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THE ROLE OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN MONTENEGRO IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND UNIFICATION OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (1918–1922)

A decree of the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III abolished the Patriarchate of Peć, the Serbian Church on September 11, 1766, and annexed its territories to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. At the end of the 19th century, there was a debate as to which of the Serbian dioceses was the canonical successor of the Patriarchate of Peć? In this debate, certain circles from Montenegro were included. In that context, the well-known Serbian canonist of the last decades of the 19th and the beginning of the 20thcentury, Bishop of Dalmatia Dr. Nikodim Milaš, stated, «It was not a legal, canonically justified act, but a simple illegal usurpation, performed due to few praiseworthy motives»[1]. Novica Kovačević-Graovski was a doctor by profession, and otherwise a passionate Montenegrin historian and publicist of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, who published a large number of articles and discussions on this issue at that time. According to the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, in the leading Montenegrin newspaper of that time, *The Voice of Montenegrin* (*Glas Crnogorca*) he stated, «There are two serious reasons that deny the legitimacy of this abolition. On one hand there is a brute force whose order lasts as long as that force. On the other hand the resistance of Serbian bishops and clergy, as well as the fact that they have not been proved that those bishops prayed and concluded through the synod, so that the Patriarchate of Peć would cease to exist»[2].

One of the most famous Serbian church historians of the 20th century was Dr. Đoko Slijepčević. He ended his life in 1993 in Cologne, Germany. As an opponent of the communist regime, he emigrated from Yugoslavia in mid-1945 and lived mainly in Bern, Munich and Cologne. On the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, he wrote, «both formally and essentially, it was a violent and an illegal act. Any other claim and argument would be a simple sophistry»[3].

[1] *Милаш Н.* Каноничко начело православне цркве при разређивањуцрквених власти. К питању о јерархичком положају сарајевске митрополије. Задар, 1884. С. 13.

[2] *Гр. Н (Ковачевић-Граовски Н.).* Је ли се Српска Патријаршија у Пећи канонски угасила? и ко јој је канонски наследник? // Глас Црногорца. 1904. Бр.13 (27.март). С. 4.

[3] *Слијепчевић Ђ.* Укидање Пећке Патријаршије 1766 // Богословље.Бр. XIII/3-4. 1938. С. 299.

In the second half of the 20th century, Ljubomir Durković-Jakšić appeared as one of the most prominent Serbian church historians. He was born in Montenegro, but he spent most of his life in Belgrade. He believed that «the Patriarchate of Constantinople illegally destroyed the Serbian church organization in the Patriarchate of Peć in 1766, and by its so-called abolition subordination of most of it under its rule, it committed a non-canonical act»[4].

Since the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, the «Greekization» of Serbian territories has taken place in the full sense, not only by trying to fully shape the higher church clergy as Greek, but also by trying to introduce the Greek language as a liturgical language and opening Greek schools and cultural institutions. While the Greeks in the Serbian border territories had a clearly formed and rich civic class, Serbs practically either did not have it, or they had the one that it was difficult to distinguish between Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian. That is why; in general, the Greek people in the first decades of the 19th century could fight for their liberation and state emancipation much faster and easier than the Serbs. Moving towards the depths of the Serbian ethnic territories, the influence of the Greek clergy declined more and more, and his attempt to Grecize the Serbian people through church and culture failed. This is all the more so, as the Serbian state formed in Serbia in the first half of the 19th century was rapidly trying to get rid of the higher Greek church clergy imposed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

After the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, those dioceses of the Serbian people that were under Ottoman rule, were «Grecized» by the high and middle Greek clergy. The dioceses that were under the rule of the Venetian Republic until the end of the 18th century, as well as Austria, practically created a special Serbian church, which, apart from the general canonical ties, had no closer contact with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The only exception was the Church in Montenegro, personified in the Metropolitanate of Cetinje. Based on the political freedom of Montenegro, it continued its autochthonous life, practically without any obligations and ties to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. From the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, and throughout almost the entire 19th century, Russian state and Church had a great influence on the Church in Montenegro. However, the Church in Montenegro had never given the right to Russia, nor to the Russian Church, to control it. The memory of the Patriarchate of Peć had always existed, as well as the belief that the Church in Montenegro was a legal extension of the Patriarchate of Peć.

It can be seen in several cases, some of which have a political-state connotation. After the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, the Venetians put strong pressure on the Orthodox inhabitants of Boka, in order to abolish their religious freedoms. They usurped the monasteries of Stanjević and Maine in the area of Budva. There was the winter residence of Montenegrin metropolitans. The territory of the Venetian Republic along the border with Montenegro, was owned by the Metropolitan of Cetinje, and A group of Montenegrin leaders led by Governor Jovan Radonjić and Serdars Vukal Vukotić, Jovan Đurašković and Mojaš Plamenac bravely threatened the Venetian Provveditore Gaetan Molin on April 1, 1770, saying: «Do you know, sir, that we are Russian today. Whoever stands against us stands against Russia? Whoever stands against Russia stands against us». They appealed to him to free the monasteries «and

[4] *Дурковић Јакшић Љ.* Одређивање међуцрквеног положаја Црногорске Митрополије // Историјски записи. Књ. 9. Бр. 1. 1953. С. 64.

take guard, because the monasteries are neither yours nor ours for sleeping, and you had a lot of services in them»[5].

At the time of the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, Metropolitan Vasilije Petrović from the Petrović dynasty was the archbishop of the Metropolitanate of Cetinje. He had gone to Russia twice before for help. Ten years later, after the abolition of the Patriarchate, he asked for help Metropolitan Plato of Moscow on February 26. He complained about the situation caused by the Ottomans and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and begged him to «liberate the throne of the Serbian Archbishopric of Peć from the Greeks – there is in your empire the Archimandrite of the Holy Patriarch Vasilije Brkić, who fled to Russia in the last war, when the Blessed Patriarch died". He, Archimandrite Avakum, would like to be the archbishop of the Serbian throne. All Serbian archbishops would receive him with pleasure, because he speaks Turkish and Greek, and is a natural Serb. Serbian Church should be under the Russian Synod and Serbian archbishop would be set with its consent, or if it is necessary to be a Russian archbishop of Peć by one blood and monolinguals. In the end, Metropolitan Sava emphasized that he was sending this letter in the name of nine bishops. The Greeks expelled them with these words: «I, as the oldest in rank and disobedient to any authority, am sending this in the name of all Slavic-Serbian archbishops»[6].

Since they did not find understanding in Russia for placing Montenegro under the Russian protectorate, a group of Montenegrin leaders, Governor Jovan Radonjić, Serdar Ivan Petrović, and Archimandrite Petar Petrović (later Metropolitan Peter I), returned to Vienna and submitted to the Austrian Emperor a kind of political memorandum, with the same demands previously addressed to Russia. This memorandum is often called «Agreements» in historiography. In the eleventh point of this memorandum, they ask, «We want the Montenegrin Metropolitan to depend on the Patriarch of Peć in Serbia. When the current Metropolitan dies, we agree for the time being that his successor be ordained in Karlovci, but that he will always be elected according to the old custom, that is by the governor, subordinate chiefs and the entire Montenegrin people, but only as long as the Turks rule over Serbia, so we cannot send him to Peć freely»[7].

In 1804, General Marko Ivelić and Archimandrite Stefan Vučetić were sent to Montenegro as official emissaries of Russia. Both of them were born in Boka. Ivelić previously entered the Russian service and promoted to the rank of general, and received the title of count. Vučetić was once a close associate with Metropolitan Peter I. They had their personal ambitions in the mission to Montenegro as well – Ivelić intended to become the ruler of Montenegro, and Vučetić the Metropolitan. Officially, they were supposed to investigate the rumors in Russia that Metropolitan Peter I was working for French interests, and that he neglected church work, that the services were not held, and so on. They invited Metropolitan Peter I to come to Russia to justify himself before the Emperor and the Synod.

