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The Relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad: 1920–1941*

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Abstract: The present article has made clear a general understanding of the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad between 1920 and 1941. Overall, the relationship was outstanding. The Serbian Church, through the persons of its leaders, constantly showed its support to the Russian Church Abroad.

Key words: Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC), Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii), Metropolitan Anastasii (Gribanovskii), Patriarch Varnava of Serbia, Patriarch Gavriil of Serbia.

Part I: Introduction

The Purpose of this Work

In contemporary Orthodox America, as well as the rest of the world, the correct understanding of Orthodox Church relations is unknown, people often forget the historical events that have taken place in the Orthodox Church, especially in

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the Twentieth Century. An area of great concern is the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

This paper seeks to examine the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, mainly between the arrival of the Russians up until the beginning of World War II, which is a large portion of the Russians' stay in Yugoslavia. The goal was to collect as much information as possible from numerous sources in order to better understand the relationship of the two churches. The main focuses are on the actions of the Serbian Patriarchs regarding the First-Hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the involvement of the Serbian Orthodox Church as a mediator between the troubled Russian Churches, along with other important relevant contemporary details.

In short, the goal of this paper is to closely analyze the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad between 1920 and 1941 in order to better understand the close connection of the two churches, especially between each Churches' guiding hierarchs; with hopes of completing this goal, it is believed that many will benefit in the Serbian Church as well as in the Russian Churches, so that a better understanding will be acquired by all to the glory of God, Who abides fully in the Serbian Church as well as in all the parts of the one Russian Church.

Historiography

Hitherto, there does not exist a study on the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Thus, the sources for this work were sought out in many different places in order to come up with an accurate description of the relations.

A wealth of information was acquired for this paper from the Archive of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, Serbia. Other information was gathered from the Archives of Holy

Trinity Seminary and *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, both in Jordanville, New York, the Archive of the Synod of Bishops in New York, the Stanford University Library, and the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF) in Moscow.

Some important sources for the study of the subject of this paper are the periodicals of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, *Tserkovnyiia Vedomosti* (1922–1930)¹ and *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (1933–1941). These periodicals contain official documents, articles, and letters by authoritative representatives of both the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii and *Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi Eparkhii* provided me with relevant information in regards to the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), especially in the section dedicated to the intermediation of the Serbian Orthodox Church between the Russian Churches.

The book *Russkaia Tserkov' v Iugoslavii* by V. I. Kosik, which was printed at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Institute in Moscow, was of incredible use to this work in that it provided a large amount of information in regards to the point of view of the Russian hierarchs, clergy and laity in Yugoslavia as well as providing me with many historical facts.

The pamphlet *The Truth about the Russian Church Abroad* written by M. Rodzianko was very useful in the writing of this paper, it having a wealth of historical facts of a polemical nature in regards to the history of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

The History of the Serbian Orthodox Church by Paul Pavlovich was a necessary tool in depicting historical events of the Serbian Orthodox Church before and during the presence of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in Yugoslavia.

The books *Kanonicheskoe Polozhenie Vysshei Tserkovnoi Vlasti v SSSR i Zagranitsei* by Protoierei Mikhail Pol'skii and *Pravovoe Polozhenie Russkoi Tserkvi v Iugoslavii* by Sergei Viktorovich

¹ The years reviewed indicated in parenthesis.

Troitskii were invaluable for their providing of some historical facts regarding the canonical situation of the Russian Church.

The series of books entitled *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antoniiia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago* by Bishop Nikon (Rklitskii) were very valuable in providing details of Metropolitan Antonii's acts, as well as the acts of the Higher Church Authority relevant to the arrival of the Russians in Belgrade. However, the series is written with a strong "hagiographic" approach.

The manuscript *The History of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad*, as well as the book *Monasteries and Convents of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad* by Fr. George Seide both, provided important historical information relevant to the topic. While researching his works, however, I realized that there are many historical inaccuracies which can cause confusion. For example, incorrect dates were listed for certain major events in the manuscript *The History of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad*.

The book *Srpski Jerarsi* by the late Bishop Sava of Shumadija which was published in 1996 in Serbia was very helpful in providing information about the hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church involved in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

The book entitled *Serbskii Patriarkh Varnava i ego vremia* by V. A. Maevskii was also an important source in that it provided information about Patriarch Varnava's life and actions from an inside point of view, Maevskii having been Patriarch Varnava's secretary for a number of years.

The collections of acts of the First (1921) and Second Pan-Diaspora (1938) Councils were also important sources for understanding the relations of the two churches.

