was used for this attack.



The spacing between, and the sizes of the types of MLRS units judged to be at the firing position

The visible traces of the vehicles also fit well for the typical spacing of BM-21/Tornado-G systems in battle formation (see the image above for the spacing of the units visible from the satellite image). According to Army Field Manual No. 100-2-3,⁹

The BM-21 launcher can be traversed through 180° and the bank of 40 launcher tubes elevated from 0 to +55° electrically or manually. The rockets can be launched singly at any desired time interval by manual means or in partial or complete salvo at a fixed 0.5-second time interval from within the cab or up to 60 m away from the cab with the aid of a remote-control unit connected to the vehicle by a cable. The rockets must be fired with the launcher parked obliquely to the target to prevent blast damage to the unshielded cab.

Our investigation of this attack shows that the average trajectory of the craters pointed toward the direction of the suspected firing positions with a high degree of accuracy; the maximum-to-minimum deviation of the analyzed crater angles is only 0.2%. Additionally, a measurement in the other direction, extrapolating the trajectories of the visible burn marks at the firing position, revealed that the trajectories led directly to the center of the artillery crater field.

⁹ <https://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm100-2-3.pdf>

Artillery attacks in the Chervonopartyzansk region 14 July to 8 August 2014

In early July 2014, units from the 72nd Motorized Brigade, the 79th Airmobile Brigade, the 24th and 51st Mechanized Brigades, and elements of the 3rd Separate Special Forces Regiment were tasked with securing the Russian-Ukrainian border south of the separatist-held towns from Marynivka to the Izvaryne checkpoint. This area, covering over 150km of border, was known as "Sector D"¹⁰.

From the end of the ceasefire on 1 July until 11 July, Ukrainian units advanced quickly and found relatively little resistance until they reached the Chervonopartyzansk/Gukovo checkpoint. Then, the situation changed dramatically. The Zelenopillya artillery attack against Ukrainian forces on 11 July was followed by artillery attacks against large conglomerations of Ukrainian units in the area close to the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine and Panchenkove, Chervonopartyzansk, Khmelnytskyi, Biryukove, Dolzhanskyi border control point and the Dyakove region. As the world diverted their attention on the horror of the Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 (MH17) shoot down on 17 July, the situation sharply deteriorated for the Ukrainian units on the eastern border.

On 22 July, Dmytrivka, a town on the supply road to Sector D, came under attack from separatists¹¹. For the next two weeks, transport along the roads east of these towns greatly limited resupply and reinforcement for the trapped units^{12,13,14}. From interviews and media reports, it was evident that conditions were dire^{15,16}. Despite this, the units on the border continued to hold their positions.

¹⁰ <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/08/12/ukrainian-troops-retreat-from-russian-border-leaving-100-kilometers-defenseless-against-invasion.html>;
<http://web.archive.org/articles/2014/08/12/ukrainian-troops-retreat-from-russian-border-leaving-100-kilometers-defenseless-against-invasion.html>

¹¹ <http://uacrisis.org/lysenko2-22-07-2014/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141129002451/http://uacrisis.org/lysenko2-22-07-2014/>

¹² <http://maidantranslations.com/2014/07/24/dmitry-tymchuks-military-blog-summary-july-23-2014/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141206131810/http://maidantranslations.com/2014/07/24/dmitry-tymchuks-military-blog-summary-july-23-2014/>

¹³ <http://maidantranslations.com/2014/07/27/towns-in-donbas-have-been-liberated-thanks-to-the-72nd-and-79th-brigades/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141206184958/http://maidantranslations.com/2014/07/27/towns-in-donbas-have-been-liberated-thanks-to-the-72nd-and-79th-brigades/>

¹⁴ <http://mignews.com.ua/sobitiya/inukraine/3342474.html>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210143339/http://mignews.com.ua/sobitiya/inukraine/3342474.html>

¹⁵ <http://mignews.com.ua/sobitiya/inukraine/3363561.html>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210143455/http://mignews.com.ua/sobitiya/inukraine/3363561.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IX6e3wr34BM>

On 3 August, a breakthrough by Ukrainian units in the west unblocked a potential resupply route (between Dyakove and Dmytrivka) to the beleaguered units on the border¹⁷. That same day, pro-Russian forces sharply increased the number of attacks against the trapped units on the border¹⁸. Out of ammunition, on 4 August, over 400 Ukrainian soldiers from the 72nd Mechanized Brigade fled across the border to escape the constant bombardment¹⁹. By 8 August, the remainder of the 72nd and 79th brigades had broken out of the encirclement, and around 1,000 survivors were able to regroup with other units near Savur-Mohyla²⁰.

Significant artillery attacks upon Ukrainian units in the border region east of Dmytrivka were undoubtedly a key factor in the retreat of Ukrainian units from Sector D. However, until now, the trajectories and firing positions of the artillery attacks that led to this defeat have not been analyzed. In the following section, we analyze two of the largest visible artillery attacks close to Chervonopartyzansk and Sverdlovsk, where Ukrainian units were hit by hundreds of visible artillery shells during July and August 2014.

The Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine/Panchenkove attacks 14 July 2014 to 8 August 2014

On 14 July 2014, consistent accounts emerged in both Ukrainian and pro-Russian media outlets that clashes took place in the vicinity of a mine called 'Dolzhanskaya-Capital,' close to the Ukrainian town of Panchenkove^{21,22}.

¹⁷ <https://en.informnapalm.org/anti-terrorist-operation-ukraine-summary-august-4-2014/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210143548/https://en.informnapalm.org/anti-terrorist-operation-ukraine-summary-august-4-2014/>

¹⁸ <http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/08/05/dmitry-tymchuks-military-blog-summary-august-4-2014/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141208115423/http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/08/05/dmitry-tymchuks-military-blog-summary-august-4-2014/>

¹⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28652096>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141229035005/http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28652096>

²⁰ <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/08/12/ukrainian-troops-retreat-from-russian-border-leaving-100-kilometers-defenseless-against-invasion.html>;
<http://web.archive.org/articles/2014/08/12/ukrainian-troops-retreat-from-russian-border-leaving-100-kilometers-defenseless-against-invasion.html>

²¹ <http://www.dtek.com/ru/media-centre/press-releases/details/v-dtek-sverdlovanratsit-v-rezultate-boevikh-deistvii-obestocheni-dve-shakhtoplosshadki>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210143935/http://www.dtek.com/ru/media-centre/press-releases/details/v-dtek-sverdlovanratsit-v-rezultate-boevikh-deistvii-obestocheni-dve-shakhtoplosshadki#VNoYOixcpjA>

²² http://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2014/07/16/n_6315585.shtml;
http://web.archive.org/web/20141025100221/http://www.gazeta.ru/social/news/2014/07/16/n_6315585.shtml



Crater fields near Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine

Considerable disruptions to the mine's power system affected pumps and the ventilation system, leading to the evacuation of 278 miners.

The satellite image from 8 August shows the cause of the power outage: large amounts of artillery fire that destroyed several electricity poles in the vicinity of the mine. Analysis of the damaged electricity poles and their connections suggested that only lines leading directly to the mine were affected. Therefore, there was no evidence to suggest that power to nearby towns was disrupted due to this attack.

The Bellingcat investigation team researched media reports from mid-July to confirm attacks from this time period. Official Ukrainian government sources reported artillery attacks on 23 July and 1 August²³, and Ukrainian media sources also reported attacks in this area on 16 and 24 July, and from 1 to 4 August²⁴. The following comparison of maps provided by separatist sources shows the course of the battles in July and August throughout the region and also suggests several specific dates for attacks on Ukrainian forces²⁵.

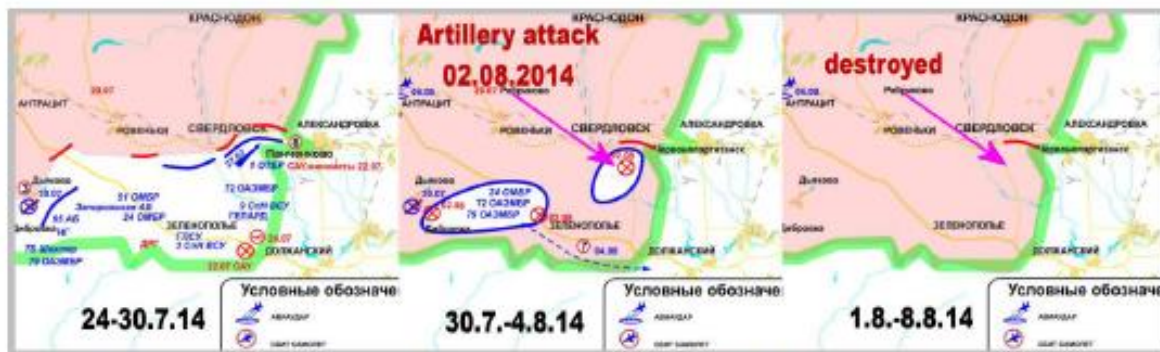
²³ <http://mediarnbo.org/?lang=en>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150209075216/http://mediarnbo.org/?lang=en>

²⁴ <http://maidantranslations.com/category/opinions/dmitry-tymchuk/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20141201222146/http://maidantranslations.com/category/opinions/dmitry-tymchuk/>

²⁵ <http://warday.su/map/53-karta-boevyh-deystviy-18-22-iyulya.html>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150210144240/http://warday.su/map/53-karta-boevyh-deystviy-18-22-iyulya.html>



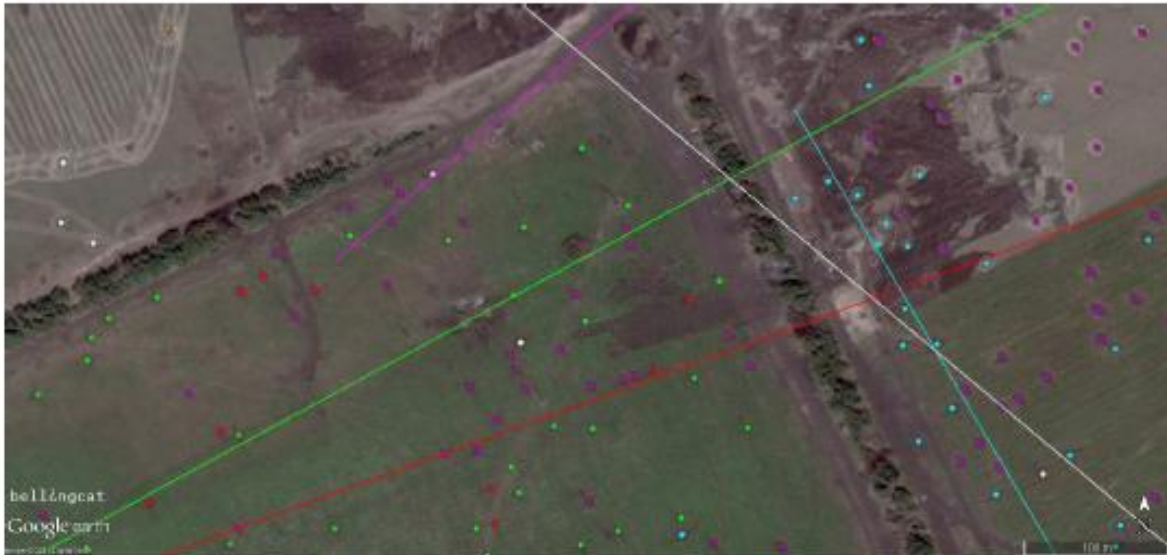
Battles southeast of Sverdlovsk from 11 to 24 July (map from pro-Russian websites)



Battles southeast of Sverdlovsk from mid-July to early August (map from pro-Russian sites)

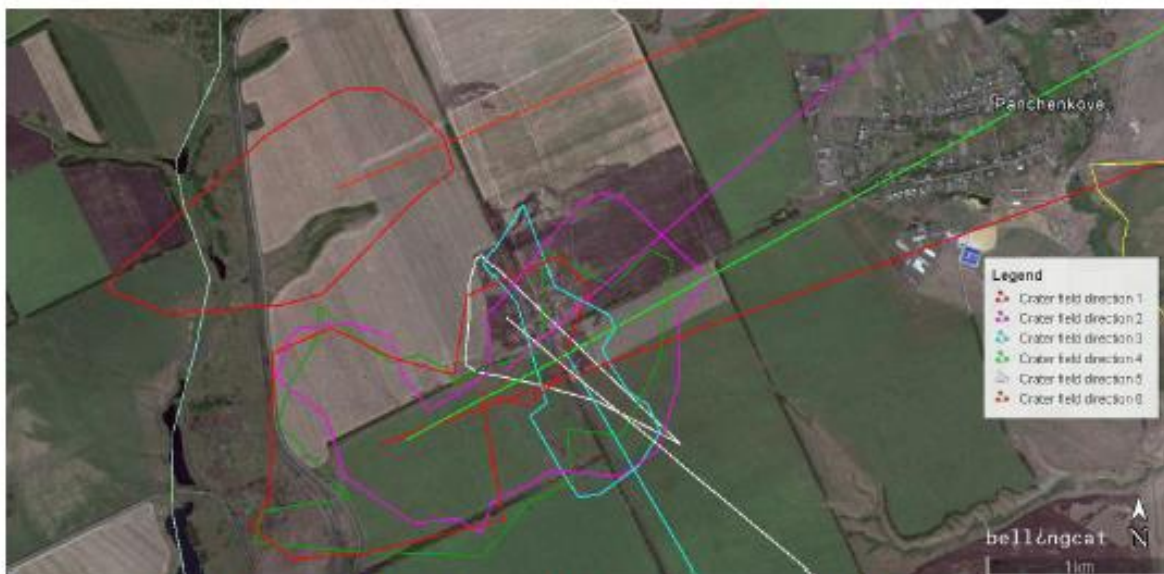
The Bellingcat investigation team analyzed a number of videos shared on YouTube and VKontakte (VK), Russia's most popular social networking site. From these sources, it was established that at least two attacks occurred on 16 July.

Next, our team analyzed the crater field near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine outside of the Panchenkove village by using satellite imagery from 8 August 2014. A total of 813 craters were measured.



Crater fields near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine

Analysis of the calculated trajectories in the crater field reveals that there were six separate attacks from five different directions.