However, the Montenegrin leaders gave an answer to the Emperor and the Russian Synod in July 1804. This answer clearly shows the complete commitment of the Church in Montenegro to the concept of the abolished Patriarchate of Peć. It states, among other things: «It is probably not known to the Russian Synod that the Serbian Orthodox people had their own patriarch, to

[5] *Миловић Ј.* Зборник докумената из историје Црне Горе (1685–1782). Цетиње, 1956. С. 320–321.
[6] *Јовичић Ж.* Писмо црногорског митрополита Саве митрополиту Платону фебруара 26, 1766 // Гласник Српског ученогдруштва. 1867. Књ. 5, Бр. 22. 1867. С. 357–359.
[7] *Ђорђевић В.* Црна Гора и Аустрија у XVIII веку. Београд, 1912. С. 9–10.

whom the Serbian archbishops were subordinate until 1769, and then, after the war between Turkey and the Russian Empire began, the Serbian patriarch of all Illyrian countries Vasilija Brkić, escaped to our lands from his impending death, and then he went to Russia and died in St. Petersburg, where the importance of the Slavic-Serbian patriarchs was cut, and today the chair of the Patriarchate of Peć is still vacant; therefore, our Metropolitan stayed alone in the local church, independent of any authority (...) so we, the Montenegrin people, chose him for this act, and to be consecrated as archbishop, and the former patriarch not being in Serbia at the time, we sent him to the Orthodox Metropolitan who consecrated him together with other bishops and handed over to him the supreme pastorate over us»[8].

Since the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć, most Montenegrin Metropolitans had been ordained in Russia. In the beginning, the only exception was Peter I, who was ordained in Sremski Karlovci on October 13, 1784, by Metropolitan Mojsije Putnik[9]. His nephew Peter II Petrović was ordained in St. Petersburg on August 3, 1833, in the presence of the Russian Emperor Nicholas I[10]. In 1844, the Russian Synod awarded Peter II the title of Metropolitan. On that occasion, by a special shipment to Kotor, a port in the Adriatic Sea, and then to Cetinje, a gold-embroidered letter was sent to him, which he received on May 1, 1845[11].

After the death of Metropolitan Peter II Petrović, the period of theocracy in Montenegro ended. It became the Principality in 1851, and one of the sons of Peter II, Danilo, was elected as the prince. The chair of the Cetinje metropolitans remained vacant until December 1858, when Nikanor Ivanović was ordained after a series of vicissitudes in St. Petersburg. Namely, Ivanović was an Austrian citizen who had come to Montenegro years earlier. Austria insisted that he should be ordained on its territory in Sremski Karlovci, which Prince Danilo refused. The ordination was performed only after Nikanor renounced Austrian citizenship[12].

After the death of Prince Danilo in 1860, Nikanor Ivanović was fired because he did not come to his funeral. Ilarion Roganović became the new Montenegrin Metropolitan at the end of May 1863. He was ordained in St Petersburg by Metropolitan Isidore[13]. In 1878, Visarion Ljubiša was ordained a bishop of Zahumlje-Raška in Cetinje. After the death of Metropolitan Ilarion Roganović in 1882, Visarion Ljubiša became Metropolitan of Montenegro. He did not live long, and he died in 1884. His successor was Mitrofan Ban, who was ordained in St. Petersburg in April 1885[14]. He would remain the Montenegrin metropolitan for decades, and would welcome the establishment and unification of the Serbian Church after the First World War. Since the Diocese of Zahumlje-Raška was without archbishops for years, and

[8] *Поповић П.* Црна Гора у доба Петра I и Петра II. Београд, 1952. С. 60–61.
[9] *Форишковић А.* Неколико докумената о завладичењу Петра I Петровића октобра 13, 1784. у Сремским Карловцима // Историјски записи. 1969. Књ. 26. Бр. 1. С. 135–153.
[10] *Грујић Р.* Православна Српска Црква. Београд. 1921. С. 164–165.
[11] *Петар II Петровић Његош.* Писма (приредио Мираш Кићовић). Београд. 1951. Књ. 6. С. 218.
[12] Архивско-библиотечко одјељење Народног музеја Црне Горе (lfktt – АБОНМЦГ) –Цетиње /Црна Гора/. Фонд Данило I. 1858. Документ број (д.б.) 266 и 337.
[13] АБОНМЦГ. Фонд Никола I. 1863. Д.б. 11.
[14] *Минић В.* Животопис или успомене из живота митрополита Митрофана Бана. Цетиње. 1991. С. 180–185; *Пилиповић Р.* Сто година од упокојења архиепископа цетињског и митрополита црногорског Митрофана Бана (1885–1920) // Црква, Календар Српске православне патријарпије. 2020. С. 120–127.

Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban managed it, on May 27, 1908, Kiril Mitrović was ordained Bishop of Zahumlje-Raška in the Alexander Nevsky Lavrain St Petersburg. He would later also be a participant in the establishment of a unified Serbian Church.

Finally, in Constantinople on December 1, 1911, Gavrilo Dožić was ordained Metropolitan of Raška and Prizren with its seat in Peć. The territory of his metropolitanate was then part of the Constantinople Patriarchate and the Ottoman state. However, with the liberation of Metohija and Peć in the First Balkan War at the end of 1912, these territories would become part of Montenegro, and without the canonical dismissal of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Metropolitanate of Peć headed by Dožić would be formed. This Metropolitanate would receive canonical dismissal only in the process of the unification of the Serbian Church. In 1918, Dožić would become a deputy at the Assembly in Podgorica, and also a participant in church unification.

After the final demarcation following the First Balkan War, the Montenegrin King Nikola Petrović sent Metropolitan Gavrilo Dožić to Peć offering a celebratory toast at a gala dinner in the court. This speech-toast of his, given on November 20, 1913, was officially published in *The Voice of Montenegrin*. In it, he expressed in another way the commitment of the Church in Montenegro to the ideas of the Patriarchate of Peć. Among other things, the post says:

«Angels of heaven, holy kings and patriarchs, who rest in eternal sleep in the space of our God-protected diocese, will rejoice when the song of God, the song of the Serb's prayer for the health of the Serbian people and their happiness resounds under the vaults of their temples. Please, Holy Metropolitan, follow the examples of my glorious ancestors, the lords of this country, and be inspired towards the non-Orthodox brothers by their broad religious tolerance, which has always distinguished them. Let your first prayer there be a thank you to God for those happy days, for the repose of the souls of the killed Serbs, as well as those Serbs who contributed to the liberation of our people from the Turks with their work, effort, desire and prayers.

From the throne of famous Serbian patriarchs, which has been vacant for so long, you have to learn, my dear people, the virtue and the Orthodox faith. You have to establish in it a love for the homeland, because Peć was the hearth of the Serbian church and the power of the Serbian spirit. Peć was Serbian Moscow, and Moscow is the chaste mother not only of our Russian brothers, but also of ours, because it defended us in difficult times and illuminated with faith in God and in the victory of our righteous thought.

You have to keep the most beautiful temple of God in the Balkans, my Visoki Dečani monastery, in the splendor of magnificence as a sacred expression and a witness to Serbian piety and greatness»[15].

In the meantime, at the end of August 1910, Montenegro was proclaimed Kingdom, and Nikola became King. At the extraordinary session of the Montenegrin National Assembly, the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Dr. Lazar Tomanović, in his solemn speech, among other things said: «Above all, the Metropolitanate of Cetinje is the only Saint Sava's Episcopal chair, which has been preserved without interruption to this day, and as such it was the legal see and heir of the Patriarchate of Peć»[16].

[15] Краљ Никола Петровић. Здравица // Глас Црногорца (Цетиње). 1913. Бр. 55 (30.новембар). С. 2.

[16] Из Народне Скупштине // Глас Црногорца (Цетиње). 1910. Бр. 35 (15.август). С. 2.