Pravoslavnaia Rus', *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'*, *Pravoslavnyi Put'* and *Orthodox Life*, all publications of Holy Trinity Monastery, provided me with articles relevant to my research. *Pravoslavnyi Put'* was especially helpful in the section related to the Carpathian Diocese.

Glasnik, the official news organ of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was also used. Unfortunately, due to the lack of time that was available in Belgrade, I was unable to research the entire time frame pertinent to this paper.

Note on Transliteration and Style

All names are transliterated into the English language according to the Library of Congress System based on the language of the original source. The style of usage is according to The Chicago Manual of Style.

Part II: Historical Information

Serbia and Russia — The Bonds of Two Churches

Serbia and Russia have been united spiritually for centuries. This is due to the Orthodox-Slavic connection of the peoples. For example, when Montenegro was independent from Serbia,² the church officials (a political theocracy with a metropolitan and a king, united in the same person) always appealed to Russia for aid. For example, Metropolitan Sava of Montenegro was in close contact with Russia, constantly seeking spiritual aid in his defense against Roman Catholicism. Metropolitan Vasilije of Montenegro died in 1766 in Russia and is buried in the cathedral of the Annunciation in St. Petersburg, after having fled to Russia in fear of the Turks (Sava 1996, 60–61, 431). In 1833 Metropolitan Petar II Petrovich Nyegosh, King of Montenegro, was consecrated to the episcopacy by the Russian Church (Puzovich 2000, 218). During the Turkish Yoke (1389–1804), the Serbian Church would get virtually all of its Church Slavonic service books from Russia, the Serbs' books having been destroyed by the Turks. In Tsetinje, Montenegro, the see of the Metropolitan of Montenegro, such clerical items as vestments, Gospels, and other books are displayed in the museum of the monastery – all these gifts were of the Russian Empire to the Serbian Church in Montenegro. Nor was the exchange one-sided. The Russian

² Montenegro was never nationalistically divided from Serbia. It was a separate state due to the Turkish Yoke; the Church in Montenegro was Serbian, even though it was under self-rule.

Church also had Metropolitans of Serbian descent as well as other Serbs involved in its life. One well-known example is Pakhomii the Serbian Logofet of the Fifteenth Century. He was a professional scribe and translator who also wrote saints lives, encomia, services, and canons (Kuskov 1994, 116). In short, the Churches were united very closely, giving each other spiritual support for many years.

Serbia and Russia — Politically United

Serbia and Russia were also connected politically, supporting each other in every way, especially on the part of the Russians. Russia annually sent monetary subsidies to Montenegro (Puzovich 2000, 218). The Russian Empire also came to the military defense of Serbia. For example, when Austro-Hungary gave the Serbs an ultimatum of war after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip on June 15/28, 1914,³ Czar Nicholas II responded. He wrote to the Prince-Regent Alexander of Serbia on July 1/14: “As long as there is at least a bit of hope in the aversion of bloodshed, all of our efforts must be directed to that goal. But, if contrary to our sincere desires, we are not able to make progress, Your Highness may be assured that Russia will in no way be left indifferent to the participation of Serbia.” (Kosik 2000, 22).

The Serbian Orthodox Church at the Dawn of the 1920’s

To understand the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad’s (ROCA) position in Serbia, one must first understand the political and ecclesiastical situation in Yugoslavia at the end of the 1910’s and at

³ June 15/28 is Vidovdan, the day of the commemoration of the Battle of Kosovo (1389). This, although a day of worldly defeat, is considered to be one of the greatest Serbian Feasts of Spiritual Victory, the Serbs becoming a martyric nation, with thousands of Martyrs praying for the Serbian Nation at the Throne of God, with the hope of being freed from the Turkish Yoke and submission to the will of God.

the beginning of the 1920's. Politically, a drastic change had taken place. First, Yugoslavia was a completely new name for the nation. Yugoslavia had been known as "The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes". At the end of World War I (1918), however, the Allied Powers had granted all of the territories that was to become Yugoslavia to the nation with the ability for its expansion into a Greater Serbia; however, King Peter I of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes decided to change it to Yugoslavia, literally meaning Southern Slavs. This was very uncomfortable for the Serbian Church. The Church understood that, as a result, it would lose certain religious freedoms it had enjoyed since the break away from Austro-Hungary, this being due to the political unification of different nationalities which had different beliefs (Pavlovich 1989, 220). The Serbian Church was also in a state of irregularity, being divided into five different self-ruled jurisdictions (Spasovich n.d., 157). These were the Serbian Church in Serbia proper, the Church of Montenegro, the Church of Karlovats, the Church of Bukovinsko-Dalmatia and the Church of Bosnia-Herzegovina ("Gramota," *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 8–9 (1922): 2). The two last groups were autonomous under the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Pavlovich 1989, 221).