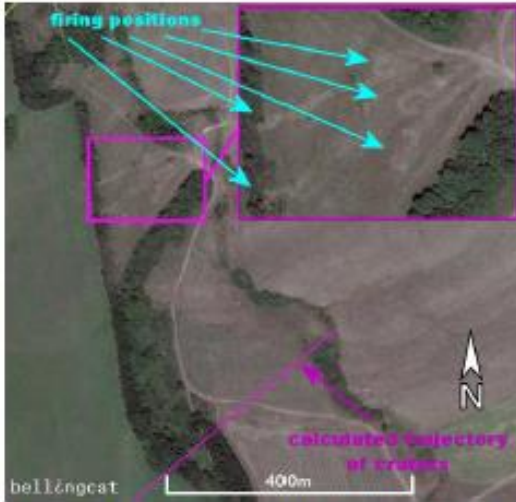


Crater fields near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine showing six separate firing trajectories

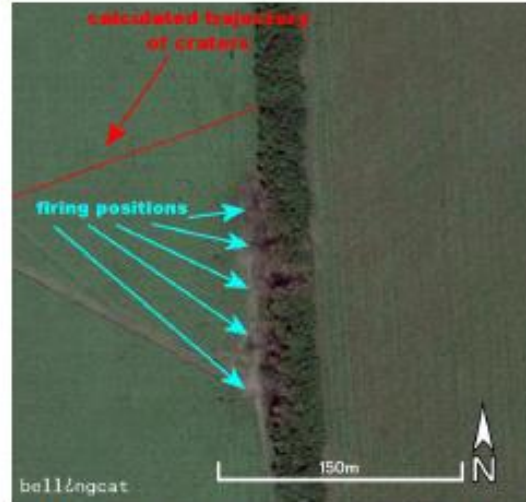
With maximum differences of 300m at a shelling distance of 15km, all of the calculated trajectories can be traced to five separate firing positions. Every one of these – with the exception of the position near Chervonopartyzansk, Ukraine, which is close to the border – is clearly within the territory of Russia.

The firing positions, from north to south, were located in the following positions:

1. Near Nizhnyaya Kovalevka, Russia at 48°07'51.4"N, 39°54'02.4"E
2. Near Chervonopartyzansk, Ukraine at 48°03'03.2"N, 39°49'52.2"E

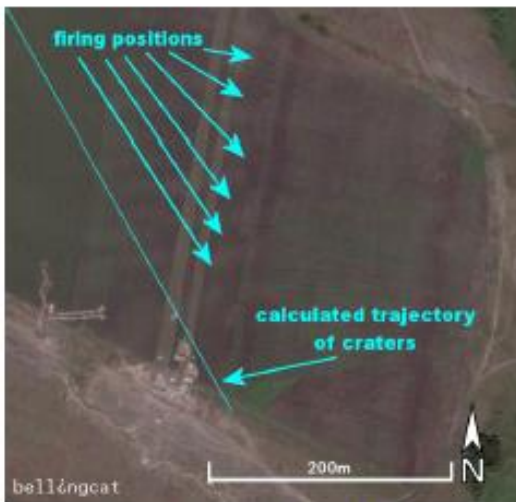


Firing position near Nizhnyaya Kovalevka, Russia



Firing position near Chervonopartyzansk, Ukraine

3. Near Pavlovka, Russia at 47°56'28.1"N, 39°49'12.0"E
4. Near Ukrainskiy, Russia at 47°58'23.0"N, 39°51'01.5"E



Firing position near Pavlovka, Russia

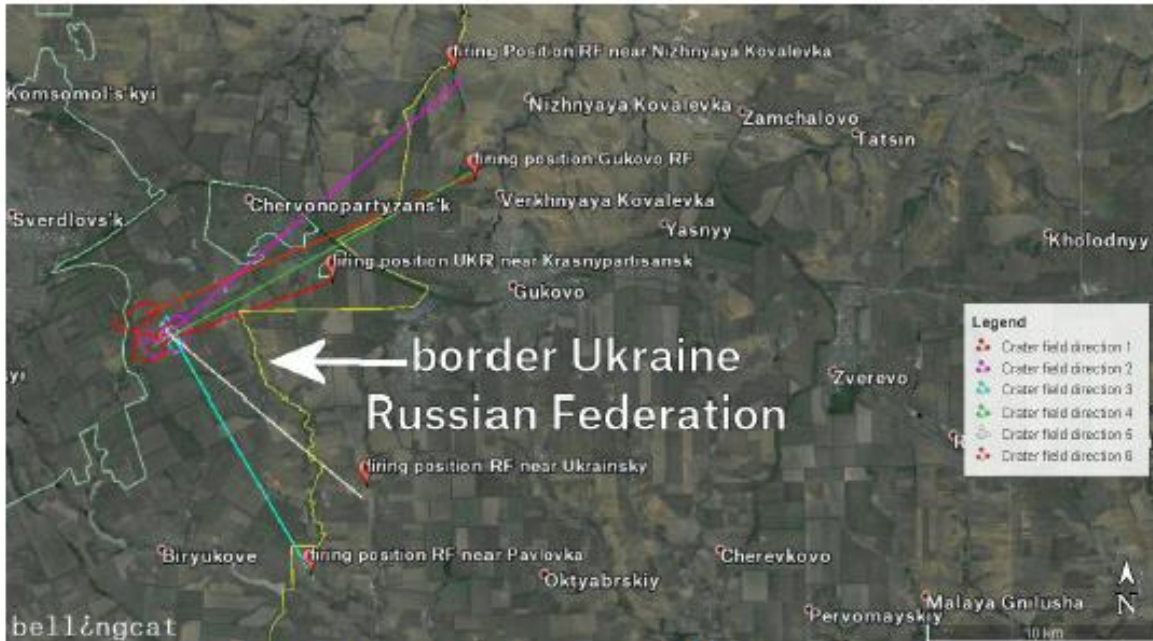


Firing position near Ukrainskiy, Russia

The one exception was a firing position located near Chervonopartyzansk, within the territory of Ukraine.

5. Near Gukovo, Russia at 48°05'25.0"N 39°54'45.3"E

The firing position near Gukovo is particularly noteworthy, because numerous videos have been shared on social media showing artillery fire. The firing position shown in these videos will be examined separately in the following section.



Crater fields near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine – located firing positions

The Bellingcat investigation team has also found that at all of the firing positions except one (Chervonopartyzansk), vehicle tracks show both an arrival from and departure to areas within Russia. In other words, in four out of five cases, there were no observable tracks linking the firing positions to Ukrainian territory, and all the observable tracks near the firing sites were exclusively within the territory of Russia.

The firing position near Gukovo

On 17 July 2014, a series of videos were shared on YouTube and VK showing an attack with MLRSs. The attack occurred on 16 July in the vicinity of Gukovo, Russia. This attack has already been geolocated by a number of blogs and articles, for example by The Interpreter²⁶.

The Bellingcat investigation team has found six videos on social networks that show the events of 16 July near Gukovo. Two of these videos were captured from the edge of the Kovalevsky pond on the afternoon of 16 July.



Video001

г. Гуково (РФ), град бьет по Украине
"City of Gukovo (RF), a Grad strikes at Ukraine"
added 16 July 2014

Camera location: [48°4'30.76"N 39°55'36.94"E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nuar9RkYCR)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nuar9RkYCR>

[A](#)

Alternative link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SIDxVxdlijw>

Video001 shows several MLRS salvos west of the pond. This video has been successfully geolocated a number of times by various journalists, bloggers, and open source investigators²⁷.



Video002

Обстрел ГРАДАМИ территории Украины. г. Гуково, Ростовская область.

"Bombardment of the territory of Ukraine with Grads, city of Gukovo, Rostov oblast"

16.07.2014, 17.05 (MSK)

added 16 July 2014

Camera location: [48° 4'15.08"N 39°55'24.16"E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_pCuqmOm0)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_pCuqmOm0

Alternative link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRCjUPa7qHU>

Video002 shows burning fields northwest of the same pond that appears in Video001. It was suspected at the time that this fire came from MLRS launchers²⁸.

²⁶ <http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-149-russian-tanks-and-artillery-reach-donetsk/>;

<http://web.archive.org/web/20150108053731/http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-149-russian-tanks-and-artillery-reach-donetsk/>

²⁷ <http://ukraineatwar.blogspot.dk/2014/07/russian-Grad-firing-from-russian-soil.html>;

<http://web.archive.org/web/20150115124112/http://ukraineatwar.blogspot.nl/2014/07/russian-grad-firing-from-russian-soil.html>

Other Grad rocket volleys were documented in four other videos on the same day in the evening. Each of these videos was captured exactly at sunset, leading to our determination that the videos were captured at approximately 19:15 (MSK, local time)²⁹.

An important feature of this collection of videos is that each was captured from different angles facing the firing position. The Bellingcat investigation team was able to precisely determine the location of the firing position from the exact locations of the cameras and the angle and positions of the Grad launchers in each video.



Video003
Град в Гуково
"Grad in Gukovo"
added 16 July 2014
Camera location: [48°03'59.0"N 39°55'36.2"E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUUzNnGGbSk)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUUzNnGGbSk>
Alternative Link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edE_FshuF2U

Video003 was captured from a cherry tree on a residential plot on Bazarnaya Street 84 in Gukovo. The identifying features of this video include buildings in the center of the video, the cherry tree as camera location, and the angle and distance from the firing position.



Camera location Video003 - yellow-green lines in the middle point toward the firing position

²⁸ <http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-149-russian-tanks-and-artillery-reach-donetsk/>;
<http://web.archive.org/web/20150108053731/http://www.interpretermag.com/ukraine-liveblog-day-149-russian-tanks-and-artillery-reach-donetsk/>

²⁹ <http://suncalc.net/#/48.05.39.9333.13/2014.07.16/19:15>



Video004

Залп российских ГРАДов из Гуково в сторону Украины

"Salvo of Russian Grads from Gukovo in the direction of Ukraine"

added 16 July 2014

Camera location: [48° 4'29.80"N 39°55'36.07"E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pu0h2O7Rn)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pu0h2O7Rn>

↓

Alternative link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8F9WFkA9C08>

Video004 shows the firing position on the southwest side of Kovalevsky pond. The identifying landscape features in this video are the solitary tree on the right side of the camera's perspective, the big bush in roughly the middle of the perspective, and the utility poles on the far left side of the perspective.



Camera location of Video004 - light green lines in the middle point toward the firing position



Video005

Град Гуково, Ростовской обл., Россия по Украине
Russian attacked Ukraine from Gukovo, Rostov
Oblast

added 16 July 2014

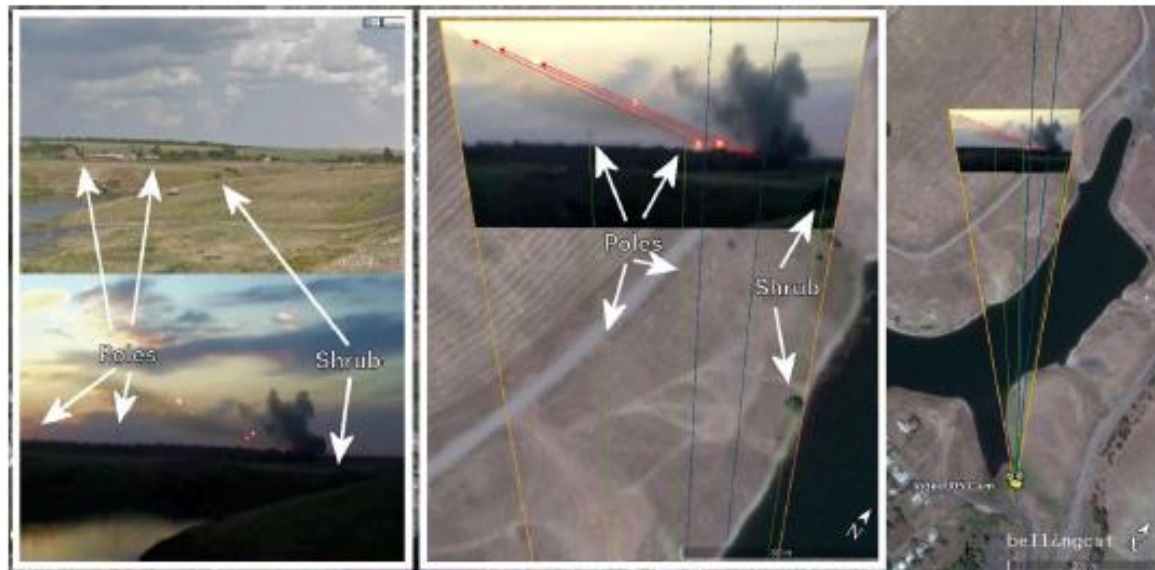
Camera location: [48° 4'24.30"N 39°55'37.12"E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXpCTUjWGkE)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXpCTUjWGkE>

Alternative link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ufW8UxbkPM>

The firing position in Video005 is visible from the southwest side of Kovalevsky pond. The identifying landscape features in this video are the same as Video004: a big bush and utility poles.