The process of disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was opened by the breakthrough of the Thessaloniki front and the advance of the Serbian army towards Serbia through Macedonia and Kosovo, and then towards other northwestern Yugoslav provinces. In the political sense, during the First World War, the idea of Serbian and Yugoslav unification took place in parallel, intertwined and denied each other. During the second phase of the First World War, a strong movement for unification with Serbia developed in Montenegro. It had two manifesting forms. The first was in a country that was under Austro-Hungarian occupation. A strong outlaw movement developed there. The other was abroad, in prison camps, where most Montenegrin officers, intellectuals and politicians were interned. Within it, certainly the most important aspect was the formation of the Montenegrin Committee for National Unification on March 27, 1917. In Paris, which soon afterwards transferred its headquarters to Geneva. The former Montenegrin Prime Minister Andrija Radović was its leader. He definitely parted ways with King Nicholas before that due to his ideas on unification. The king hesitated to declare unification, employed tactics and set various conditions. On the other hand, Radović's board worked closely with Nikola Pašić and the Serbian government. In general, after the end of the Balkan wars, the idea of the hopelessness of the Montenegrin state began to prevail in Montenegro, and such a feeling was helped in a subtle way by Russia. The young Montenegrin bourgeoisie and the intellectual class were at the forefront of this process. The reactionary and absolutist royal administrative apparatus with its own interests stood opposite to them.

The disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, due to which the Austro-Hungarian troops left Montenegro in October 1918, and the entry of allied troops led by the Serbian army, brought the process of unification into the final phase. Therefore, the process of establishing a single Serbian Church, and the participation of the Church of Montenegro in it, should be first viewed from a broader political aspect. Undoubtedly, the liberation and unification of all Serbs, through a common Yugoslav state, created the basis for the church unification that is the establishment of a unique Serbian Church that was extinguished by the will of the Ottomans in 1766. In operational terms, the unification of Montenegro with Serbia and other Yugoslav provinces was carried out through the decisions of the Grand National Assembly of the Serbian people in Podgorica (Podgorica Assembly). This Assembly was held from November 24 to 29, 1918, according to the new calendar.

The clergy of the Church in Montenegro almost unanimously supported the unification and the ideas of the Podgorica Assembly. In general, there was no difference between the supporters of unconditional unification with Serbia and the supporters of the King Nikola. The supporters of the King Nikola were the royalist movement of the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty and the king himself, who represented his interests as national. During the session of the Podgorica Assembly, the head of the Church, Archbishop of Cetinje and Metropolitan of Montenegro Mitrofan Ban, sent a telegram to the Assembly on November 25, 1918. It reads, «The great world events made it possible for each nation to determine the direction of their future state life. This goal of the manifestation is all the more significant on which depends the honor and future of the nation, whose representatives you are, bearing that in mind, and as a clergyman I pray to God to give you strength and a future, to carry out the work of your task in the spirit of those lofty ideals for which our glorious ancestors lived and died, and that is the liberation

and unification of the Serbian people, that is, the great Yugoslavia. In that name, I invoke God's blessing on the Great National Assembly and its holy work»[17].

Two days later, the Bishop of Zahumlje-Raška, Kiril Mitrović, sent a telegram of support to the Assembly from Nikšić. He claimed that: «He most cordially welcomes and blesses the hard-working work of the Great National Assembly for the unification of the Serbian people and the realization of a common homeland with Yugoslavia»[18].

It said that the Assembly held in Podgorica was of a neo-clerical character. These priests were its deputies: Petar Mijanović, Krsto Radulović, Jovan Dapčević, Nikola Simović, Stanko Obradović, Krsto Lješević, Ivo Koprivica, Mirčeta Golović, Jovo Radović, Petar Hajduković, MirkoVujisić, Kirilo Balšić, and Nikola Jovićević. The deputies were also three monks: Metropolitan Gavrilo Dožić of Peć, Abbot Serafim Džarić and Protosyncellus Prokopije Veković[19]. Metropolitan Gavrilo Dožić was the leader of the delegation of the Podgorica Assembly, which presented the decisions of the Assembly to Regent Aleksandar Karađorđević in Belgrade.

When the decisions of the Assembly in Podgorica were announced, Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban gave a speech on the occasion of unification:

> «Pious Christians!
>
> The terrible current world war has caused not only an internal but also an external coup d'état among the most of European people. Certain great world rulers deprived of their great thrones, as responsible for the terrible world bloodshed. The same fate did not pass the Montenegrin ruling house.
>
> The Great Montenegrin National Assembly, declaring the unification of Montenegro with Serbia under the Karadjordjević dynasty, dethroned His Majesty the King Nikola I, and with him, the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty. The days we are surviving are a great epoch in the history of Montenegro.
>
> Montenegrins waged a heroic struggle for full five centuries, all with the aim of liberating and unifying the Serbian people, and this noble and lofty idea, in the name of God, is partially realized today.
>
> Our knightly past has given us the right to unite with brotherly Serbia and Greater Yugoslavia with dignity and pride. For the realization of the new Yugoslav state, our Serbian army, crowned with tireless glory, showed such an example of heroism, which can rarely be found in the history of mankind.
>
> The terrible and bloody fight is already over, and the fortunes of war have remained on our fair side. The enemy curses, no matter how strong and powerful he was, he fell into the deep abyss of his eternal ruin under the blow of the knightly Serbian weapon of our powerful allies, from the height of his great pride. On its ruins, resurrected new Yugoslav state composed of our three-named people: Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The new state is happy to have a large number of highly educated sons, who will cover all the authorities in the country with dignity and benefit, both on land and at sea. In addition, Yugoslavia is rich in many fortified cities, large towns, vast seas, fertile fields, every branch of educational institutes and various industrial institutions; in a word, in the new state are the best conditions, which will be the source of all happiness in all branches of people's life.
>
> The Serbian people are very happy that, after five centuries of torment and trouble, they experienced those historical days of glorious and fraternal community.
>
> With these great successes, I am indescribably happy, I pray to God, to bless the new state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes under the mighty scepter of His Majesty, the Christ-loving King Peter I

[17] АИИЦГ – Подгорица /Црна Гора/. Фонд Подгоричка Скупштина, фасцикла 319. Телеграми (без сигнатуре).

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid. Записници.

Karadjordjević. Let the holy right hand of God protect, strengthen and strengthen it, so that it, in the concert of other European countries, may forever play the beneficial role of happiness and peace, not only of its citizens, but also of all mankind.

Long live His Majesty King Peter I Karadjordjević!
Long live the Serbian people!
Long live the great Yugoslavia!
Long live our powerful allies!»[20]

Svetozar Tomić was one of the leaders of the unification movement in 1918. He was also an anthropogeographer, and a member and student of the anthropogeographic school of Jovan Erdeljanović and Jovan Cvijić. As such, he was one of the creators of the Assembly in Podgorica. In his memoirs, published on the occasion of the decade since the unification, he wrote that on November 2, 1918, he had met with a group of people in Cetinje, and talked to them with Metropolitan Mitrofan. Then the metropolitan told him: «God forbid that I am against the unification of the Serbian people, and I am an admirer of the King Nikola. He made me from an ordinary monk to the Metropolitan of Montenegro, and I am grateful and obliged to him for that, but this my obligation must never destroy the unity and happiness of the people»[21].

The Assembly in Podgorica was not only multi-confessional, but also multi-political. In it, around the fundamental idea of the unification of Montenegro and Serbia, various political elements gathered, from the pro-radical Karađorđević, to the people who were supporters of the King Nikola. In that political conglomerate, which is especially interesting, there are also those who can identify with atheists and left socialists. It was obvious that the ideas of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia had reached Montenegro. Three members of the Assembly, Milan Terić, Miloš Jovanović and Miljko Bulajić, submitted an interpellation to the Assembly for consideration.

In point eleven it is said that all goods owned by the King Nikola «as well as all monastic and church goods pass into the hands of the People's Committee». A certain number of students of medicine, agronomy and technology were to be educated from this income. Hospitals and agricultural schools had to be built on the estates, and connected by road to larger places. Then they moved on to even more radical demands: «Further: all valuables in churches and monasteries are to be considered as people's property under the supervision of the people's committee». This board was supposed to hand over all church and monastery property to the Government of Serbia at the same cost.