It was only in June of 1919 that these five jurisdictions were reunited by Metropolitan Dimitrii of Serbia into one unified Serbian Orthodox Church (Spasovich n.d., 157). At this time, Prince Alexander made it clear that the Serbian Church was to lose its status as the National Church and was to lower itself and be considered on the same level as other churches, such as the Roman Catholics. This was not a new decision. Already in January of 1919, the state had declared equality among the Orthodox, Roman Catholics and Moslems. From September 9–12, 1920, the Serbian Orthodox Church held a Council of Bishops. At the meeting, it was decided to bring back a Patriarchate (Pavlovich 1989, 220–221). On September 28/October 11, 1920, Metropolitan Dimitrii of Serbia was elected to be Patriarch of Serbia, but the enthronement could not take place immediately (Spasovich n.d., 157). The government of Yugoslavia desired to be a part of the election process and hence

insisted on having a vote in the election of Patriarch. The government was given three candidates by the Assembly of Bishops. On November 12/25, 1920, the government of Yugoslavia also elected Metropolitan Dimitrii as Patriarch of Serbia (Pavlovich 1989, 220–221). For the first time in over one hundred and fifty years, a Serbian Patriarch was on the Serbian Patriarchal Throne (Spasovich n.d., 157). This showed the earlier declaration of equality of religions to be weak. The Serbian Church then was going through turmoil. Because of its problematic status, the entry of another Orthodox jurisdiction was bound to cause problems.

Part III: The 1920's

The Russians Move

On September 5/18, 1920, Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) received a telegram while on Mount Athos from the Russian White Army General Petr Nikolaevich Vrangel'. The telegram asked for Metropolitan Antonii, the senior bishop of the Russian Church outside Soviet Russia, to come to Crimea and administrate the Church of the White Army there. Metropolitan Antonii accepted the invitation and went to Crimea. Within forty days, no one was able to stay there. The Bolsheviks started moving towards Crimea and the White Army was forced to move farther away from the Bolsheviks.

It is necessary to mention the connection between the White Army and the Russian Church. The White Army had the complete support of the Russian Church on the territories of its control, this is why Metropolitan Antonii accepted the invitation of the general (Khrapovitskii 1988, 80). Finally, no choice was left and evacuation was imminent. About 150,000 people were put in boats on November 6/19, 1920, and headed for Constantinople. Among these people were Russian Church Hierarchs, military, intelligentsia and people of all walks of life, united together with one common goal, that of saving their lives. These people were led

by General Petr Nikolaevich Vrangel'. He began the journey with his people, leading them to safety. Unfortunately, all could not be taken along. Every boat in Sevastopol was used for this journey, and all were full. Those who were left behind could only expect the worst. Since the Russian clergy shared the life of the Russian Army in its defense of Holy Russia, it was natural for them to evacuate together with the army (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. V, 5).

In leaving for Constantinople, Metropolitan Antonii based his canonical right to go with the flock on the 39th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (691) which states that a diocese “with all its people may be moved due to the reason of barbaric attacks in order to free itself from pagan slavery” (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. V, 6). This would prove extremely important later. The day the bishops arrived, November 6/19 1920, a meeting of the Higher Church Authority (HCA)⁴ was held. At this meeting, several points were established. First, the HCA would exist in Constantinople with the blessing of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, to spiritually feed the Russian flock and the canonical situation of the HCA would have to be decided by the Patriarch of Constantinople. It was also determined who would be a part of the HCA (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. V, 6–12). For this reason, Metropolitan Antonii made sure to receive clearance from all the local Orthodox Churches that had canonical territory over an area where any Russian parish was to allow a parish to exist there (Khrapovitskii 1988, 81). At the second meeting on November 9/22, 1920, Archbishop Anastasii (Gribanovskii) of Kishinev and Khotin was added to the HCA, and at the third meeting of the HCA it was resolved to contact the Patriarchate of Constantinople for an official decision on the canonical status of the HCA. The Patriarchate of Constantinople presented Metropolitan Antonii with the following statement: “Under your guidance the Patriarchate authorizes every undertaking, for the Patriarchate knows that Your Eminence will

⁴ When communication was cut off with Moscow during the civil war, the bishops of southern Russia were forced to convene a council in Stavropol'. The council took place in 1919. “At this Council the Higher Church Authority of Southern Russia was established” (Rodzianko 1975, 8).

not commit any uncanonical act” (Rodzianko 1975, 8). On December 22, 1920, the Patriarchate of Constantinople presented the Russian Hierarchs the following *gramota* (№ 9084): “To the Russian Hierarchs has been vested the authority over the Russian Orthodox refugees, in order to fulfill all the needs of Church and religion for the comfort and reassurance of the Russian Orthodox refugees” (Khrapovitskii 1988, 82). Metropolitan Antonii was also invited to come to Antioch by Patriarch Gregory VI of Antioch, an old friend, but the Metropolitan declined in order to stay with his flock (Khrapovitskii 1988, 82).