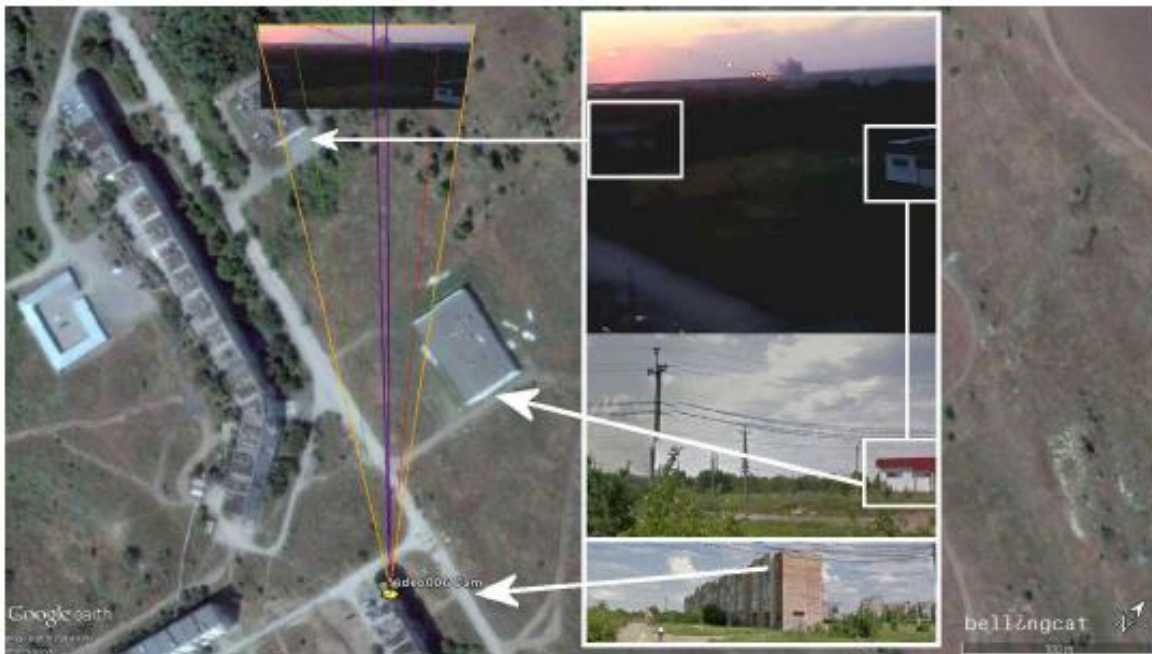


Camera location of Video005 - blue lines in the middle point toward the firing position

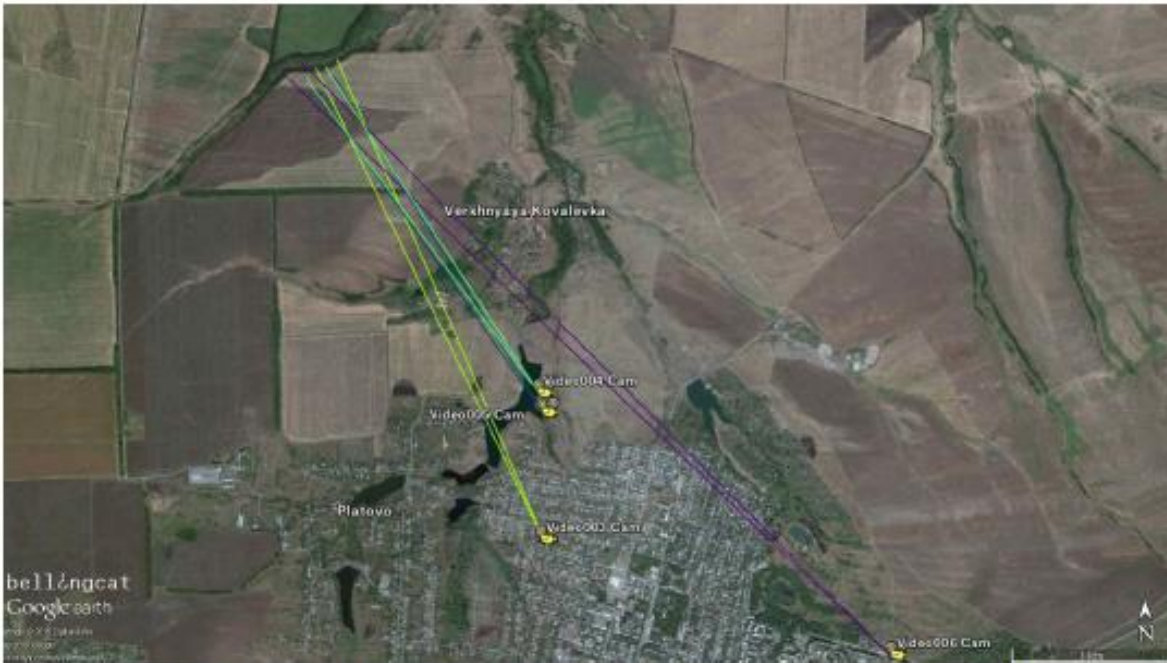


Video006
Обстрел территории Украины из Гуково, россия
"Shelling of the territory of Ukraine from Gukovo, Russia"
Added 16 July 2014
Camera location: [48° 3'33.15"N 39°57'22.60"E](https://www.google.com/maps/place/48+3+33.15+N,+39+57+22.60+E)
http://vk.com/video-38854900_169727129
Alternative link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsmcdunSOLA>

Video006 was captured from a residential building on Botanicheskaya Street 7a in Gukovo. The identifying features of this video include a building on the right side of the video, another building on the left side, the road below, and the angle and distance from the firing position.

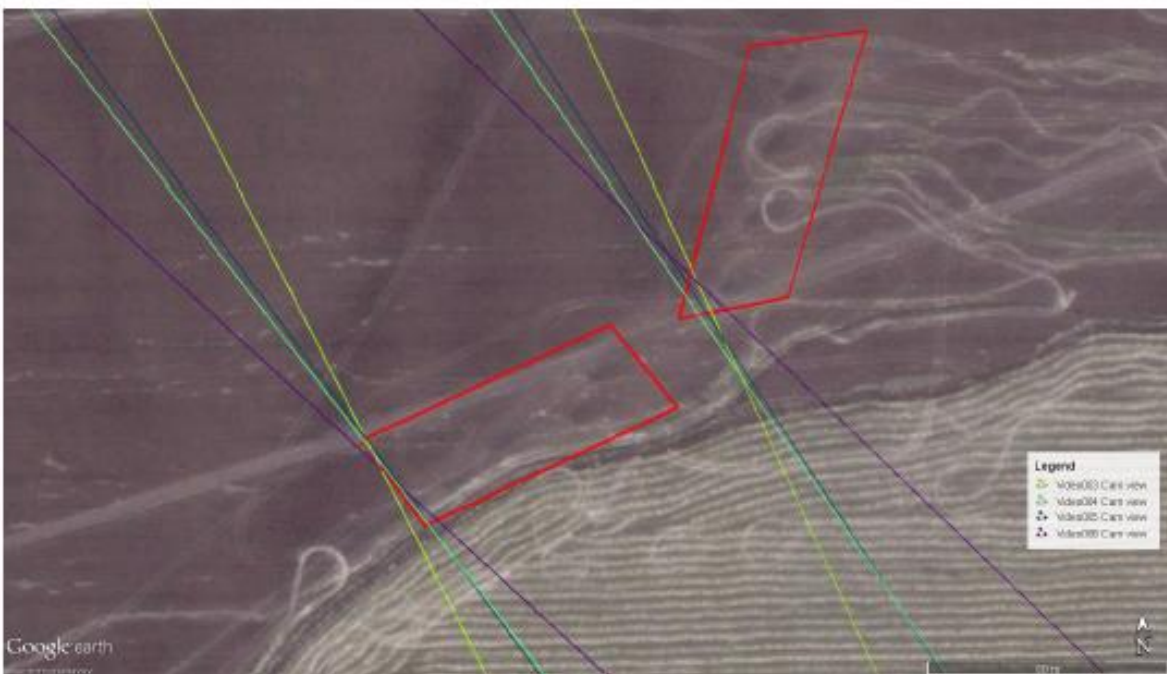


Camera location of Video006 - dark purple lines show the direction of the firing position



The intersections of the viewing directions to the firing position give the exact location

On the satellite image below, taken 8 August 2014, the intersection of the lines clearly shows two visible burns, marking the firing position.



The intersection of viewing directions and the location of Grad firing positions

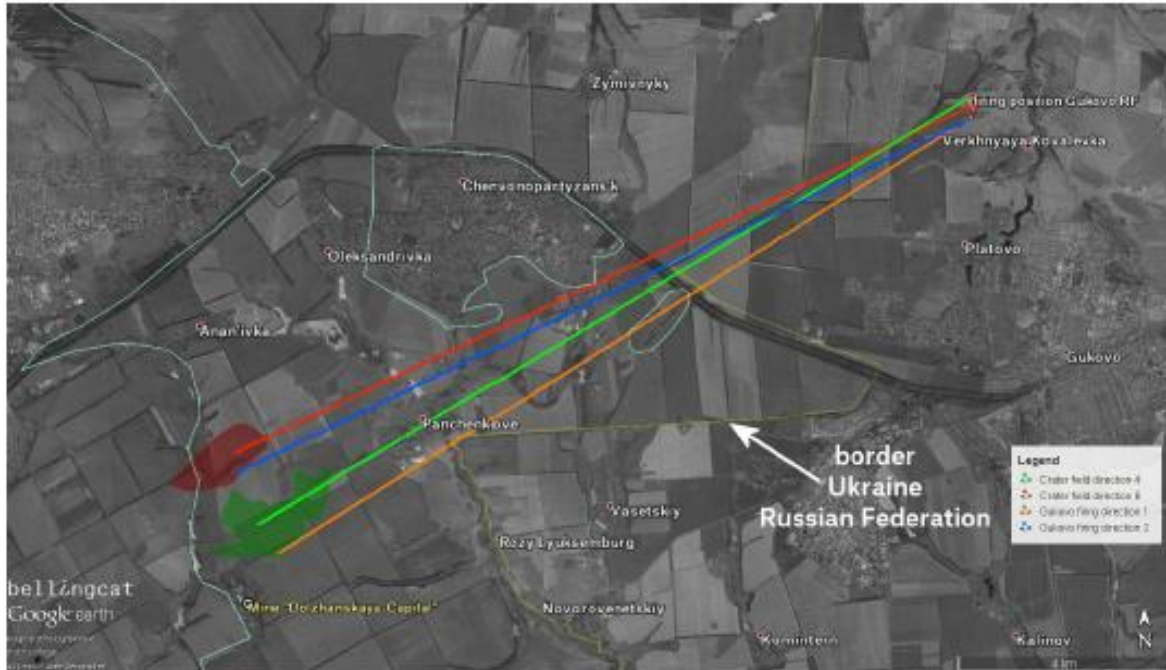
The positions of the cameras in the previous videos clearly point to a firing position north of Platovo. These firing positions are visible from satellite imagery of the burned fields (image above).

As evident from the satellite imagery, there are two visible firing positions for four Grad MLRSs at 48°05'25.0"N 39°54'45.3"E. The Bellingcat investigation team has measured the direction of the traces of fire and calculated the trajectory for each firing position.



Trajectories analyzed from the direction of the burn marks

The calculated trajectories of the burn marks point toward two different crater fields on Ukrainian territory (image below). After analyzing the individual craters in the artillery strike site, we found that the calculated trajectories of the firing positions fit almost exactly the two trajectories determined from the artillery crater analysis of the crater field near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine.



Trajectories from the firing position north of Platovo to the target area around the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine

Thus, from the evidence of crater field analysis, social media geolocation, and local media reports, the Bellingcat investigation team has determined that the artillery attacks on the Ukrainian armed forces positions near the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine were conducted on 16 July 2014 from firing positions near Gukovo, within the territory of Russia.

Video footage of the aftermath of the attacks

On 12 August 2014, the separatists, via their so-called "Information and Analysis Agency South East" posted two videos entitled "Destroyed position of the 'heroic' 72nd Brigade APU near Sverdlovsk, Lugansk region"³⁰.

The Bellingcat investigation team has located the camera position of these videos as being in the crater field in the vicinity of the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine³¹.



A shot from the video
"Уничтоженная военная техника под Свердловском 72 бригады ВСУ"³²

The same destroyed military vehicles are clearly visible in the 8 August 2014 satellite image from Google Earth, taken just after the Ukrainian forces pulled out of this border area³³.

³⁰ <http://real-info.info/novorossiya/razbitve-pozitsii-gerojskoj-72-brigady-vsu-pod-sverdlovskom-luganskaya-oblast>;

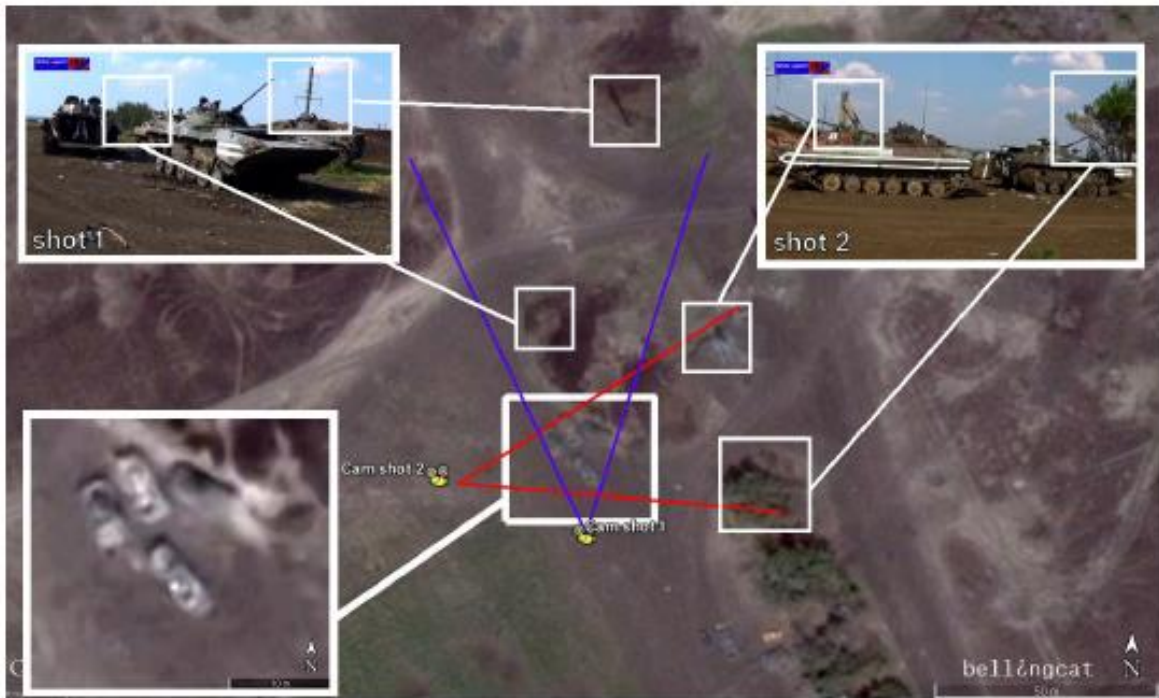
<http://web.archive.org/web/20140819175725/http://real-info.info/novorossiya/razbitve-pozitsii-gerojskoj-72-brigady-vsu-pod-sverdlovskom-luganskaya-oblast>

³¹ <https://www.google.de/maps/place/48%C2%B001%2753.3%22N+39%C2%B044%2715.5%22E/@48.0314833,39.7376444,732m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m2!3m1!1s0x0:0x0>

³² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_bpZMKlnN4

³³ https://pressimus.com/Interpreter_Mag/press/3701;

http://web.archive.org/web/20150210144851/https://pressimus.com/Interpreter_Mag/press/3701



Camera location for the scene from the video at 1:05



A shot of four damaged Ukrainian vehicles from the video
 "Уничтоженная военная техника под Свердловском 72 бригады ВСУ"³⁴

³⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_boZMKlnN4



Other shots from the videos

These videos show the extent of the destruction of the Ukrainian forces' equipment based close to the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine. Many heavily damaged trucks and armored vehicles are visible in the video, including a truck, several BMP-2 units, a self-propelled artillery unit, BM-21 Grad launchers, and tanks.