The point thirteen of that interpellation said: «Let this Great National Assembly reduce all churches and monasteries to the rank of chapels. Further, to order the bury all human corpses in the ground, which still stand in monasteries today, under the name of miracle workers, so that burial is performed on these remains once and to free the people's consciousness from the pressure of centuries-old religious delusions. Persons, on the other hand, who have lived to this day performing a church, religious ceremony, should be employed in the civil service if they are capable of it»[22].

[20] Архив Митрополије Црногорско-приморске (далее – АМЦП) – Цетиње /Црна Гора/. Фасцикла Митрополит Митрофан Бан (без сигнатуре).
[21] *Томић С.* Десетогодишњица уједињења Црне Горе и Србије. Београд. 1929. С. 35.
[22] АИИЦГ. Фонд Подгоричка Скупштина, фасцикла 319. Записници (без сигнатуре).

All three deputies later became communists. Two of them, Jovanović and Bulajić, were at the founding congress of the Socialist Workers' Party of Yugoslavia (Communists) in Belgrade in April 1919. The Assembly only acknowledged this interpellation, but did not comment on it.In this document; however, it is important to look at the genesis of atheism and communism in Montenegro. A significant part of this interpellation was realized after the victory of the communists in the Second World War and the revolution in Yugoslavia and Montenegro. Certainly, it cannot be considered autochthonous, due to its programmatic and ideological basis. It corresponded, as already indicated, to the connotation of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. In a broader sense, it was based on the philosophical and ideological characteristics of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

In the name of Bishop Kiril Mitrović, a member of the Nikšić Consistory, Milan Mihailović, addressed the clergy of the Diocese of Zahumlje-Raška from Nikšić on December 7, 1918, to mention the name of King Peter I and Crown Prince Alexander during the service. This was in connection with the decisions of the Assembly in Podgorica on unification. The clergy were advised to advise parishioners to live in harmony and love, because after great suffering and devastation, it is time to start working and be loyal to the new authorities. Priests who caused disorder by their actions would be severely punished[23]. This break can be interpreted in two ways. That was the time immediately after the end of the almost three-year Austro-Hungarian occupation. A strong outlaw movement developed in it, with which powerlessness and robberies appeared as an accompanying phenomenon. It is evident that even during the elections for the Assembly in Podgorica, there was a great political polarization in Montenegro, between the unifiers and supporters of the King Nikola.That polarization did not end with the decisions of the Assembly in Podgorica. Moreover, it is only deepened. Supporters of the King Nikola began preparations for the uprising, which took place around Christmas 1918/19. This event is known as the Christmas Uprising.

It cannot be disputed that the Church in Montenegro followed the context of wider events, which means it followed the general political decisions in Montenegro and abroad with the end of the Austro-Hungarian occupation and the First World War. Therefore, the participation of the Church in Montenegro in the establishment of a single Serbian Church was a sequence of political events. On the other hand, the desire and will of the majority of Montenegrins for unification with Serbia and other Yugoslav provinces cannot be disputed. This cannot be disputed in the narrower ecclesiastical sense in Montenegro. The awareness of belonging to the Serbian Saint Sava Church, and its Patriarchate of Peć, forcibly and uncanonically extinguished by the Ottomans, was very much alive in Montenegro. Moreover, it was constantly insisted on. It also supported Montenegrin state and dynastic interests in the fight for the championship in the Serbian people.

The church leadership of the state of Montenegro very quickly followed the sequence of political events caused by the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, both in Montenegro and abroad. Therefore, on December 16, 1918, he made the decision to unite with the Church in the Kingdom of Serbia, and through that act with other dioceses, aware of the fact that this was a logical and historically long-awaited act. On the other hand, it would be wrong to interpret the political basis of this event, as well as itself, as the result of the inevitable church unification. The Church in Montenegro was an unavoidable factor in the establishment of

[23] АМЦП. Фонд Консисторија Никшићка.Фасцикла 21/1918. (без сигнатуре).

a single Serbian Church. Moreover, it had a long tradition, and behind it the fact that it was the Church of one of the two independent Serbian states. Therefore, it was the state Church, as well as the one in Serbia, and not one of a number of dioceses from the former Austro-Hungarian or Ottoman state.

An extraordinary session of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Montenegro was held on December 16, in the residence of the Metropolitanate in Cetinje. There were Metropolitan of Montenegro Mitrofan Ban, Metropolitan of Peć Dr. Gavrilo Dožić, Bishop of Nikšić and Zahumlje-Raška Kiril Mitrović, and Synod Secretary Deacon Ivo Kaludjerović. The topic of the session was «To unite the independent Serbian Orthodox Holy Church in Montenegro with the autocephalous Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Serbia". The Synod stated that it had comprehensively studied this issue, and that it had adopted a solution. Noting that the «Great National Assembly of the Serbian People in Montenegro», held on the 13th (November 26, 1918 in Podgorica), made a decision on the unification of independent Montenegro with the Kingdom of Serbia, the Holy Synod found it justified that the autocephalous church in Montenegro unites with the independent Orthodox church in the new state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. This decision was supposed to be delivered to Serbian Metropolitan Dimitrije and Prime Minister Stojan Protić[24].

The course of the unification of the second, historical part of the Metropolitanate of Montenegro in Boka, went differently. This part separated in 1815. After the Congress of Vienna in 1814 and after Boka and Kotor definitely belonged to Austria, this state quickly began to deny the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Montenegrin metropolitans over this territory. It unified this territory in the ecclesiastical sense with Dalmatia, and was in a complex relationship with the composition of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Later it was exempted with the establishment of the Diocese of Boka Kotorska and Dubrovnik with its seat in Kotor. This Diocese became part Metropolitan of Bukovina-Dalmatia again in 1873, with its seat in Chernivtsi in today's Ukraine. This Metropolis did not have unity in the territorial sense, but was artificial. Therefore, the Bishop of Dalmatia-Istria, Dimitrije Branković, addressed the Holy Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, to receive his and the Diocese of Boka Kotorska-Dubrovnik, which currently did not have an archbishop, in a church connection with the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. The Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci agreed to this proposal on December 29, 1918, and adopted it[25].

On December 31, 1918, the First Conference of Serbian Orthodox Bishops was held in Sremski Karlovci. The decision Metropolitanate of Karlovci to unite with other church areas in the state of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was announced, by establishing the unity that existed until 1710. Under the presidency of Belgrade Metropolitan Dimitrij Pavlović, stated that «the unanimous will of the legal representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church areas for unification and based on that expresses the need to immediately start the implementation of that church unification by establishing the Serbian Patriarchate, as it is expected that the Serbian Church in Montenegro will agree to unification, which due to the short time and difficult traffic conditions could not be represented in this election of bishops»[26]. The same conference authorized Metropolitan Dimitrije to compile and send a petition to the Ecumenical Patriarchate

[24] АМЦП. Фонд Свети Синод Православне Цркве у Краљевини Црној Гори.Фасцикла 1918. (без сигнатуре).
[25] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр.1 (14.јул). С. 7–8.
[26] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 2 (29.јул). С. 17–18.

for initiating proceedings in the case of the united Serbian Church, and asked the Government of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes for diplomatic mediation with the Patriarchate[27].

On March 13, 1919, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Belgrade Metropolitanate authorized Archbishop Dimitrije of Belgrade and Metropolitan of the Kingdom of Serbia to convene a conference of Orthodox bishops as soon as possible, regardless of whether they belong to independent or episcopates with a different status. It would review the decisions of the conference in Karlovci, and give new guidelines for the future organization of the united Serbian Church[28].