Fig. 1. Troops of General Vranfel' (in photo's center) in Serbia. The early 1920's

The Move to Yugoslavia

Soon after the Russian émigrés arrived in Constantinople, the HCA began working on their next move to Belgrade. This task was given to E.I. Makharoblidze, the secretary of the HCA. Metropolitan Antonii was assured by the Serbian Church a place to live in the Serbian Patriarchal Palace in Sremski Karlovtsi and the other Russian Bishops were promised residence

in Serbian monasteries. In the Spring of 1921, Metropolitan Antonii left for Serbia (Khrapovitskii 1988, 83). In its meetings on April 6/19 and 8/21, 1921, the HCA came to its final decision to move to Serbia. Their reasons included the following:

- 1) the majority of Russian émigrés were in Serbia;⁵
- 2) Serbia is the center of the Balkans which would facilitate communication;
- 3) Serbia was where the most Russian Bishops were in one place;
- 4) in Serbia was to be found a number of the Russian educated people;
- 5) the commanders of the Russian Army were all either in Serbia or planned to move there in the following months;
- 6) an undefined and transparent relationship could be found in Constantinople between the Russians and the Turkish Army;
- 7) the transparent relationship (with the Turkish Army) was aggravating the relationship of other Western-European nations towards the Russians, weakening their relations, and
- 8) the HCA would be able to unite with its president, Metropolitan Antonii who was already in Serbia. And so, the HCA moved to Serbia, convening for its first meeting on July 9/22, 1921 (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. V, 23–24).

The HCA was very grateful for the hospitality of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. However, it is evident that the Greeks understood their hospitality to mean accepting the HCA into the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, while the HCA soon neglected that issue when they decided to move to Serbia. While still in Constantinople, the HCA acted with the blessing of the Patriarchate. For example, in the archives of the ROCA in New York, there is a protocol about the tonsuring of a reader in

⁵ On January 23/February 5, 1920, the first five Russian bishops had arrived in Serbia (Khrapovitskii 1988, 83). Of these five bishops, one was Archbishop Evlogii. In August of 1920, Archbishop Evlogii was sent by the HCA of Southern Russia as a delegate with the delegation of the SOC to Geneva for an inter-faith preparatory conference called “Life and Work” (Evlogii 1947, 368).

one of the Russian churches in Constantinople. The HCA blessed the tonsuring, yet first asked for the permission of the Patriarchate (Protocol No. 19 of the HCA, March 9/22, 1921. Archive of the ROCA). Also, the HCA confirmed all divorces only with the permission and advice of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Protocol No. 22, No date found. Archive of the ROCA). However, when the HCA left Constantinople, it did not seek the advice of the Patriarchate but rather decided to simply inform the Patriarchate of the planned move to Yugoslavia (Protocol No. 23, April 29/May 12, 1921. Archive of the ROCA). The basis for these later actions is justified by the writings of Sergei Viktorovich Troitskii who wrote that no church can be in submission to two church bodies at one time (Troitskii, S. V. Letter to the Chairman of the Hierarchical Synod of the ROCA. July 20, August 2, 1939. Archive of the ROCA). He writes, “Since the Church of Constantinople and the Church of Russia are two different bodies, which are in an administrative relationship self-ruling bodies, Orthodox Canon Law does not allow dependence on two Churches” (Troitskii, S.V. Letter to the Chairman of the Hierarchical Synod of the ROCA. July 20, August 2, 1939. Archive of the ROCA). Moreover, Patriarch Tikhon gave his blessing to the HCA despite its location within the canonical territory of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Gubonin 1994, 261).

Henceforth, allowing the Russians to come to Serbia was not an easy decision for the Serbian Government. Nonetheless, the Serbs took their chances and welcomed the Russians. As soon as the hierarchs had arrived, Metropolitan Dimitrii invited all the bishops for dinner to welcome them and show his compassion. On the following day, the bishops were invited to the Royal Palace for dinner with the successor to the Serbian Royal Throne, Prince Alexander, thus receiving a warm welcome from the Serbian Church and the Yugoslav State (Khrapovitskii 1988, 83).