The Khmelnytskyi attack 25 July 2014

On 28 July 2014, the Russian news agency Ruptly published a video on YouTube entitled "Ukraine: Battle aftermath litters after Sverdlovsk militia pummels 72nd Motorized Brigade"³⁵.



Shot from the Ruptly Video

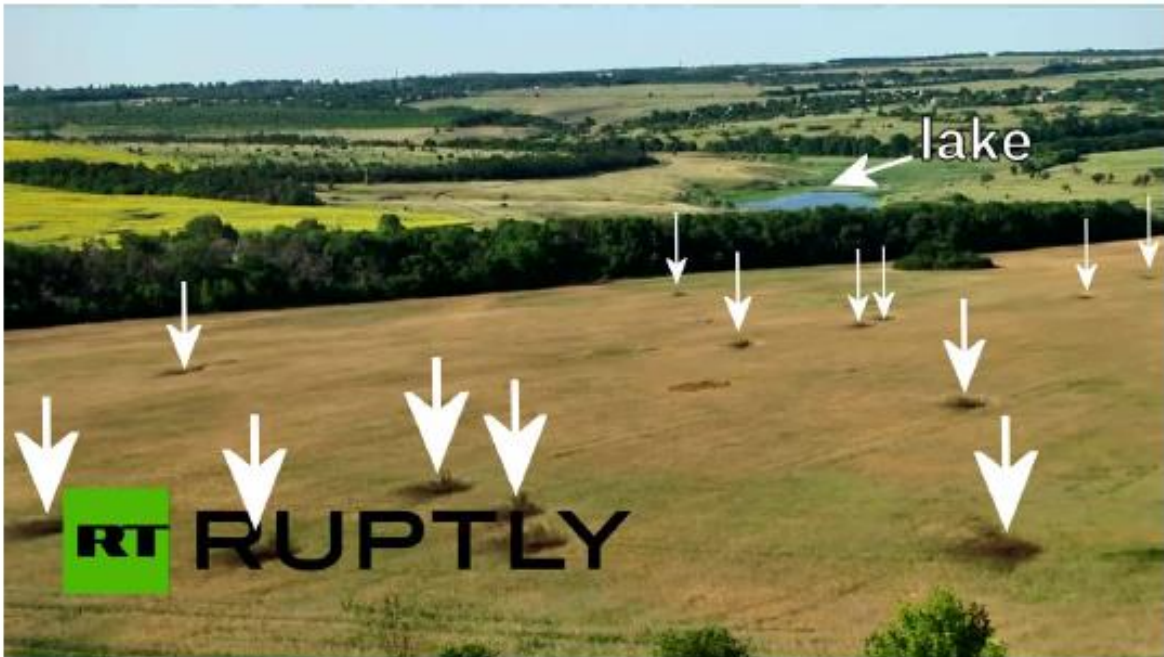
Several abandoned and damaged armored vehicles are visible in this video. The video description also gives us a date for the attack:

Ukrainian Army BMP-2, MT-LB and rocket launchers were left abandoned near Sverdlovsk on Saturday, after the 72nd Motorized Brigade suffered heavy losses during mortar shelling from the Lugansk People's Militia on Friday. Lugansk People's Militia has said that heavy losses were suffered by the Ukrainian army in both hardware and personnel after the Kiev troops were hit by the 12mm [sic] mortar shells.

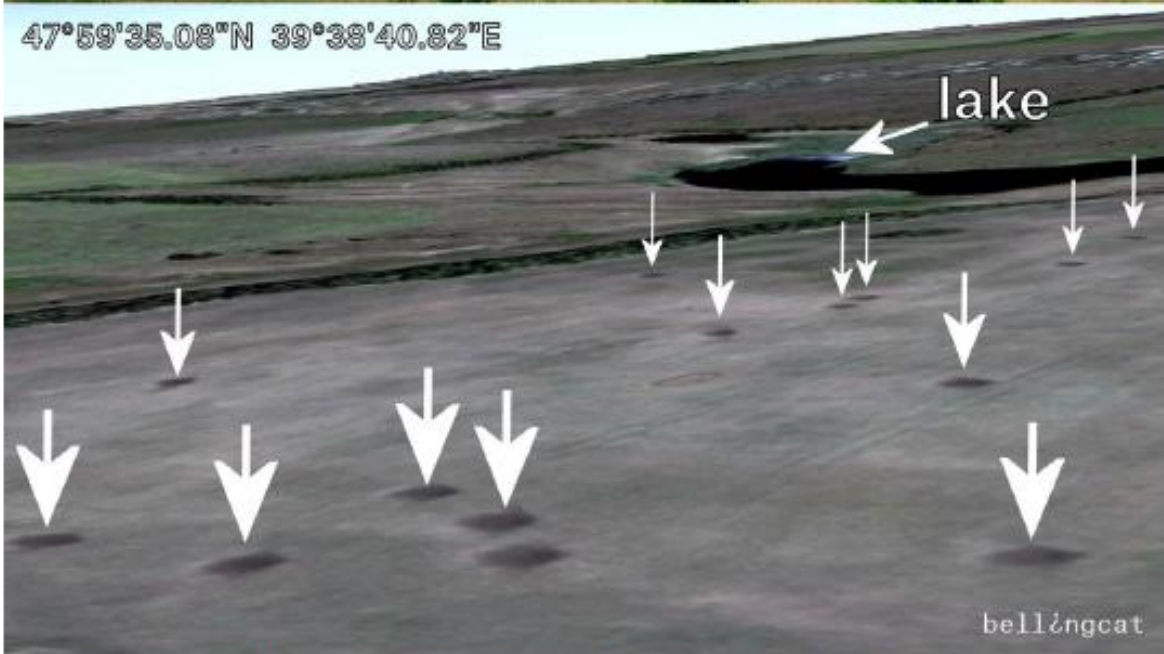
The video was released on 28 July 2014, which means that the day of the attack (the previous Friday, as mentioned in the description) was 25 July 2014.

Using the video footage, the Bellingcat investigation team has located the camera location of the Ruptly video as being a crater field close to the village of Khmelnytskyi, south of Sverdlovsk.

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj7sE6dsuWQ>



47°59'35.08"N 39°38'40.82"E



Comparison shot from the Ruptly video and the 15 August 2014 satellite image from Google Earth

Analyzing the satellite imagery, we found a total of 209 craters. We were also able to determine three primary attack trajectories.



Result of the crater analysis at the village Khmelnytskyi, south of Sverdlovsk

The trajectories of nine craters point directly east (green line). Two other trajectories (red and cyan lines) originate from a southeasterly direction. All three trajectories clearly point to firing positions within Russian territory.



Firing position 1 and military camp
Google Earth satellite image date 08 August 2014



Firing position 2 and military camp
Google Earth satellite image date 08 August 2014

These firing positions are directly connected to the military camp of the Russian army near Pavlovka and a smaller firing position close to Malyy.

Conclusion

The Bellingcat investigation team used internationally recognized methods and satellite imagery to analyze a total of 1,353 artillery craters in eastern Ukraine and determine their trajectories. We located firing positions that closely matched these trajectories, all of which were inside Russian territory with one exception, which was less than 2km from the Russian border.

Three artillery attack case studies were investigated in this report: Amvrosiivka (14 July 2014), between Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine and the village of Panchenkove (16 July to 8 August 2014), and Khmelnytskyi (25 July 2014). Our artillery crater analysis concluded that there were a total of ten primary attack trajectories across all the case studies. We identified firing positions from each of these attack trajectories. Nine of these firing positions were – without any doubt – within the territory of Russia, with three being within 400 to 800m of a military camp. The one position in Ukraine was near Chervonopartyzansk, within the territory of Ukraine, 1.2km south and 1.5km north of the border with Russia.

The target trajectory of three firing positions was determined through analysis of scorch marks created by MLRS fire. All three of these trajectories led precisely to the target area of the crater field, allowing our team to calculate the trajectories in both directions (i.e., from crater field to firing position and from firing position to crater field). Vehicle tracks are also visible and clearly showed that they originated from, and led back to, Russian territory near seven firing positions.

The firing position for an attack on 16 July 2014 in a field north of Gukovo, Russia was documented in a series of videos found on social media. Four of these videos show the same instance of 122mm MLRS fire from different perspectives. By comparing the video locations and views, the Bellingcat investigation team was able to geolocate the exact firing position. With a small deviation (300m at a shelling distance of 15km), the firing position geolocated through video analysis was the same as that derived from the crater analysis.

This study has provided compelling evidence that a series of artillery attacks on Ukrainian territory were conducted between 14 July and 8 August 2014 from firing positions within Russia. The first attack on 14 July originated from Russian territory near the Russian village of Seleznev and was directed towards positions of the Ukrainian armed forces south of the Ukrainian village of Amvrosiivka. Four attacks were conducted near Gukovo, Russia on Ukrainian armed forces close to the Dolzhanskaya-Capital mine and the village of Panchenkove between 16 July and 8 August. Two additional attacks were conducted on this area from Russian territory north of Gukovo. On 25 July, an artillery attack was conducted on the positions of the Ukrainian 72nd Mechanized Brigade near Khmelnytskyi village, south of Sverdlovsk. These attacks also came from locations within Russia, specifically from a military base in Pavlovka and a position east of the village of Malyy.

Acknowledgments

Based on the original work of Sean Case

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This report was created collaboratively using [Slack.com](https://slack.com)

MH17 Joint Investigation Team's New Video Brings New Facts to Light

This report analyses a new video with disturbing transcribed audio recordings determining the cause and culpability of the MH17 tragedy, implicating Russia and pro-Russia rebels.

MH17 JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAM'S NEW VIDEO BRINGS NEW FACTS TO LIGHT

March 30, 2015

By Aric Toler

On March 30, the Joint Investigation Team investigating the cause of the downing of MH17 released a video calling for witnesses in eastern Ukraine to come forward with information regarding the transport of a Buk anti-aircraft system through eastern Ukraine on July 17th (the day of the MH17 crash) and 18th, 2014. In the video, the Joint Investigation Team summarize the path of the Buk from Donetsk, through Zuhres and Torez to Snizhne, to Luhansk, and back to Russia with photographs and videos of the Buk along with intercepted phone calls between separatists. The majority of this information has been long known, as can be found in Bellingcat's November report on the Buk system that likely shot down MH17. However, this video also provides us with new information that further implicates Russia and the separatists with whom it collaborated in the form of intercepted phone calls placed after the downing of MH17. In these three previously unpublished phone calls, separatists discuss a Volvo low-loader truck hauling a Buk from Snizhne to Russian territory shortly after the MH17 shutdown.

Along with the newly published phone conversations, the Joint Investigation Team video confirms previous facts vital in determining the cause and culpability of the MH17 tragedy. The video, along with a description on the JIT website, confirm the following facts that were also recapped in the November Bellingcat report:

- A Buk anti-aircraft system was transported in a Volvo low-loader with a telephone number on a distinct yellow background from Donetsk on the morning of July 17 and through Luhansk in the early morning of July 18
- The same Buk was seen in the morning and early afternoon of July 17 in the towns of Zuhres, Torez, and Snizhne.
- The Buk drove south of Snizhne in the afternoon of July 17 without the assistance of the Volvo low-loader.

The new information, which has largely been speculated upon before this video, concerns the location of the Buk before being photographed in Donetsk and after the shutdown of MH17.

The Joint Investigation Team has determined that the Buk was likely transported from Sjevnyy, Ukraine in the Luhansk oblast, through Luhansk, and into Donetsk. This transit took place overnight between July 16 and 17, though the exact route is not clear, as the video highlights a few possible alternate routes near Luhansk. The Joint Investigation Team does not speculate where the Buk was located before reaching Sjevnyy; however, the town is located less than a kilometer from the Russian border, raising obvious questions.



There are three additional calls that the Joint Investigation Team referred to, all of which occurred after the downing of MH17. The first took place at 9:32pm, approximately 5



hours after the MH17 crash, between two separatists. This call concerns how one of the crew members accompanying the Buk was left behind at a checkpoint east of Snizhne. The Joint Investigation Team is requesting any additional information available regarding the location of this checkpoint and petrol station, along with the identity of this crew member. There are a few errors in the English and small parts of the phone calls that are not included in the transcript, which are also not included in the below transcript. Additionally, the Joint Investigation Team redacted the names in the phone

call, instead marking them as (...), and the transcript selectively marked expletives used in the phone calls. None of the expletives, excluded parts of conversations, or minor errors change the essential content of the phone calls from the original Russian.

A: Yes, (...)!

B: Hello, commander. Have you already left, yes?

A: Me? Yes. I have left for my task, you – for yours.

B: I got it. Within that very region or not?

A: No. I'm not within that region. I'm [going to] to the other direction.

B: ...[inaudible] a fighter has got lost there from this one... [inaudible] launcher. He has (expletive) lost his crew (expletive)!

A: What a (*sic*) launcher?

B: From a Buk.

A: From a Buk?

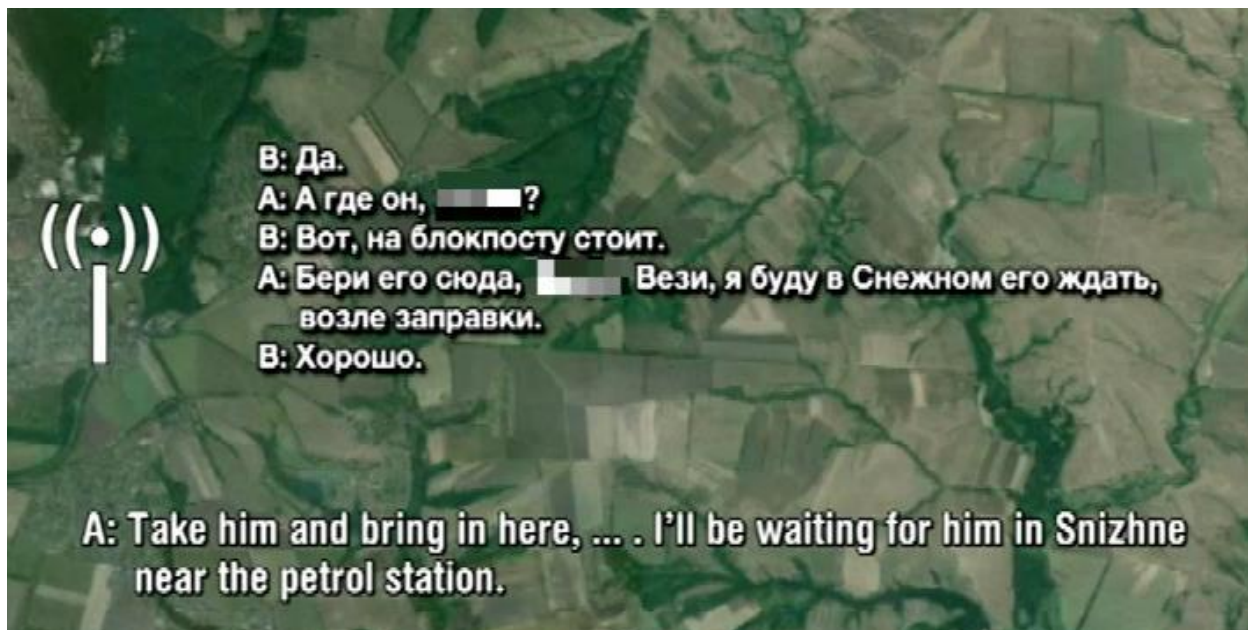
B: Yes.