After the Second Conference of Serbian Archbishops, he formed a temporary committee, which called itself the Central Council of Bishops of the United Serbian Church. Its members were: Metropolitan of Montenegro Mitrofan Ban (president), and members: Metropolitan of Zvornik-Tuzla Dr. Ilarion Radonić, Bishop of Timisoara and administrator of the Karlovci Metropolitanate Dr. Georgije Letić, Bishop of Niš Dositej Nikolić, and Vicar Bishop of the Karlovci Metropolitanate Ilarion Zeremski. The decisions of this body immediately became executive, and various legal matters, after the approval of the Minister of Religion, too. This Assembly had to prepare all the necessary materials for the unification of the Serbian dioceses, compiling the agenda of the session, and convening a conference of bishops. All dioceses corresponded with the state authorities through him.

The President of the Conference of Serbian Archbishops, Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban of Montenegro, sent a telegram to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople on May 12, 1919, as follows: «The Most Reverend Archbishops of all Serbian regions, having gathered in a fraternal joint conference, consider it their duty to send the fraternal Great Church of Christ with this, expressing the most cordial declarations of devotion and love to it»[29].

The Second Conference soon began from May 15 to 18th in Belgrade, chaired by Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban of Montenegro. It expresses «the spiritual, moral and administrative unity of all Serbian Orthodox church areas».This unity was to be defined and regulated when the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Autocephalous Church met under the presidency of its patriarch. This conference also took note of the activities of Belgrade Metropolitan Dimitrij towards the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in connection with the co-optation of those Serbian bishoprics, which were still under its jurisdiction. Through this metropolitan, the Government of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was informed that two experts, in the field of the church, would be added to its diplomatic team in negotiations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople[30].

The third conference of archbishops under the presidency of the Metropolitan of Montenegro Mitrofan Ban was held from December 3 to 15, 1919, with most of the sessions in Sremski Karlovci. The Draft Law on the Proclamation and Establishment of the Old Serbian Patriarchate was adopted on it. There should have been a synod as a permanent and the highest administrative and ecclesiastical judicial authority along with the patriarch.

[27] Ibid. C. 21.
[28] Ibid. C. 23.
[29] Архив Патријаршије Српске Православне Цркве (АПСПЦ) – Београд /Србија/.Фонд Патријаршије, Свети Синод, кутија 2. Телеграми (без сигнатуре).
[30] Гласник: Службени лист Српске Православне Цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 1 (14.јул). С. 18–21; Службени лист Краљевине Срба, Хрвата и Словенаца (Београд). 1920. Бр. 90 (4.септембар). С. 1–3.

The Council of Bishops should have been the highest legislative authority. The key decisions of the conference were there to obtain canonical dismissal from the Metropolitan of Bukovina, Dr. Vladimir Ripta, for the dioceses in Boka and Dalmatia, as well as from the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the dioceses in: Old Serbia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.Earlier, the Bishop of Dalmatia and Istria, Dimitrija Branković, and the Secretary, Dr. Vojislav Jonić, were authorized to go to Bucharest and Chernivtsi. On November 22, they managed to get a canonical dismissal that means that the Dalmatian-Istrian and Boka Kotorska-Dubrovnik Dioceses can join the Karlovci Metropolitanate. They belonged to it until it entered the Bukovina-Dalmatia Metropolitanate. According to this Dismissal List, the Metropolitanate of Karlovci stated on December 20 that these two dioceses have again become part of its canonical relationship[31].

After the failed of the Christmas Uprising of 1918/19, the King Nikola's supporters did not accept the failure. As the Montenegrin government in exile existed in Neu near Paris, it coordinated its activities with the guerrillas (comites) in Montenegro. Although this was an issue in the domain of political-state conflicts, and had nothing to do with the process of establishment and unification of the Serbian Church, a number of Montenegrin priests who openly supported the unification and criticized former the King Nikola came under attack from his supporters.

On the night of August between 4/5, 1919, the supporters of the King Nikola killed on fraud the parish priest of Koman near Podgorica, the priest Krsto Radulović. He was a member of the Assembly in Podgorica, too. On November 10, 1919, the supporters of King Nikola also killed the parish priest of Bogetić near Nikšić, the priest Ilija Mijušković. On October 2, 1919, the parish priest of Čevsko-ubaljski near Cetinje, Luka Nikolić, addressed the Consistory of Cetinje with a request for help. He stated that in the days of unification, he put his life, family life and property at the disposal of this idea. Because of that, the supporters of King Nikola attacked him. On August 16, the supporters of the King Nikola (komiti) set fire to his house and twenty beehives. During the service in the church in the village of Lipa in the parish of Trnjin near Cetinje, the supporters of the King Nikola attacked him. They asked him not to mention the name of the former King of Serbia, the Yugoslav King Peter I, during the service, only the name ofthe Montenegrin King Nikola, regardless of the fact that the unification was carried out. He refused it. Because of that, they mistreated him and made him shout: «Long live King Nikola», which he also refused.

When he served in the village of Trnjine the next day, a group of outlaws of about thirty armed supporters of the King Nikola appeared. They again asked him to mention the name of the King Nikola during the service, which he refused. Therefore, they took him out of the altar and plucked his beard and hair, and at the end they beat him. Beaten like that, they left him lying at the church for four hours, and they went to the village. He took advantage of that and ran away. He soon received threats that they would kill him if they met him again[32].

[31] АПСПЦ. Фонд Патријаршије, Свети Синод, Свети Архијерејски Сабор, кутија 1. Фасцикла 1.Кроз акта (без сигнатуре); Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 3 (14.август). С. 1–34.

[32] АМЦП. Фонд Консисторија Цетињска. Фасцикла 72/1919. (без сигнатуре).

Mitrofan Ban addressed the Central Council of Bishops (CCB) on May 10, 1920, stating that he had been in poor health for six months, and that he was resigning from the position of President of the Parliament, but remained as a member until he was dismissed[33]. The Deputy Minister of Religion and Minister of Education of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, by an act of June 5, 1920, informed the Parliament, in connection with the act of May 12, that Metropolitan Mitrofan resigned from the position of CCB president due to illness.The vice president, Bishop Dositej of Niš, did the same. Archbishop of Belgrade and Metropolitan of Serbia Dimitrije was elected to replace Mitrofan. The Bishop of Timisoara, Dr. Georgije Letić, was elected as a Vice President. The Ministry of Religion said it could not take these changes into account. This is because of the Article 3 of the Decree on the Organization of the Central Council of Bishops stipulates that the Council of Bishops consists of five members, elected by the Conference of Bishops. Therefore, it was requested that a conference of bishops be called, and that the matter be resolved in this way. It was emphasized that this issue should be resolved as soon as possible, due to the final negotiations «WITH THE GREAT MOTHER CHURCH in Constantinople»[34].

In the name of Peter I, King of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Alexander, as the heir to the throne and regent, declared on June 27, 1920, the Provisional National Representation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and he required from the competent authority to declare the Law on the Establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate. Article 1 established the Patriarchate as the only autocephalous church of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Article 2 stipulates that a Serbian patriarch should head the patriarchy. There should have been a synod with him, as the largest ecclesiastical judicial ecclesiastical authority. The patriarch was supposed to be the president of the assembly of all archbishops. Article 3 stipulates that the seat of the patriarchate would be in Belgrade. Article 4 provided for the enactment of a statute on the election of a patriarch. Article 5 provided that the law would enter into force when the king signed it, and when it was published in the Official Gazette[35].

On October 23, 1920, a decree was issued to convene the Assembly in the Cathedral Church in Belgrade, in order to elect a patriarch. On the day of St. Stephen Milutin, October 30, at eight o'clock in the morning, the Electoral Assembly began the election of the patriarch between three candidates: Metropolitan of Serbia Dimitrij Pavlović, Metropolitan of Zahumlje-Herzegovina Petar Zimonjić and Bishop of Pakrac Miron Nikolić. Dimitrije Pavlović was elected patriarch. On the same day, Crown Prince Alexander confirmed this election by decree.

[33] АПСПЦ. Фонд Патријарпије, Свети Синод, Свети Архијерејски Сабор, кутија 1. Д. б. 86.
[34] Ibid. Д. б. 4670.
[35] Ibid. Кутија 1.Фасцикла 1. Д. б. 271/118. – See about church legislation in the creation of a unified Serbian Orthodox Church and the method of electing the patriarch: *Перић Д.* Законодавство Српске православне цркве од стварања Југославије до новијег времена, Прилог проучавању односа државе и цркве. Торонто, 1995. С. 15–26, 71–91; *Радић. Р.* Избор патријарха СПЦ у 20. веку // Историја 20. века. 2009. Бр. 1. С. 17–36; *Џомић В.* Начин избора српских митрополита и патријарха у XIX и XX веку // Гласник права. 2010. Бр. 1. С. 69–82; *Новаковић Д.* Српска православна црква у законодавству Краљевине СХС и Југославије. Београд, 2015. С. 24–36; *Ракитић Д., Ђукић Д.* Стварање државно-црквеног права после уједињења // Сто година од уједињења: Формирање државе и права: Зборник. 2020. С. 193–230.

The Serbian patriarch had a seat in Belgrade, and a temporary seat in Sremski Karlovci. The enthronement ceremony took place the next day in the cathedral in Belgrade[36].

In the name of the King Peter I, the heir to the throne, Regent Alexander, issued a decree on the dethronement of administrative and judicial power in the Serbian Patriarchate in November 1920. Article 4 stipulates that the diocesan bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and Dalmatian dioceses, and the diocesan episcopate of Montenegro, as well as the metropolitans of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stand in the same canonical attitude towards the patriarch, the Council and the Synod, and the other diocesan bishops of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro[37]. At the session of the Parliament on November 16, 1920, the act about the termination of the work of the Parliament from the Minister of Religion was adopted[38].

The Government of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes has started negotiations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the annexation of its parts on the territory of the state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to the Serbian Church. In connection with that, an agreement was signed on March 18, 1920, as well as a special decision the next day. In that context, the establishment of a united Serbian Church was recognized. Due to the fact that the patriarchal throne of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was vacant because of the resignation of Patriarch Herman V, Metropolitan Dositej of Brus, who was the deputy of the patriarchal throne, as well as ten members of the Synod, including the secretary, signed the synodic decision. The Patriarchal and Synodal Tomos replaced this decision within three months of the election of the new Patriarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate[39].

The state government also recognized this unification and recognition of the renewed Serbian Church, by the decree of the heir to the throne Alexander in the name of King Peter I on June 17, 1920. The President of the Central Committee of Bishops of the United Serbian Church, Archbishop of Belgrade and Metropolitan of Serbia Dimitrije, convened a conference of all archbishops for September 9. Its members went to Sremski Karlovci, and on the day of the Assembly of Serbian Saints on September 12, the solemn establishment of the Serbian Patriarchate took place. The founding took place in the presence of the Crown Prince Alexander, Prime Minister Dr. MilenkoVesnić, and Minister of Religion Pavle Marinković[40].

On the same day, the founding of the Patriarchate was announced in Cetinje with the ringing of bells at the Cetinje monastery. After the service in the Cetinje monastery, the secretary of the former Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro, Deacon Ivo Kaludjerović, in the name of the ailing Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban. Addressed to the gathered people. In his speech, he said, among other things: «The last flame on the throne of Saint Sava, always burns, burns even today, and he testifies classically with his life and being that the original Saint Sava's autocephaly of the Serbian Church has always remained uninterrupted, and it

[36] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 8 (29.октобар). С. 113–114; Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 10 (29. новембар). С. 142–145.

[37] АПСПЦ. Архив Патријаршије, Свети Синод, Свети Архијерејски Сабор. Кутија 1. Фасцикла 1. Д.б. 312.

[38] Ibid. Д.б. 101.

[39] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 7 (14.октобар). С. 99–100.

[40] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 5 (14.септембар). С. 1–67.

has lasted until today. That living and never extinguished flame was smoldering in Cetinje, on the throne of the ancient Zeta, Skenderija and Metropolitanate of the Littoral, of the only Serbian Metropolitanate, and until now the church-legal continuity of the traditions of the Pec Patriarchate has been successfully maintained»[41].

As already indicated, the election of the first patriarch was made at the session of the Council of Bishops held on September 28, 1920. in Belgrade. Metropolitan Dimitrije Pavlović was elected to that position, and the Minister of Religion was asked to submit this decision to the Council of Ministers and required a royal decree. According to that, the chair of the archbishop of Belgrade and the metropolitan of Serbia should have been elevated to the rank of patriarchy. This essentially led to a dual patriarchal characteristic that means there is a patriarch of Serbia and a patriarch of the Serbian Church.

The state government, however, did not accept this solution. In the agreement with the Parliament, two decrees were passed. The first Provisional Decree on the Serbian Patriarchate prescribed that the Serbian Patriarch was at the forefront of the Church as the head of the entire Serbian Orthodox Church, and that the Parliament have legislative ecclesiastical authority. The Assembly elected four archbishops, who together with the patriarch formed the Synod, as the highest administrative and supervisory authority. This Decree entered into force simultaneously with the Decree on the Election of the First Patriarch of the Established Patriarchate. According to this order, a threefold candidacy is foreseen, which the Parliament proposes to the special Electoral Assembly. The Electoral Assembly consisted of representatives of the peace and monastic clergy, as well as secular persons of the Orthodox faith with important state functions (the highest judicial and political authorities and the army, university rectors and representatives of the Academy of Sciences, as well as mayors of Belgrade, Sremski Karlovci, Skopje and Peć)[42].

After the Assembly in Podgorica, and the proclamation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in Belgrade on December 1, 1918, the Montenegrin government in exile continued to work in Ney near Paris, and then transferred its headquarters to Rome, Italy. The King Nikola Petrović was still alive. This government was still recognized by the great powers, until the end of 1920, when, after the elections for the Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the end of November 1920, they began to sever diplomatic relations with it. The Montenegrin government in exile did not in any diplomatic way try to stop or challenge the process of establishing a single Serbian Church.

On the news of the end of the re-establishment procedure, in its official newspaper *Glas Crnogorca* from September 24, 1920, with the title «Patriarchate», he responded with a text that read:

> «These days, the Serbs have declared the Karlovci Patriarchate all-Serbian, giving it power, which the Serbian patriarch once had during the reign of the strong Emperor Dušan.
>
> The Montenegrin people, who with their centuries-old efforts founded the Serbian state thought and enabled their selfless and heroic deeds to free the Serbian tribe from Turkish and Austrian slavery, liberated Peć, the seat of the Serbian patriarch. The real patriarchal rights of the Metropolitan of Peć came to life with the liberation of Peć. Montenegro wanted to appoint a patriarch in Peć, but as a large

[41] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 6 (29.септембар). С. 84–85.

[42] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1922. Бр. 3 (14.фебруар). С. 35–36.

part of our people who were under Austrian slavery had not been released yet, that act was postponed. As soon as Montenegro is established, the Metropolitan of Peć will be declared the patriarch of the entire Serbian Orthodox Church with all historical rights. The real Montenegro will never be able to give up of that. Otherwise, it would have sinned against its people, who never allowed the sermon of the captured altar of Serbia to be heard from their pulpit»[43].

Although some details in this text are incorrect, such as the fact that the Karlovci Metropolitanate received the status of a patriarchate, the identity of the church plans of the state of Montenegro with those realized in the new state of the Kingdom of SCS, can be seen.

At the end of November 1921, the vacant throne of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was filled. The new patriarch became Melentije IV. On February 19, 1922, he confirmed with Tomos the exclusion of the dioceses from the canonical administration of the Ecumenical Patriarchate that belonged to the Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro by the peace treaty in Bucharest in 1913. These territories belonged to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes based on the peace treaty in Ney near Paris in 1919. In addition, he acknowledged the unification of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and Montenegro with the Church in the Kingdom of Serbia, and before that the Diocese of Boka Kotorska-Dubrovnik and the Dalmatian-Istrian Diocese with the Metropolitanate of Karlovci[44].