A: And where is he, (expletive)?

B: Here he is standing at the checkpoint.

A: Take him and bring in here, (expletive). I'll be waiting for him in Snizhne near the petrol station.

B: Okay.



The other two intercepted calls took place at approximately 8:00am and 8:20am on July 18, the morning after the downing of MH17 and a few hours after the Buk and Volvo low-loader truck were filmed in Luhansk headed east.

First call, placed at approximately 8am on July 18, 2014:

B: Good morning (...)!

A: Good morning, (...) Yesterday was a (expletive) mess, I have nothing to say.

B: What's up?

A: Where, is, whatsit (expletive) err...Why did your comrade (...) return. Incomprehensible such movements. I don't know what was going on yesterday, tell me!

B: They brought the car [note: Every time car or vehicle is referred to in these transcript, the original word used is машина / mashina, which can refer to any vehicle, truck, or a machine. This word is likely referring to either the Volvo truck or the Buk] till crossroad, left it there, the lads went on themselves.

A: Well.

B: So, the car was going in the correct direction and arrived successfully.

B: There were strange incoming calls which began suddenly, from 10 persons.

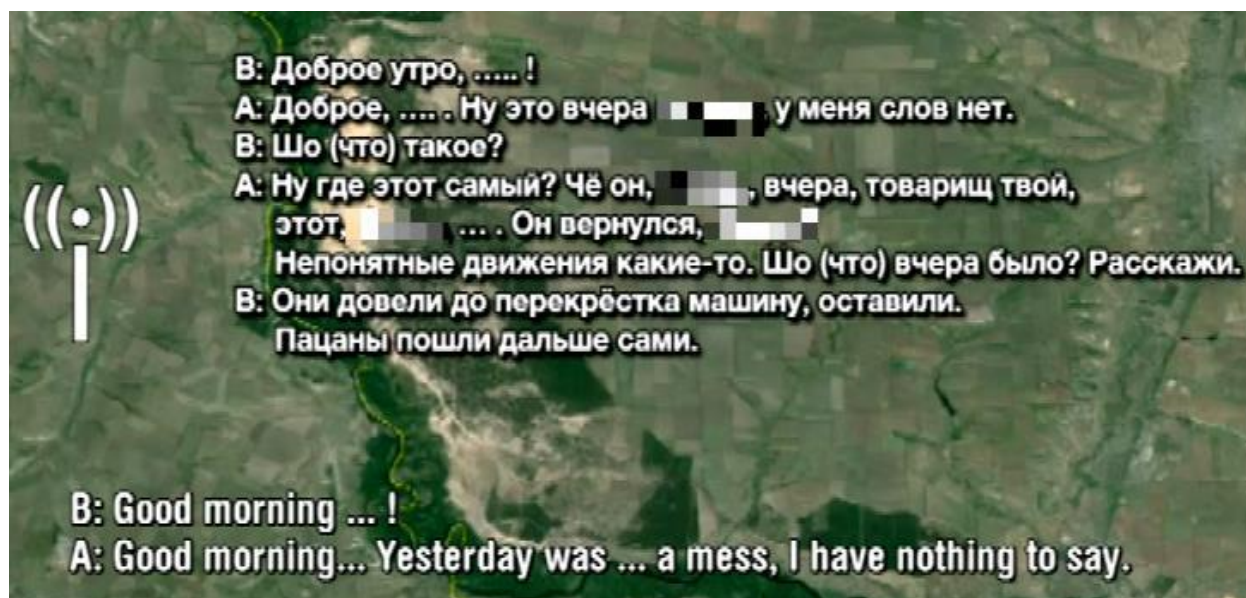
A: Who are that (*sic*) 10 persons?

B: Err. There were different incoming calls got him on the phone from people who begun (*sic*) to introduce themselves...err...One and then the second, then the third, then the fourth...he told me that he had pissed off...later, (...) begun to phone up.

A: And he turned of (*sic*) his telephone. (Expletive) of a mess.. err... and we don't know at all where is the car.

B: The car is in Russia.

A: (Expletive) shit... err...yesterday I [said] (expletive) that we didn't know.



Twenty minutes later, a second call is placed between the same two people in the previous call (A and B).

B: Yes, (...)!

A: (...), you should take (...), and come to my place, there is no ...car, no one saw it (expletive). That one, which had gone to meet it... returned back without the car, you know what I mean. Where? Whom? Which way did he bring it? (Expletive) disaster, you know...

B: And what about Bibliotekar [*note: "The Librarian"*]? This is that group of people transported it.

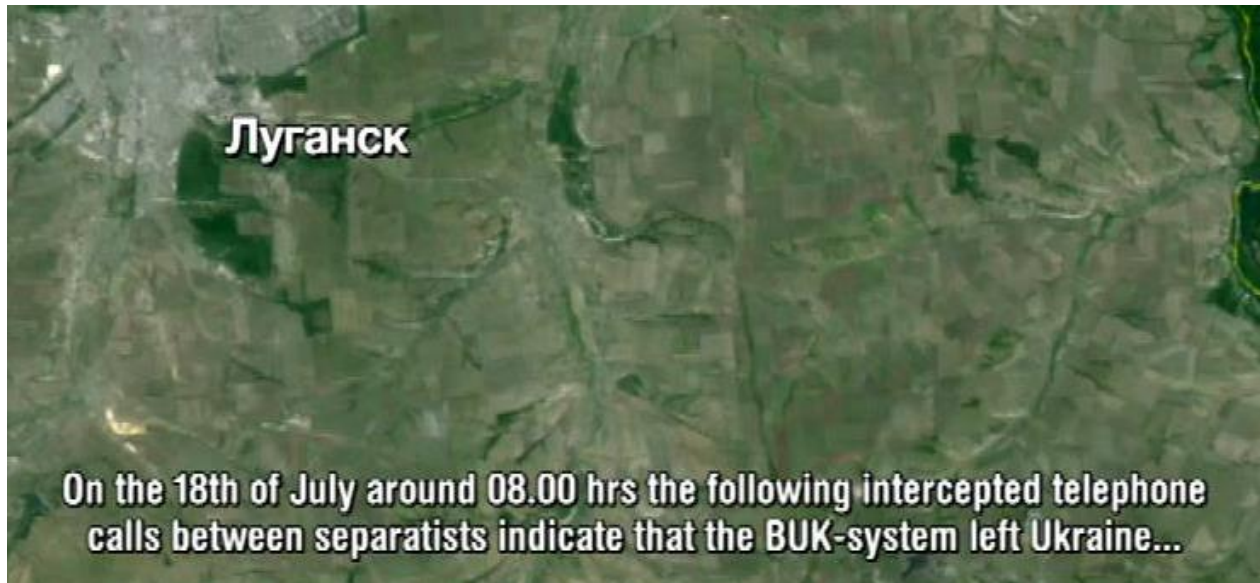
A: Well.

B: On the lowboy [*note: The Volvo low-loader truck*]. I have just made a (*sic*) contact with them, they are all in Russia, they will bring a new vehicle [*note: Same word – машина – used as in the previous translation to "car" from Russia*].

A: Aha. But that...err...did he give it to Bibliotekar?

B: For sure!

A: Well, I got it.



There are several facts to be extracted from these calls, including the following, which were not included in the November Bellingcat report and only partially speculated upon from other open source investigations:

- The first known origin point of the Buk on July 17 was not in Donetsk, but instead in a town less than a kilometer from the Russian border. Previously, many have claimed that this Buk was seized from an abandoned Ukrainian base in Donetsk. This new information indicates that either the Buk simply came from Russia, or separatists transported a captured (Ukrainian) Buk from Donetsk to a town at the Russian border (or further into Russia), and then returned to Donetsk.
- The Buk was located at the checkpoint east of Snizhne in the evening of July 17, before traveling to Luhansk. For a map showing the checkpoints active on July 17 just east of Snizhne, click [here](#) for a KMZ file created by Bellingcat contributor Timmi Allen (use Google Earth to open file).
- The Buk had a crew with it, though it is not explicitly said where the crew originated from (Russia or Ukraine).
- The Volvo truck and Buk were transported into Russia after passing through Luhansk early on the morning of July 18.
- Numerous people organized the transport of the Buk and many others knew about the situation, including: the separatists who picked up the person at the checkpoint on July 17, the crew transporting the Buk on July 17-18, the ten

people who called the person who transported it on July 18, and the people who took the Buk in Russia from the other crew on July 18.

- The “Bibliotekar” crew transported the Buk to Russia.
 - The participation of Bibliotekar was previously known from an earlier call intercepted and released by the SBU (Ukrainian Security Services), as seen on this English transcript of the call.
 - From the July 17 call, placed on the morning of July 17, a man named Khmuryi tells a separatist (named “Buryatik”) to call Bibliotekar for more information on the Buk, which was located near a motel in Donetsk.
 - Khmuryi is supposedly the name used by Sergei Petrovsky, a separatist officer who was in Donetsk at the time.
 - The identity of “Bibliotekar” is unknown.
- The Volvo truck was taken to Russia on July 18, but was later used by separatists on August 6 and August 23 (second source). Thus, we can conclude that unless an identical Volvo truck was picked up as well, the машина (translated as both “car” and “vehicle” by the Joint Investigation Team) the Buk hauled by the Volvo.

This new video is the strongest indication yet from the Joint Investigation Team that the Buk photographed and filmed in eastern Ukraine on July 17 and 18 is the culprit of the tragedy. While the Joint Investigation Team has not explicitly ruled out other scenarios, it is telling that they have called upon witnesses in eastern Ukraine for more information while disclosing specific photographs, videos, and intercepted phone calls that all point to the same culprits.

How EchoSec Found Evidence of a Russian Fighting in Ukraine

This report shows senior soldiers from well within Russia who are now fighting in Ukraine.

How EchoSec Found Evidence of a Russian Fighting in Ukraine

February 19, 2015

By Jason Jubinville and Bellingcat

Originally posted on the EchoSec Blog, reproduced with permission.

Recently, the media has been paying close attention to the Donetsk region in northeast Ukraine. We decided to look for ourselves to see if we could identify military personnel of Russian origin in the area.

In a military, or global security context, the data pouring from this region can play a pivotal role in command, control, communications and coordination of operations.

Quick, informed decisions are the best decisions.

We used a systematic, 3-phase approach to find, filter, and investigate the social media coming out of Ukraine and Russia.

We started by using a systematic grid search to identify clusters and outliers, then reviewed each cluster and outliers for interesting information. Finally, we reviewed each piece of flagged information across multiple social media sources to correlate information and draw conclusions.

This investigation took us less than 6 hours, and the results were astounding.

Here is how we did it:

Initially, our analyst drew a box over the Donetsk region in Northeast Ukraine. The purpose of this large initial search is not to find posts immediately, but to determine where a large number of the posts are clustering. These clusters are going to be prioritized, then analyzed later for anything that stands out.

Upon further inspection of the clusters in the Donetsk region on January 23rd, our analysts found an individual of interest. Due to the nature of the data, no firm conclusions can be drawn about the pictured soldier; however, he appears to have crossed the Russian border into Ukraine to join the fighting, only recently.



This particular soldier identified himself as Amigo Desperado, probably an alias. Our analyst then tracked him to using a different social media source, VK. VK is Facebook-like application popular in Russia. As can be seen in the picture below, we can find his date of birth, current city, and the location of several recent posts.

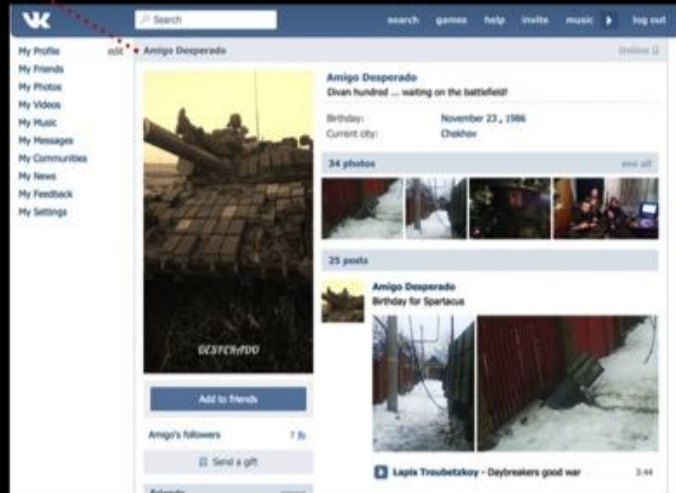
echoSEC leads in Ukraine point to a Russian soldiers' VK page (VK is Russian Facebook)



'Amigo Desperado'

Born Nov 23, 1986

Lives in Chekhov,
Russia



In the following picture, we can see that he was located in Russian territory in early December. He is clearly pictured with the Russian flag, a tank, and a group of men.