Five days later, on February 24, the Canon Letter was published in response to the notification of the Serbian Patriarch Dimitrij. The Tomos and the Canon Letter were brought to Belgrade via Bucharest by the envoys of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, led by Metropolitan Herman of Amasya. On Sunday, April 2, in the Cathedral of the Holy Archangel Michael in Belgrade, Serbian Patriarch Dimitrije, together with Metropolitan Barnabas of Skopje and Metropolitan Herman, served the hierarch's liturgy. At the end of the liturgy, Herman solemnly announced the decisions given by the Tomos and the Canon[45].

Serbian Patriarch Dimitrij Pavlović held the solemn enthronement on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 28, 1924 in Peć, during the solemn hierarch's liturgy. This symbolically wanted to show that the so-called Third Serbian Patriarchate is in fact just a continuation of the continuity of Peć, and in fact one and the same. At the end of the prayer, Metropolitan Petar Zimonjić of Dabro-Bosnian and Gavrilo Dožić of Montenegro brought the patriarch to the altar through the royal doors to the throne of the ancient patriarchs of Peć. King Aleksandar Karađorđević brought him to the throne. After his accession to the throne, Prime Minister Ljubomir Davidović read the king's charter on the enthronement of Peć. After reading the charter, King Alexander solemnly handed over to the patriarch a precious encolpion (a medallion worn by a bishop) with the image of Saint Sava[46].

[43] Патријаршија // Глас Црногорца (Нежи код Париза). 1920. Бр. 88 (24.септембар). С. 1–2.
[44] Гласник: Службени лист српске православне цркве (Београд). 1924. Бр. 9 (14.мај). С. 1–29.
[45] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1922. Бр. 6 (28.март). С. 1–88.
[46] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1924. Бр. 15 (14.август). С. 225–228. – See more about the restoration and unification of the unified Serbian Orthodox Church: *Страњаковић Д.* Уједињење Српске православне цркве и обнова Пећке патријаршије 1818–1922.године // Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1962. Бр. 4 (април). С. 140–156; *Петровић К. Д.* Уједињење Српске цркве и обнова Патријаршије // Српска православна црква 1219–1969, Споменица о 750-годишњици аутокефалности. Београд, 1969. С. 361–368; *Веселиновић Р.* Уједињење покрајинских цркава и васпостављање

The establishment of the Serbian Church, that means the Patriarchate of Peć, should be studied from another aspect – the canonical one. Although the process of unification of Serbian dioceses was inevitably carried out, which until 1918 were part of several states, including autocephalous churches, it essentially meant only the establishment that means the renewal of a church creation that already existed and had autocephaly. Deacon Ivo Kaluđerović the priest of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro, the secretary of the Holy Synod, and the participant in the historical session at which the decision on unification was made correctly noticed this. In the already quoted speech on the occasion of the establishment of the Patriarchate of Peć, he said, among other things, this: «Today, only the old Patriarchate of Peć is being renewed, which the Greeks illegally abolished in 1766. However, the Serbian Patriarchate did not finally end then. The accession of this to the Church of Constantinople was not valid, because it was carried out by force, against the will of the competent factors, in an illegal and an uncanonical way. That violent act was considered by the Serbian Church as a coup d'état. And the Serbian clergy fought against that coup for a long time and desperately ...But a difficult time came, the Patriarchate of Peć in its greatest extent, but never as a whole actually fell under the Greek Patriarchate»[47].

Canonically speaking, the continuity of the Patriarchate of Peć was violently interrupted, by a decision of a non-Christian state – the Ottoman Empire. The rule 18 of the sixth Ecumenical Council of Tula, held from September 1, 691 to August 31, 692, in the time of Emperor Justinian II, says about this: «We order that the clergy, who have left their places because of barbaric invasion, or some other reasons, after that, they have to return to their churches and not leave them for a long time without reason. And if there is someone contrary to this rule, let him be overthrown, until he returns to his church»[48].

Rule 37 of the same parliament is in a similar context. It reads: «Since there were barbarian invasions at different times, and because of that many cities were subjugated by lawless people, it was so impossible for the head of one of such cities, since he was appointed, to take his throne and establish his high priestly survival, and in accordance with the established custom of ordaining and doing everything else that belongs to the bishop, we, striving to honor and respect the clergy, and endeavoring that in no way pagan notice harms ecclesiastical rights,

Српске патријаршије // Српска православна црква 1920–1970, Споменица о 50-годишњици васпоставе Српске патријаршије. Београд, 1971. С. 13–35; *Гардашевић Б.* Организационо устројство и законодавство Српске православне цркве између два светска рата // Српска православна црква 1920–1970, Споменица о 50-годишњици васпоставе Српске патријаршије. Београд, 1971. С. 37–64; *Gligorijević B.* Ujedinjenje srpske pravoslavne crkve i uspostavljanje Srpske Patrijeršije // Istorija 20. veka. Br. 2. 1997. С. 7–18; *Марјановић Ч.* Историја Српске цркве. Београд, 2001. С. 151–153; *Слијепчевић Ђ.* Историја Српске православне цркве. Књ. III. Београд, 2002. С. 3-6; *Ђурић В.* Избор и устоличење патријарха Димитрија (Павловића), у Прилози за историју Српске православне цркве. Књ. I. Приштина-Лепосавић, 2006. С. 9–90; *Ђокић Н. Марковић М.* Уједињење Српске Православне Цркве 1920.године у новинским извештајима // Гласник: службени лист Српске Православне Цркве (Београд). 2020. Бр. 9 (септембар). С. 461–469; *Пилиповић Р. Бранковић М. Б.* Уједињење српских црквених области у обновљену Српску Православну Патријаршију 1918–1924. године. Бања Лука, 2021. С. 69–105.

[47] Гласник: Службени лист Српске православне цркве (Београд). 1920. Бр. 6 (29.септембар). С. 84–85.

[48] *Милаш Н.* Правила Православне Цркве с тумачењима. Књ. 1. Нови Сад. 1896. С. 488–489.

establish that those bishops who have already been appointed they were unable to occupy their thrones because of the mentioned reason, they are not subject to any damage, and let them ordain various clergy according to the rules, and let them enjoy the right of seat according to their place, and let every act of their priesthood be firm and lawful. Because the need for time, which prevents the accurate preservation of rights, must not narrow the boundaries of the administration»[49].

Finally, it is necessary to look chronologically at the situation in the Orthodox Church of the Kingdom of Montenegro in the period of the establishment and unification of the Serbian Church. At the time of its establishment and renewal, the Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of Montenegro had three dioceses: the Montenegrin one with its seat in Cetinje, Zahumsko-raška with its seat in Nikšić, and Budimska with its seat in Peć. Taking into account the territories of the future Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, created according to the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church adopted in 1931, another Diocese of BokaKotorska and Dubrovnik should be included in this issue. Former Bishop of Zahumlje-Raska from the time of the Kingdom of Montenegro, Kiril Mitrović, was elected for the Bishop of Boka Kotorska-Dubrovnik on November 7, 1920, and was enthroned in Kotor on February 28, 1921. He died in Kotor on July 24, 1931. The President of the Central Council of Bishops, who began the process of establishment and unification of the Serbian Church, Montenegrin Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban, died on September 30, 1920. The new Montenegrin metropolitan became the metropolitan of Buda, Dr. Gavrilo Dožić, and he was enthroned in Cetinje on March 2, 1921. The department of the Zahumlje-Raška Diocese remained vacant, and this Diocese was abolished in 1927. In February 1938, Dožić was elected for the Patriarch of Serbia. The Synod Secretary, Deacon Ivo Kaludjerović, was also the Secretary to Patriarch Dožić with the rank of archpriest-staurophore[50].

Conclusion

Finding the formal reason for the indebtedness of the Patriarchate of Peć (Serbian Church) to a Greek moneylender and interpreter at Porta (Ottoman government) who was accused of treason and hanged, the Patriarchate of Constantinople appeared as the payer of the debts of the Patriarchate of Peć to the Ottoman state. It was obviously a matter of coordinating the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Ottoman state in the process of violent and non-canonical abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery. The Patriarchate of Peć and its patriarchs appeared during the 17th and 18th centuries as the initiator of the resistance of the Serbian people to the Ottoman rule. It did this in cooperation with Austria, the Venetian Republic and Russia. The Ottoman state therefore wanted to shut down that institution. On the contrary, the Patriarchate of Constantinople showed a great degree of collaboration and pacifism towards the Ottoman state. It had its own interests, so that it would carry out the Hellenization of Serbian territories through its church clergy, by closing down the Patriarchate of Peć and taking over its territories. Since the end of the existence of the Patriarchate of Peć,

[49] *Милаш Н.* Правила Православне Цркве с тумачењима. Књ. 1. С. 518–519.

[50] Сава, епископ шумадијски (Вуковић). Епархије и епископи Српске Православне Цркве 1920–1970 // Српска православна црква: Споменица о 50-годишњици васпостављања Српске Патријаршије. Београд. 1971. С. 173; *Батрићевић Ђ.* Патријарх Гаврило Дожић. Цетиње, 2000. С. 7–13, 74–77; *Ђурић В. Близанац М.* Патријарх Гаврило (Дожић) и његово доба. Нови Сад, 2004. С. 43–50, 121–130.

it has mostly had no success in that, although it has mostly appointed Greeks as bishops in Serbia. Thus, each of the dioceses of the Patriarchate of Peć was left to manage as it knows and can in its internal organization, and the attitude towards the state authorities of the state in which it was. Essentially, those dioceses of the former Patriarchate of Peć, which were part of the Ottoman government, became part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Those dioceses that were part of the Venetian Republic until the end of the 18th century until it collapsed, as well as Austria, formed a special church organization, which, apart from wider canonical unity, did not recognize the competencies of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Thanks to the political independence of Montenegro, and the fact that from the beginning of the 18th century, elements of state organization were formed in it within the theocracy, the Metropolitanate of Cetinje continued its independent church life. It did not recognize the decisions of the Ottoman authorities and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, because they simply did not have the possibility of actual influence on it. Therefore, in the decades until the end of the 18th century, and throughout the 19th century, the autochthonous church life of the Cetinje Metropolitanate took place. It simply did not recognize the Patriarchate of Constantinople, simply because its metropolitans were not ordained in Constantinople, but in Sremski Karlovci and Petrograd. Montenegro wanted to show its state independence, which was only formally formalized at the Berlin Congress in 1878. At the beginning of the 20th century, Montenegro, with its internal legal-secular and legal-ecclesiastical acts, declared the Church autocephalous in it. It did so by adopting the Constitution of the Holy Synod and the Constitution of the Consistory in early 1904, and the Constitution of the Principality of Montenegro in 1905. However, in the canonical procedure, the Church did not ask for when, nor did it receive a certificate of autocephaly. According to the canons, it did not have even three bishops, which was the basis for autocephaly.

In 1912, in the First Balkan War, the Montenegrin army liberated Peć, the former seat of the Patriarchate, as well as the nearby monastery of Visoke Dečani, a large center of Serbian ecclesiology, and the endowment of Tsar Dušan Nemnanjić and his father the King Stefan, too. From the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery in 1766. until the First World War, the awareness of belonging to the Serbian Church and the Patriarchate of Peć never died in Montenegro. Moreover, the Church in Montenegro has often referred to the fact that it is the legal heir and follower of the Patriarchate of Peć.

From the beginning of the 20th century, the movement for unification with Serbia began to strengthen in Montenegro. The rule of the prince, and from 1910 the King Nikola Petrović, was anachronistic and undemocratic, which did not suit the young Montenegrin bourgeoisie. During the First World War, the unification movement reached its peak, and sublimated with the general Yugoslav unification. The Montenegrin government, led by King Nikola, left the country in January 1916, shortly before Austro-Hungarian troops entered. It continued its operations in Neuilly near Paris during the war, enjoying partial French support. Shortly after the end of the First World War, the question of the unification of Montenegro with Serbia and other Yugoslav provinces was raised. For that reason, at the end of November 1918, the Assembly was held in Podgorica, which proclaimed the unification and dethronement of the King Nikola and the Petrović-Njegoš dynasty.

The clergy of the Church in Montenegro largely supported unification as a political act. King Nikola had a considerable number of supporters in Montenegro who were not opposed to unification as a global act, but his and his dynastic interests were their priority. When the unification created the conditions for the establishment of the forcibly and uncanonically

abolished Patriarchate of Peć, the unification of all Serbian dioceses began in its establishment. The Church in Montenegro unreservedly entered in that process. Montenegrin Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban was the president of the Central Council of Bishops, who worked operatively on the establishment and unification.

In terms of church unification, there was no schism in Montenegro, unlike the political and dynastic issue. The Montenegrin government in exile in Neu near Paris, and the supporters of King Nikola in Montenegro did not enact any legal act, public opposition, etc. in connection with ecclesiastical unification. Unification as a political act was supported by a large part of the clergy of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro, and all bishops. A number of priests and one metropolitan were direct participants in the Assembly in Podgorica. Therefore, the later attacks of the protégés of King Nikola (komita) on a number of priests can by no means be understood as an act of motives for opposing the establishment and unification of the Serbian Church. These were actions primarily with political motivation. Several priests were loyal to King Nicholas. However, after the unification and the revival of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, they peacefully became involved in the clergy of the Serbian Orthodox Church. One of the participants in the unification, either as a political or as a church rank, Metropolitan of Peć Dr. Gavrilo Dožić, later became the Serbian patriarch.

Информация о статье

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Заголовок: The role of the Ortodox Church in Montenegro in the establishment and unification of the Serbian Ortodox Church (1918–1922) [Роль Православной Церкви в Черногории в процессе создания и объединения Сербской православной церкви (1918–1922)]

Резюме: Цель статьи — проанализировать особенности церковной жизни Черногории после упразднения Печского патриархата (Сербской церкви) в 1766 г. до объединения Сербской православной церкви в 1918–1922 гг. Печский патриархат был неканонически и насильственно упразднен в 1766 г. указом османского султана Мустафы III. Православная церковь в Черногории не признала этот акт. Она продолжала свою внутреннюю жизнь, считая себя наследницей Печского патриархата. В XIX в. произошло восстановление сербской государственной самостоятельности, а также имело место каноническое освобождение различными способами других сербских епархий. Наконец, с окончанием Первой мировой войны в 1918 г. были созданы условия для воссоздания единой Сербской православной церкви. Церковное духовенство в Черногории в значительной степени поддерживало объединение как политический акт, а также полностью поддерживало процесс создания и объединения Сербской православной церкви, то есть возвращение к ситуации 1766 года. Эту процедуру поддержали все архиереи Священного Синода Православной Церкви Черногории, которые участвовали в ней под руководством черногорского митрополита Митрофана Бана.

Ключевые слова: история церкви, Черногория, Печ, Патриархат, Сербская Церковь, Митрополит Митрофан Бан

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Title: The role of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro in the establishment and unification of the Serbian Orthodox Church (1918–1922)

Summary: The intention of this article is to show how the church life of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro went from the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć (Serbian Church) in 1766, to the end of the process of establishment and unification of the same Church in the period from 1918 to 1922. The Patriarchate of Peć was abolished in 1766 by a decree of the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III, violently and uncanonically. The Orthodox Church in Montenegro did not recognize that act, but continued its internal life, considering itself the successor of the Patriarchate of Peć. During the 19th century, there was state emancipation in Serbia as

well as canonical emancipation in various ways of other Serbian dioceses. Finally, with the end of the First World War, in 1918, the conditions were created for the establishment and unification of the Serbian Church. The Church clergy in Montenegro largely supported the unification as a political act, and the process of the establishment and unification of the Serbian Church that means the return to the situation from 1766, in its entirety. All the hierarchs of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in Montenegro supported this procedure, and led by the head of the Church, Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban, participated in it.

Keywords: Montenegro, the Patriarchate of Peć, Serbian Church, Metropolitan Mitrofan Ban

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