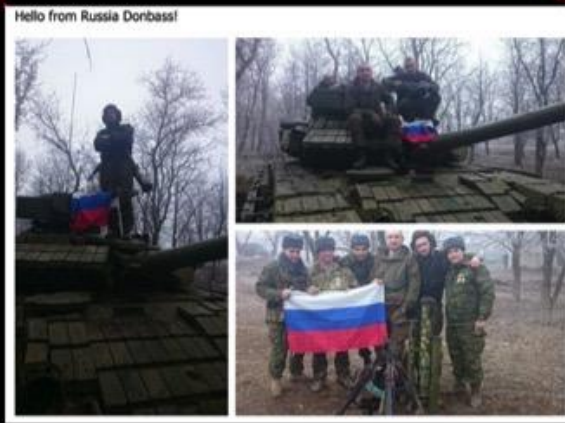


Amigo Desperado was in Russia in mid-December, but mentions Ukraine

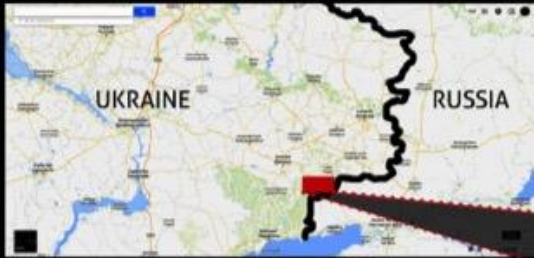
Amigo Desperado:
"Hello from Russia,
Donbass"

Soldiers in Russia
addressing Donbass,
Ukraine

Dec 14, 2014



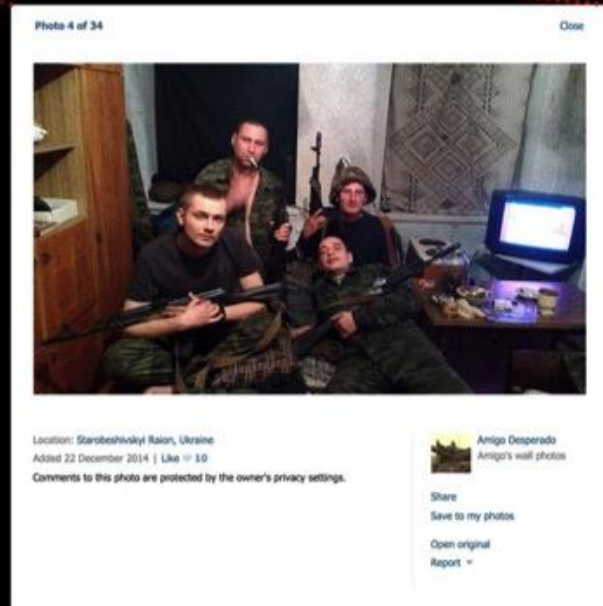
We then found a photograph of him 8 days later on December 22nd. The location associated with this post was from **within** the Ukrainian boarder.



Amigo Desperado's photo 8 days after "Hello from Russia" comment

The photo was automatically geotagged by location services in the phone. The Russian soldier and his group are now just inside the Ukraine border in Starobeshivs'kyi.

Dec 22, 2014



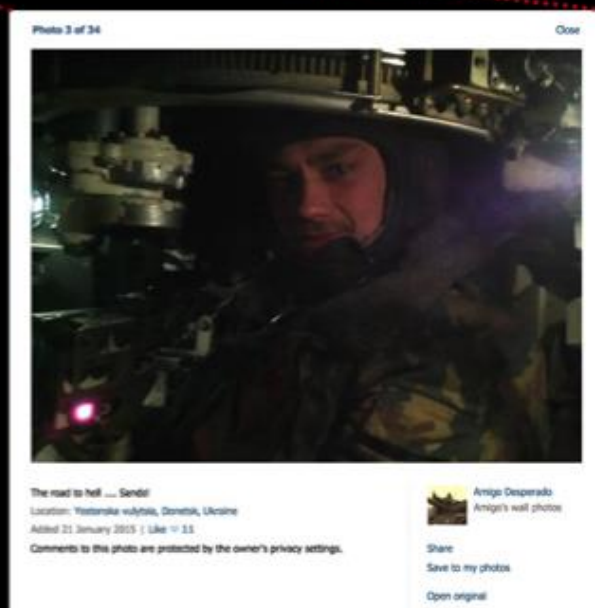
Finally, we find a photograph that he has posted, where the location tag was directly from the Donetsk region. Using Echosec we tracked this individual from his Russian home to the center of the conflict within Ukraine. Further information about his identity, his motivations, and his associations can be derived from other social media accounts similar to VK.



Amigo Desperado's photo from this Wednesday

The photo was also automatically geotagged by location services. He is inside a tank in Donetsk, Ukraine.

Jan 21, 2015



While our analyst was looking at the Donetsk region, he saw a number of graphic social media posts that captured the severity of the conflict in the region. These posts included several graphic images of bodies, ordnance and other evidence of the conflict. We elected not to display these graphic images on our blog, however, a social media search near the Donetsk airport, or near Mariupol may yield similar results.

Ultimately, the Echosec social media search tool was an effective tool for finding interesting information that is publicly available online. An effective user can sort through large amounts of information quickly to find what he needs. This can include tracking a person of interest, finding out new information in a crisis situation or gathering actionable intelligence.

All information contained in this post is open source and implications or inferences made by this publication are solely views of the writer.

Written by: Jason Jubinville @jpjubinville.

MEETING WITH THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH - WINNIPEG

Bishop Larence Huculak is the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg and leader of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) in Canada. I met with His Eminence in Winnipeg on July 3, to discuss Orthodox unity in Ukraine, what it could mean for the Ukrainian Catholic community, and what implications it could have. Bishop Huculak stated that should unification of the existing Ukrainian Orthodox churches take place, doing so today would be the most ideal and most likely produce favourable results. Ukrainians need a force they can rally behind, and since Orthodoxy is the largest and predominant religion in the country, it is obvious that a unified and recognized Orthodox church – based on the precedent of Kyivan-Rus’ – would be that force.



UGCC makes up a total of 8 percent of the total Ukrainian population, while Orthodoxy tallies over 86 percent. Currently, there are three Orthodox churches in Ukraine: Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC EP). The rest of the country’s population is categorized as Muslim, Jewish, Protestant, Pentecostal, Baptist, or ‘other’ (such as Baha’i). Though the UGCC is under the jurisdiction of Rome and not Constantinople, as per the Union of Brest in 1596, it still traces its origins to the conversion of Kyivan-Rus’ in 988 and is part of that national heritage.

Even though the UGCC and the rest of Ukraine’s Orthodoxies do not look to the same Primate, Bishop Huculak agreed that the unification of Ukraine’s three Orthodox churches would bring the people of Ukraine together. This might only be true if the new organization beckons to the national legacy of Kyivan-Rus’. Kyivan-Rus’ will provide the foundation for unity – religious and national – as it did for the period before the Soviet Union. The church (Greek Catholic and Orthodox) has long sustained Ukraine’s national identity and played an active role in religious, cultural, social, agricultural (see Dr. Roman Yereniuk meeting), and political life. Thus, because the UGCC and Ukraine’s Orthodoxies share a common past, the legal status and freedoms of the UGCC’s congregants will not be threatened. In fact, Bishop Huculak shared my perspective that Orthodox unity will bring Ukrainians together.

Discussions on uniting Ukraine’s different Orthodox churches, if successful, could lead to a weakening of Moscow’s influence in that war-torn country. Two of Ukraine’s three largest Orthodox church groups have been discussing a merger, with the apparent blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch, head of Orthodoxy worldwide. The UAOC EP and

the UOC KP have been holding regular meetings on the possibility of merging. The UOC MP, the third group, is widely seen as being under the political control of Moscow, and is experiencing a lessening of its influence especially following the Russian annexation of Crimea and its continued support for rebel groups.

There are administrative and real-estate issues that would be associated with such a merger. How are property transfers dealt with (churches, church land, graveyards and cemeteries)? How should voting for unity be undertaken? With three bishops or clerics in one area, which one takes precedence? To these questions, Bishop Huculak answered that the state would have to step in and assist with property transfers, votes would necessitate two-thirds majority support for merging with the other churches, and over time questions of church authority (i.e. bishops) would be dealt with and positions would be phased out.

On January 22, 2014, in the midst of EuroMaidan, Bishop Huculak gave a public sermon, in which he stated:

For over two months our people have been protesting peacefully in defense of their political, economic and social future. This is their democratic right and no government, political party, army or police force can deny them of this right, especially through violence... After many years of denied legal status and underground existence, our Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine is again being threatened by the ruling authority with loss of status for standing beside and praying with her people in the streets of Kyiv... And after centuries of subjugation by outside powers, in recent years the road to self-determination has been opened to Ukraine's citizens.

After a productive meeting, both Bishop Huculak and I agreed that Orthodox unity in Ukraine could help alleviate the situation and assist in helping Ukrainians with these problems.

MEETING WITH DR. ROMAN YERENIUK - WINNIPEG



Dr. Roman Yereniuk is a professor of religious studies at the University of Manitoba and the Director for the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies. Archpriest Roman Bozyk is the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, Principal of St. Andrew's College at the University of Manitoba, and an instructor/researcher of religion at the same institution. I met with both men at St. Andrew's College on July 3, 2015, to discuss Orthodox unity in Ukraine, based on the precedent created by Kyivan-Rus';

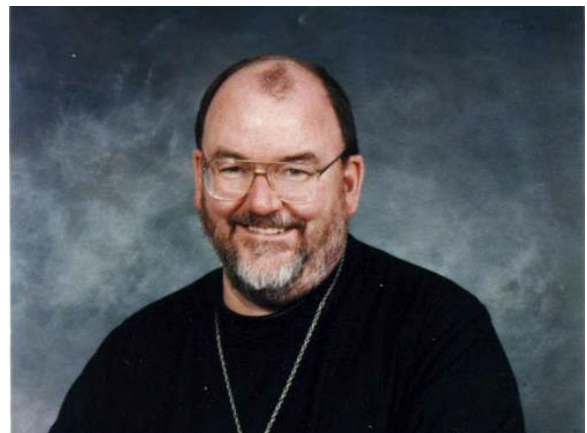
what unity could mean for Ukrainians; and, what implications unity could have on state politics and minority populations in Ukraine (Jews, and Tatar and other Muslims).

Immediately, Dr. Yereniuk emphasized the importance of the Orthodox church of Kyivan-Rus', established in 988 when Europe's largest state was converted to Orthodoxy by its leader, Grand Prince Vladimir of Kyiv. According to Dr. Yereniuk, "The church played a dominant role in the life of Ukrainians in their European homeland. The village church was the hub of activities – religious, cultural and, for a long time, educational. The priest was a leading intellectual and social figure in village life, proving not only spiritual guidance to his faithful, but also advice on improved agricultural methods, world news, and political happenings." The Orthodox church has always played a social and political role, in addition to its primary religious role.¹⁸³ It has always supported a unique Ukrainian national identity. Although Ukraine had been under continuous foreign control from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries, and for those parts formerly under Tsarist control there was a small yet undeniable Russian influence, until recently the legacy of the Kyivan-Rus' church has kept Ukrainian identity alive. Dr. Yereniuk agreed that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), one of three Orthodox churches in Ukraine, exerts a great deal of political influence on Ukrainians, altering the status quo and diminishing the historical cohesiveness of the Ukrainian people.

Father Bozyk, who has lectured internationally on the origins of the foundations of Ukrainian Orthodoxy – most recently at the University of Toronto in May 2014, when he gave a talk entitled, "St. Ilarion of Kyiv: The Foundation of Ukrainian Orthodoxy"¹⁸⁴ – took the same tone as his colleague. However, he went on to state that Moscow's current influence is rooted in the era of Stalinism, when Ukrainian language and culture was severely limited due to aggressive Sovietization policies. He noted that this included the Holodomor, the genocide by starvation that occurred against Ukrainians (by the regime of Josef Stalin) between 1932 and 1933 and resulted in between 6 and 7.5 million dead. It is Stalinism that is the foundation for today's aggressive and invasive influence exerted by Moscow, albeit to a great degree through the Orthodox church.

In demonstrating the importance of Kyivan-Rus' to modern Orthodox traditions and Orthodox heritage, both men referred to church architecture. They noted that by the eleventh century, church designs shifted away from Byzantine styles towards "local tastes, local building practices, and, perhaps, their own creativity. These changes marked the beginning of an architectural school known as the Kyivan-school." The Kyivan-school helped Ukrainians shape their own 'Ukrainian' identity through the centuries, and allowed Ukrainians to express their culture and language – through social interaction – even under foreign domination. Although Kyivan-Rus' disintegrated in the thirteenth century and new churches were built using more-modest designs and supplies, a revival took place in the seventeenth century, sometimes referred to as 'Cossack baroque'. Dr. Yereniuk then pointed to architectural historian, George Korbyn: "Ukrainian architecture has evolved into an entirely different, dynamic, and unique style. The 'Ukrainian Baroque' is a distinctly national Ukrainian style."¹⁸⁵ Since the rise of the Russian Orthodox Church at the end of the Soviet period and the creation of the UOC MP after the fall of Soviet communism, Russian styles, teachings, and influence have been increasingly imposed in Ukraine. For the most part, these have derived directly from Moscow and, today, from the directives of President Vladimir Putin.

For both Dr. Yereniuk and Father Bozyk, the need for a unified and recognized Orthodox church in Ukraine is real. Should the ongoing discussions of unification between the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP) produce results, a major shift in Ukrainian life will take place, and Ukrainian identity and cohesion will strengthen. They stated that Russia's political influence in Ukraine has manifested itself socially, religiously, and physically (with reference to Orthodox churches and religious culture). "We must see unity soon. Disunity is allowing Ukrainian history and identity to fade away."



Dr. Yereniuk was very open and encouraging of my past and present work for Ukraine. He did, however, express some disappointment in my reporting, identifying that I did not reference or make mention of the several past initiatives and conferences that aimed to work towards Orthodox unity. I explained that I have not been made aware of any other efforts, but that it should not be an impediment to my efforts, that I have been very open, and hope to assist wherever I can. Meanwhile, Archpriest Bozyk seemed to be borderline hostile. He repeatedly characterized Moscow Patriarchate parishioners as near-godless heathens I believe that he was including me in that category, as I have openly declared on numerous occasions that I am a member of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP).

I understand the dark past and hostility towards the ROC MP and its parishioners, but, at some point we must move beyond the subtle differences and recognize the

commonalities and goodness shared by all. There is something to be gained through working together, practicing religion through a common church, and Orthodox unity in Ukraine.

Professor Yereniuk stated that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate's community can be broken down into three categories: those who are Ukraine supporters, those who are believers but who know not of the church relationships in the past nor the present, and those who are ardent Russian supporters and not prepared to accept the truth about President Putin's actions.

Specifically in regards to this project, I asked Dr. Yereniuk if he might have concluded from his comments, as I had, that 60 to 70 percent of Moscow Patriarchate parishioners and priests would join with an approved, recognized, and repatriated Kyivan-Rus' church to rally around. He agreed.

It is not easy to agree with the sentiments of Archpriest Bozyk, who suggested that I walk away from my church. I will not. What I will do is to work progressively, honestly, and openly with all of Orthodoxy to bring about reform and change – to challenge what I believe to be wrong. I will continue my work towards Orthodox unity in Ukraine and here in Canada.

Surely men of God are men of compromise, for the betterment of all, and who need no political oversight.

MEETING WITH DR. ANDRIY ZAYARNYUK – WINNIPEG

I met with Dr. Andriy Zayarnyuk on July 3, 2015, at his office at the University of Winnipeg, to discuss Ukrainian identity, Ukrainian nationalism, and what effect the unification and recognition of a new Ukrainian Orthodox church could have. Dr. Zayarnyuk is an associate professor of history at the University of Winnipeg, specializing in modern Ukrainian and Polish history, nationalism and identities, and class formation. Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, he has been a vocal critic of President Putin's policies and



“lack of understanding when it comes to the history of Eastern Europe.” In turn, Dr. Zayarnyuk has advocated for strengthened Ukrainian consciousness and culture to juxtapose Russia's invasive hegemony, agreeing that Orthodox unity is one outlet to do so.

According to Dr. Zayarnyuk,

Putin's statements have also shown that he thinks about the Russian nation in ethnic terms: for him it is not congruent with the territory of the Russian Federation. While the Soviet Union cannot under any circumstances be regarded as a Russian nation-state, Putin sees it as an empire dominated both politically and culturally by the Russian nation. Thus, Putin exclaims, when the 'Commonwealth of Independent States,' which was created to replace the Soviet Union, failed to materialize as a state, 'Russia felt that it had been not just pilfered but robbed.' ... Unfortunately, Ukraine happened to be on top of Putin's list of wrongs that allegedly have been done to the Russian nation.¹⁸⁶

Putin's version of history is reminiscent of how Stalin viewed Ukraine's and Russia's past. Putin claims, "Kyivan Rus' was the foundation of the future, enormous Russian state." The Soviet historical narrative also presents Kyivan Rus' as the "common cradle" of Ukrainians and Russians. The unpleasant trends in their history have seen Ukrainians divide and suffer. Eventually, after many struggles, they reunited in the Soviet Union but have since separated again. Clearly, Putin also believes in this romantic story of peoples destined for permanent union. He claims that Ukraine's development, modernization, and industrialization were possible only in the Russian state, presenting a purely Russo-centric version of the past. Faithful to his view of Soviet statehood as 'Russian', of which it clearly was not, Putin even presents the post-World War II reconstruction of the Ukrainian economy as Russia's gift to Ukraine. Dr. Zayarnyuk then stated that this gives no credit to the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian community, effectively denying Ukraine's existence and importance altogether, which is a blatant historical inaccuracy.

By merging the Ukraine's and Russia's past, and by placing Russia at the forefront of the historical narrative, Ukraine's rightful place as the origin of Orthodoxy in Europe is denied and is taken up by Moscow. Both states claim this legacy, but only Ukraine is the rightful successor of Kyivan-Rus', and is thus the birthplace of Orthodoxy.

Dr. Zayarnyuk emphasized the need for a unified and recognized Orthodox church in Ukraine. By establishing such an organization, Moscow's and Putin's influence could be countered (to an extent) and Ukrainian identity and life could again flourish outside of an invasive foreign influence. "It is incomprehensible as to why Moscow and the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC MP) maintains significant power in Ukraine through the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP). A recognized, independent, and unified church is necessary for Ukrainians to reassert control over their own national and cultural lives." President Putin's 2013 statement, that "Russia and Ukraine are essentially one people. We have a common tradition, common mentality, common history, and common culture. Our languages are very close. We are one people." For Putin, "the identity of the Ukrainian nation is part of our great Russian world, Russian-Ukrainian." However, this is not true. Dr. Zayarnyuk concluded that while Ukrainian nationalism and culture can be reinterpreted through the ages, it can only be done so by Ukrainians themselves, not by outside actors. Their influence and rhetoric must be limited, and establishing a unified Orthodox church based on the legacy of Kyivan-Rus' is one way to do just that.

Dr. Zayarnyuk expressed a desire to help however possible, and indicated that he could continue to explore and promote Ukrainian Orthodox unity efforts among his colleagues, peers, and others in the community.

MEETING WITH *THE UKRAINIAN VOICE* - WINNIPEG

The Ukrainian Voice is Canada's oldest Ukrainian cultural newspaper and printing press, having celebrated 100 years in 2010. On July 3, I met with the journal's editor, Maria Bosak, and its treasurer, William Scherbatiuk to discuss my ongoing work as it concerns Ukrainians and Ukrainian-Canadians. More specifically, we talked about the future of Orthodox unity in Ukraine and its broader impact.



The Ukrainian Voice was established in 1910 by a circle of bilingual Ukrainian-English teachers in Winnipeg. It began as a venture by a group of bilingual Ukrainian-English teachers and its circulation soon came to embrace the whole country, providing cohesiveness among Ukrainian-Canadians, both recently arrived and those who were established citizens. According to Professor Roman Yereniuk of the University of Manitoba's Center for Ukrainian-Canadian Studies, "The newspaper *Ukrainian Voice* was the first newspaper in the world to carry in its masthead the name Ukrainian and this contributed to the development of a strong Ukrainian consciousness among the immigrants in Canada... [T]hat the newspaper was often read and reread in numerous communities and its editorials were the discussion pieces that galvanized Ukrainian Canadians into a strong multicultural community."

Historically, *The Ukrainian Voice* certainly helped cultivate the Ukrainian-Canadian identity and promoted the unity of Ukrainians from many backgrounds (social and religious). The newspaper has long been involved in generating unity among Ukrainians. Today, they can play an equally important role.

I explained my ongoing work as it concerns Orthodox unity in Ukraine as a means of bringing the people of Ukraine together in the face of divisive and invasive policies on the part of Moscow and Russia's President Vladimir Putin. Over the years, I have advocated strongly for a unified Orthodox church in Ukraine. Recently, there has been a major step forward. A joint commission report of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC-KP) has revealed that representatives from both organizations have begun to hold regular meetings on the possibility of a merger into a 'Local Orthodox Church of Ukraine'. Representatives from the Ecumenical Patriarchate have also been present. This new church could be recognized by Constantinople and independent of outside (read: Russia's Putin) influence. And, such a merger could dampen Putin's enthusiasm for continued military incursion into Ukraine and give Ukrainians a truly politically independent Orthodox church, one that Ukrainians can rally behind. Both Ms. Bosak and Mr. Scherbatiuk agreed.

I explained that the Government of Canada remains committed to supporting the people of Ukraine and the unity of the country. For example, I have been engaged with Ukrainian politics since before the Orange Revolution. And my work has been both officially yet unofficially supported by both the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, and the Minister and Department of Foreign Affairs. In May 2014, I was sent on a 30-day mission to Kherson, Odessa, and Kyiv to meet with linguistic, cultural, and community organizations to discuss their roles in easing political and social tensions in the country. It was in January 2015 that I was a Special Envoy for the Minister of Foreign Affairs on my second mission to Ukraine and Constantinople (Istanbul), after having met with religious and political leaders throughout Canada and in New York, to carry on discussions of Orthodox unity. These included discussions with former-President Viktor Yushchenko, His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Patriarch Filaret (UOC-KP), Metropolitan Mefodiy (UAOC), and Metropolitan Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP).

Committed to maintaining the vitality of Ukrainian culture and ways of life, Ms. Bosak and Mr. Scherbatiuk (and *The Ukrainian Voice*) took great interest in my work. Indeed, the values that the newspaper upheld when it was established continue today. *The Ukrainian Voice* was initiated to raise self-esteem and pride in the Ukrainian community and its heritage, to support the Orthodox church, and to promote education as the key to communal success. My working to emphasize the importance of Orthodox unity in Ukraine (for purposes of national prosperity and religious unity) found welcoming support with the Ukrainian Voice.

CONCLUSIONS

The current situation in Ukraine can be regarded as a sociological, political, and cultural crisis tied substantially to the religious divisions between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate (UOC KP), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (UAOC EP). All of these organizations claim direct lineage to the Church body established through Prince Vladimir's conversion of Kyivan-Rus to Orthodox Christianity in 988. Each Church exhibits some degree of political and social influence.

Russia's influence, through Moscow to the UOC MP is thought to be exacerbating the societal and cultural rifts, dividing the country. Russia's central government seeks to expand its influence outside of its own borders and generate a cohesive and 'Russian' Slavic world, using the church as a tool. However most UOC MP clergy are not involved, but receive what they believe to be credible Russian news reports, particularly so because access to Western media is limited and is effectively discredited by Moscow's propaganda.

This effort by President Putin's media machine in Moscow is diabolically dividing a previously reasonably united people, with good honest reporting but interspersed with dishonest propaganda. The return of a unified Orthodox Patriarchate to its historical seat in Kyiv could provide a foundation for stability in Ukraine, at least for the Church. The roots of national cohesiveness can again grow.

Many Orthodox leaders are concerned that Moscow's expanding influence in Europe and elsewhere will cause the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) and its Patriarch to attempt to supplant the Ecumenical Patriarch, which would upset the equilibrium of the Orthodox world but would serve to expand Moscow's influence in former Soviet states and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR MP). The annexation of Crimea can be seen as a successful experiment in utilizing religious affiliation and influence to achieve ends favourable to Russia's conquest.

As the Orthodox religion forms the basis of national identity in Ukraine, bridging the divide between the different Orthodox Churches would be beneficial to society and culture. Working together apolitically and with a council of Churches in Kyiv, religious leaders would play a key role in returning peace and stability to Ukraine. Dialogue between Orthodox Church officials and other denominations is essential. In this regard, this Mission Report is meant to help inform and encourage discussion, not press for decisive action.

With the upcoming Pan Orthodox Council in 2016, the purpose of this report is to discuss and explore possible routes towards Orthodox Unity in Ukraine to be proposed after the 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council of His All Holiness in Constantinople.

One recommendation might be the establishment of a conference outside of Europe to facilitate dialogue among Orthodox leaders in a secular and objective setting, later passing recommendations on to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew after the Pan-Orthodox Council in 2016, for consideration. I also suggested another round of unofficial discussions with political, community, and Church leaders in Ukraine and Turkey for June or July 2015 be established to further advance efforts and prepare for future initiatives. As well, Russia's propaganda should be actively countered in Ukraine and abroad. In preparation for further progress pertaining to Orthodox unity in Ukraine, an emissary or envoy of the Government of Canada might consider consulting with the five Sees of the historic patriarchal pentarchy – Constantinople, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem to further raise the level of dialogue on Orthodox Unity in Ukraine.

Bringing Orthodox unity to Ukraine will help the country to identify its national future and expand freedom and tolerance.

SUGGESTED DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR ASSEMBLY TO RECOGNIZE HISTORICAL LEGITIMACY OF A KYIVAN-RUS' PATRIARCHATE

WHEREAS Orthodox Christianity in Europe – acknowledged by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople – was first established in Ukraine in 988 with the conversion of the Kyivan people of Kyiv and the Rus' people, by Saint Vladimir I, Prince of Kyiv, following his baptism at the ancient Greek port-city of Chersonesus or Korsun in Crimea, and

WHEREAS this recognition was followed by a cohesive and stable rule based upon a common theological identity shared and well established amongst peoples of the region, and

WHEREAS these indigenous Kyivan-Rus' people – in areas that would later become modern Ukraine – were the progenitors of today's European Slavic Orthodox peoples, and

WHEREAS it was missionaries from Kyiv that brought the Orthodox Christian message to the frontier region of Muscovy, established within Kyivan-Rus', and

WHEREAS it was only when the 13th century Mongol invaders threatened that the Metropolitan of the Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox Church was moved from Kyiv to Muscovy in 1299, and

WHEREAS the Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox Church did not disappear but remained a local and autonomous manifestation,

WHEREAS in 1993 the Ukrainian government, under President Leonid Kravchuk, annulled the 1686 act which transferred the Kyivan Metropolitanate from Kyiv to Moscow, whereby Constantinople also later annulled the 1686 Act, as the historic Kyivan-Rus' roots did not lie with Moscow but with Kyiv, and

WHEREAS while there now exist three different Orthodox churches in Ukraine, this is detrimental to the spirit of Christian unity, that they sit as equals, officially, under a single banner would bring stability and a sense of common identity to the Orthodox Church,

WHEREAS it will bring increased theological harmony, which will in turn bridge the political barriers to social and ethical homogeneity, also ensuring free and structured democracy, as well as the territorial integrity of their state – autonomous from the influence of others;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the assembled agree that the historic heart of the Kyivan-Rus' Orthodox Church is Kyiv, and call on democratic institutions to add their voice in support in the interests of human rights, international relations, religious freedom, and democracy.

THEREFORE we, the assembled, affirm the desirability of repatriating the historically recognized and sovereign Kyivan-Rus' Patriarchate and call on the Orthodox people of Ukraine to join together as one, to elect leaders for the Patriarchal entity, and the assembled, pray that the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, in consultation with the 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council give due consideration to encouraging all to recognize the repatriated Orthodox Church of Kyivan-Rus' as a fully autocephalous church.

LIST OF FORUMS FOR POSSIBLE PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTION ON UKRAINIAN ORTHODOXY

- OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
- Council of Europe
- Canadian Friends of Ukraine
 - Margareta Shpir
- PACE: Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- European Parliament
- UNAOC: United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
- IPU: Inter-Parliamentary Union
 - Paddy Torsney
- IPPFoRB: International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion and Belief
- IAO: Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy
- IRI: International Republican Institute
- NDI: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
- CIIA: Canadian Institute for International Affairs
- OSI: Open Society Institute
- All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (Kyiv)
- Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church
- Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate
- Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
- Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Synaxis of the First-Hierarchs of the Orthodox Churches
- Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America
- All-Orthodox Assembly in Canada
- The Patriarchal Parishes in the USA for the Russian Orthodox Church
 - Bishop John
- European Court for Human Rights
- Various European Central Administrative Bodies:
 - Germany, Turkey, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, Czech Republic, Portugal, Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Sweden, Serbia, Denmark, Finland, Slovakia, Norway, Greece, Ireland, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Macedonia, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia
- US Congress:
 - Justin Amash
 - Michael Bilirakis

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Selections From Chapter 2: Rights And Freedoms Of Man And Citizen

Article 17

1. In the Russian Federation recognition and guarantees shall be provided for the rights and freedoms of man and citizen according to the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and according to the present Constitution.
2. Fundamental human rights and freedoms are inalienable and shall be enjoyed by everyone since the day of birth.
3. The exercise of the rights and freedoms of man and citizen shall not violate the rights and freedoms of other people.

Article 19

2. The State shall guarantee the equality of rights and freedoms of man and citizen, regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, property and official status, place of residence, **religion**, convictions, membership of public associations, and also of other circumstances. All forms of limitations of human rights on social, racial, national, **linguistic or religious** grounds shall be banned.

Article 26

1. Everyone shall have the right to determine and indicate his nationality. No one may be forced to determine and indicate his or her nationality.

Article 28

Everyone shall be guaranteed the freedom of conscience, the freedom of religion, including the right to profess individually or together with any religion or to profess no religion at all, to freely choose, possess and disseminate religious and other views and act according to them.

Article 29

2. The propaganda or agitation instigating social, racial, national or religious hatred and strife shall not be allowed. The propaganda of social, racial, national, religious or linguistic supremacy shall be banned.

Article 30

2. No one may be compelled to join any association and remain in it.

Article 45

1. State protection of the rights and freedoms of man and citizen shall be guaranteed in the Russian Federation.

Article 55

3. The rights and freedoms of man and citizen may be limited by the federal law only to such an extent to which it is necessary for the protection of the fundamental principles of the constitutional system, morality, health, the rights and lawful interests of other people, for ensuring defence of the country and security of the State.

Article 61

2. The Russian Federation shall guarantee to its citizens protection and patronage abroad - Note: Russian *citizens* not Russian *nationals*.

Article 63

1. The Russian Federation shall grant political asylum to foreign nationals and stateless persons according to the universally recognized norms of international law.

THE CONSTITUTION OF UKRAINE

Selections from Chapter 2: Human and Citizens' Rights, Freedoms, and Duties

Article 21

1. All people are free and equal in their dignity and rights.
2. Human rights and freedoms are inalienable and inviolable.

Article 22

1. Human and citizens' rights and freedoms affirmed by this Constitution are not exhaustive.
2. Constitutional rights and freedoms are guaranteed and shall not be abolished.
3. The content and scope of existing rights and freedoms shall not be diminished in the adoption of new laws or in the amendment of laws that are in force.

Article 24

1. There shall be no privileges or restrictions based on race, colour of skin, political, religious and other beliefs, sex, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic or other characteristics.

Article 29

1. Every person has the right to freedom and personal inviolability.

Article 33

1. Everyone who is legally present on the territory of Ukraine is guaranteed freedom of movement, free choice of place of residence, and the right to freely leave the territory of Ukraine, with the exception of restrictions established by law.

Article 34

1. Everyone is guaranteed the right to freedom of thought and speech, and to the free expression of his or her views and beliefs.
2. Everyone has the right to freely collect, store, use and disseminate information by oral, written or other means of his or her choice.
3. The exercise of these rights may be restricted by law in the interests of national security, territorial indivisibility or public order, with the purpose of preventing disturbances or crimes, protecting the health of the population, the reputation or rights of other persons, preventing the publication of information received confidentially, or supporting the authority and impartiality of justice.

Article 35

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of personal philosophy and religion. This right includes the freedom to profess or not to profess any religion, to perform alone or collectively and without constraint religious rites and ceremonial rituals, and to conduct religious activity. *Ukraine's Orthodox are denied the right of co-communion by Moscow.*
2. The exercise of this right may be restricted by law only in the interests of protecting public order, the health and morality of the population, or protecting the rights and freedoms of other persons.
3. The Church and religious organisations in Ukraine are separated from the State, and the school — from the Church. No religion shall be recognised by the State as mandatory.

Article 36

1. Citizens of Ukraine have the right to freedom of association in political parties and public organisations for the exercise and protection of their rights and freedoms and for the satisfaction of their political, economic, social, cultural and other interests, with the exception of restrictions established by law in the interests of national security and public order, the protection of the health of the population or the protection of rights and freedoms of other persons.
4. All associations of citizens are equal before the law.

Article 37

1. Political parties and public associations **shall not have paramilitary formations.**
2. **The creation and activity of organisational structures of political parties shall not be permitted within bodies of executive and judicial power and executive bodies of local self-government, in military formations, and also in state enterprises, educational establishments and other state institutions and organisations.**

Article 41

1. The use of property shall not cause harm to the rights, freedoms and dignity of citizens, the interests of society, aggravate the ecological situation and the natural qualities of land.

Article 50

1. Everyone has the right to an environment that is safe for life and health, and to compensation for damages inflicted through the violation of this right.



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November 25, 2014

The Hon. Peter Goldring, M.P.
Edmonton East
9111-118 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5B 0T9

Dear Mr. Goldring,

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will be happy to receive you in his office on the 22nd of January 2015, at 11:30a.m. Turkey time. Please communicate with V. Rev. Fr. Bartholomew Samaras, Chief Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (*Mailing Address*: Rum Patrikhanesi, 342 20 Fener-Haliç, Istanbul, TURKEY, *Tel*: +90 212 5255416, *email*: bartholomaios@superonline.com) to confirm that you will go to visit with His All Holiness.

I wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Yours with distinct honour and blessings,

Metropolitan Archbishop Sotirios
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada)

TS/br

cc: Rev. Bartholomew Samaras, Chief Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

E-MAILED

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although I have been extensively involved in issues concerning Ukraine for over 15 years, the defining moment of my labours came when Father Sergey and Bishop Job of my church, St. Barbara's Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton, in January 2014, called for a meeting on the belief that our government must become more active in Ukraine. Departing my office, Bishop Job in broken English pleaded, 'Please help my Ukraine.'

I promised, that day, that I would attempt to investigate the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. After several more preparatory meetings in Canada and New York, I approached the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who then sent me to Ukraine on a 30 day mission in May 2014, followed by another 10 day mission in January 2015. This 300 page report is a compilation of my efforts.

A lot of work has gone into the production of this report and a great deal of thanks are needed. Firstly, I would like to thank my staff over the years who have helped compile information, organize trips, and arrange meetings. I must thank Grant Peters who was as researcher and writer on this project, and worked through interpreting my hieroglyphics of my notes from my many meetings as well as my draft corrections and notations since October 2014. Shazmin Ali, who has worked for me for nine years, also deserves commendation for her ongoing administrative efforts and great report cover design. The first introduction to Ukraine dates back to 2004 and the Orange Revolution when I was an election observer in Mykolayiv, Ukraine, and later in Kyiv. After violence broke out, I remained in the capital city for the revolution, at my own expense, to observe the crisis and report for the Canadian and international media. Over the years, the knowledge for this report has grown through some 15 trips to Ukraine, and cross-Canada and New York consultations in almost 100 special meetings to date in the last year alone.

Secondly, I would like to thank the Government of Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development, and Minister John Baird and Minister Jason Kenney.

Thirdly, I would like to recognize those who took the time in almost 100 meetings to talk with me, provide me with ideas, criticisms, and inspirations, all of which were key in the development of this project. In particular, I would like to thank Father Michael in Kharkiv for his great contribution and organizing my visits and contributing to my understanding.

Most of all, however, I would like to thank my wife, Lorraine Goldring, for her continued support for me. Over the 15 years of my involvement on the Ukraine file, she – as the family's Ukrainian connection (née Taschuk) – has provided innumerable edits, press releases, contributions, and has taken frequent late-night calls from Ukraine in which I sought help and guidance over.

Now it is time to publish the 'book' on Ukraine, hopefully for others to learn as I have done of the realities in Ukraine today.

NOTES

¹ Paul Magocsi, 'Little Russia or Ukraine: The Eurasian East Versus the European West,' *The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies*, March 18, 2014, accessed December 17, 2014, <http://www.homin.ca/news.php/news/13542/group/27>.

² Robert Blitt, 'Russia's 'Orthodox' Foreign Policy: The Growing Influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Shaping Russia's Policies Abroad,' *Journal of International Economic Law*. 33 no. 2 (2014): 365-6.

³ 'Head of Russian Orthodox church given model fighter jet by factory workers,' *The Guardian*, September 17, 2014, accessed December 16, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/17/head-kirill-russian-orthodox-church-fighter-jet-factory-workers>.

⁴ Organic nationalism (also romantic nationalism) is the form of nationalism in which the state derives its political legitimacy as an organic consequence of the unity of those it governs. This includes, depending on the particular manner of practice, the language, race, culture, religion, and customs of the 'nation' in its primal sense of those who were 'born' within its culture.

⁵ Serhii Plokyh, *The Origins of the Slavic Nations: Premodern Identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 10-5.

⁶ Anna Reid, *Borderlands: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000): 5.

⁷ B.C., 'Crimea and Sacred History: The Uses of Holiness,' *The Economist*, December 5, 2014, accessed December 17, 2014, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/erasmus/2014/12/crimea-and-sacred-history>.

⁸ Paul Magocsi, 'Little Russia or Ukraine: The Eurasian East Versus the European West,' *The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies*, March 18, 2014, accessed December 17, 2014, <http://www.homin.ca/news.php/news/13542/group/27>.

⁹ Reid, *Borderlands*, 5.

¹⁰ Ann Lencyk Pawliczko, *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 55.

¹¹ Pawliczko, *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World*, 55.

¹² Walter Moss, *History of Russia - Volume 1: To 1917* (New York: Anthem Press, 2005): 80.

¹³ Mykhailo Hrushevskyyi, *A History of Ukraine* (New York: Archon Books, 1970): 42-3.

¹⁴ Pawliczko, *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World*, 55.

¹⁵ Reid, *Borderland*, 7-8.

¹⁶ Hrushevskyyi, *A History of Ukraine*, 39-41.

¹⁷ The name 'Ukraine' is first mentioned in the *Chronicles* in 1187; Hrushevskyyi, *A History of Ukraine*, 41

¹⁸ Hrushevskyyi, *A History of Ukraine*, 39-41.

¹⁹ Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and its Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 56-7.

²⁰ Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 57.

²¹ Hrushevskyyi, *A History of Ukraine*, 43.

²² Walter Comins-Richmond, 'The History of Moscow,' (Lecture), accessed January 21, 2015, http://faculty.oxy.edu/richmond/csp8/history_of_moscow.htm; 'Russia Engages the World: The Building of the Kremlin, 1156–1516,' *The New York Public Library*, accessed January 21, 2015, <http://web-static.nypl.org/exhibitions/russia/history/mongol.html>.

²³ Serhii Plokyh, *Ukrmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005): 92-5.

²⁴ See: Vasiliï Kliuchevsky, *A History of Russia*, Volumes 1-4 (London: J.M. Dent/E.P. Dutton, 1911); Vasiliï Kliuchevsky, *Peter the Great* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

²⁵ Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, 70-1.

²⁶ Bartholomew I, 'Message by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the Devout Ukrainian People on the Occasion of the 1025th Anniversary Since the Baptism of Kyivan-Rus', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 58, no. 1-4 (Spring-Winter 2013): 329.

²⁷ Liliya Bereznaya, 'Does Ukraine Have a Church History,' *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 897.

²⁸ Roman Szporluk, 'The Making of Modern Ukraine: The Western Dimension,' *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 25, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 57.

²⁹ It is necessary that cultural or ethno-nationalism be distinguished from civic or statist nationalism. The former defines a self-identified collectivity as having distinct cultural, ethnic, and sociological traits, while the latter subscribes more-or-less with the idealized notions of collective self-determination; Paul Howe, "Nationalist Idealization and the State," *Nationalist Identities* 7, no. 1 (March 2005): 83.

³⁰ John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Englewood: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990): 3-4.

³¹ Taras Kuzio, 'Identity and nation-building in Ukraine: Defining the 'Other',' *Ethnicities* 1, no. 3 (2001): 347-8.

³² 'Tell of Jews' Part in Conduct of War,' *The New York Times*, November 11, 1918, accessed November 8, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/100193970?accountid=14611>.

³³ Historian James Mace builds on this claim by noting that the Bolsheviks hated not only peasants and nationalists but anything that did not fit into their utopian blueprint to restructure society; Robert Conquest, Dana Dalrymple, James Mace, and Michael Novak, *The Man-Made Famine in the Ukraine* (Washington: American Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984): 5-12.

³⁴ Anthony Smith, 'Gastronomy or geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations,' *Nations and Nationalism* 1, no. 1 (1994): 3-23.

³⁵ Miroslav Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Project in Europe,' in *Becoming National: A Reader*, eds. Geoff Eley and Grigor Suny (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996): 61.

³⁶ Catherine Wanner, 'Crafting Identity, Marking Time: An Anthropological Perspective on Historical Commemoration and Nation Building in Ukraine,' *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 23, no. 3-4 (1999): 105.

³⁷ Wanner, 'Crafting Identity,' 108.

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About the Author

Peter Goldring, Conservative Member of Parliament for Edmonton East, was born in Toronto in 1944 and served in the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1962 until 1966. Over the years, Peter has been an electrical systems manufacturing business owner for 23 years, ardent advocate for Canadian unity, and, a Member of Parliament since 1997. His work in Foreign Affairs includes several major reports on many countries such as Turks and Caicos, Haiti, Ghana, and Ukraine.

Peter has extensive experience in democracy development and has, after several years and some 12 visits to Ukraine, called for a discussion on the unification of Orthodox churches in Ukraine. In May 2014, for 30 days, and again in January 2015, Peter was sent as a Special Envoy to Ukraine, culminating in 100 meetings with religious and cultural leaders. These included meetings with His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew in Constantinople, President Yushchenko in Ukraine, and many others to discuss the issue of Orthodox unity. This book, entitled *Ukraine Mission Report: Kyivan-Rus' Orthodoxy*, is a compilation of those meetings with his conclusions. Peter has also published many articles on Ukraine in journals such as *Ukrainian News*, *New Pathway*, and *Esprit de Corps*.

In 1999, he was the first MP to recognize in the House of Commons the genocide that was murder by starvation – Holodomor – committed by Josef Stalin against Ukrainians in the 1930s. Peter repeated his statement in Parliament in 2005, 2006, and 2007, until the genocide was formally recognized by the House of Commons in 2008.

Peter has been an election observer in several countries, including eight times in Ukraine, where he was present for the entire Orange Revolution in October 2004 and spoke to approximately 500,000 in Independence Square. He returned in December 2013 to support and, again, speak to a crowd of 500,000 in Kyiv during EuroMaidan.

Peter's work has widely been recognized, being awarded such distinctions as the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, the Alberta Centennial Medal, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, the Ukrainian Special Community Award, an award from the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, and several awards for his work for the homeless.

Peter has been married for over 40 years. Peter and his wife, Lorraine's church is St. Barbara's Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Edmonton. Together, they have two daughters, a son-in-law, and three granddaughters.

Below: St. Barbara's Russo-Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1902 to 2015