In Yugoslavia, the Serbian intelligentsia was shocked by the poor material situation of the Russian intelligentsia, but this did not prevent them from respecting their level of knowledge and capabilities (Maevskii n.d., 12). However, the Serbian intelligentsia

was dismayed with the taking of power in Russia by the Bolsheviks, seeing it to be completely contrary to the intelligentsia's education in Western Europe. Nonetheless, this was put aside and the Serbians took in the Russians of all walks of life, having compassion on their brother Slavs from Russia (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. V, 30).

The Council of the SOC and the All-Diaspora Council of the ROCA

On August 18/31, 1921, the Serbian Orthodox Church held a council. At this meeting, the Hierarchs discussed the status of the Russian Church in Exile⁶ where the existence of the Russian Church was given the blessing to exist in Yugoslavia. The act (No. 31) stated: P.E. [Preosveshteni Episkop – The Very Most Reverend, Bishop] Jefrem, Bishop of Zhicha as the reporter, reports about the request of V.M. [Visokopreosveshteni Mitropolit – The Very Most Reverend, Metropolitan] Antoni, and he himself wishing that the Russian Church be helped as much as possible, finds that the request as a whole could not be accepted, but he reads a suggestion of the 4th section / minutes of its session from the 29th of this month which says:

“The Holy Hierarchal Synod, having considered the proposals of V.M. [Visokopreosveshteni Mitropolit – The Very Most Reverend, Metropolitan] of Kiev and Galitsia, Lord Antonii, and of the Russian Archimandrite Kirill, states his readiness to care for the exiled Russian people and their spiritual needs from now on, as it has been done until this time. The Holy Hierarchical Synod will from now on, as until now, go out of its way to help the exiled Hierarchs, Deacons and Priests, and according to need and its abilities, it will receive them into the Serbian Church Service.

⁶ In the 1920's, the ROCA is referred to in the Archives of the SOC at the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade as “*Ruska Tsrkva u izgnanstvu*” (The Russian Church in Exile), as well as “*Sremska Tsrkva*” (The Church of Srem, i.e. Sremski Karlovtsi).

The Holy Hierarchal Synod is willing to receive under its protection the Higher Russian Church Administration, under whose dominion the following things would belong:

1. Jurisdiction over Russian clergy outside of our country and that Russian clergy within our country which is not in parochial or state-educational service, as well as over military clergy of the Russian army which is not in the Serbian Church service;
2. Divorce proceedings of Russian refugees.

After the speeches of V.M.G. [Visokopreosveshteni Mitropoliti Gospodina – The Very Most Reverend, Metropolitan Lords] Gavriilo and Varnava, and P.E. [Preosveshteni Episkop – The Very Most Reverend, Bishop] Nikolaj [Velimirovich], the suggestion of the 4th section, concerning the administration of Russian refugees, was approved unanimously. (Patriarchal Archive of the SOC. Minutes from the 4th regular assembly of the Holy Hierarchal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church, held on August 18/31, 1921, in Sremski Karlovtsi).

According to Sergei Viktorovich Troitskii, this act of the SOC is the foundation of all the actions of the Russian Church in Yugoslavia (Troitskii 1940, 107). Later, on November 23/December 6, 1927, another council of the SOC declared the following: “According to the canons of the Holy Orthodox Church, when an Orthodox episcopate along with its flock endures persecution and is forced into exile onto the territory of another Church it has the right to have an independent organization and administration; in accordance with this, such a right must be recognized by the Russian Church hierarchy on the territory of the Serbian Church, naturally under the protection and supervision of the Serbian Church” (Poľskii 1948, 126).

On September 10/23, 1921, the HCA met in Sremski Karlovtsi for one of its general meetings. At the meeting, the decision of the Serbian Church in the name of Patriarch Dimitrii was accept-

ed with the following decision, stating: “The meaningful statement of His Holiness, the Patriarch of Serbia is to be put into consideration and use” (“Opredeleniia,” *Tserkovnyiia Vedomosti*, No. 2 (1922): 8–9).⁷

On July 17/30, 1921, the HCA expressed to Patriarch Dimitrii its desire to hold an assembly in the following letter:

“The Higher Russian Church Authority abroad, conscious of the benefit and necessity of similar preliminary meetings in different countries, appeal in this way to Your Holiness with the request that You permit a Russian Church assembly and that it be in Serbia, and that You would give Your prayerful archpastoral and graceful blessing on this undertaking, and in the same manner would send Your own representatives to this Assembly.” (Letter No. 484. July 17/30, 1921. Patriarchal Archive of the SOC).

Patriarch Dimitrii gave his blessing and the Russian Church held its first All-Diaspora Council which lasted from November 8/21, of 1921 until November 20/December 3, 1921 (*Deianiia Russkago Vsezagranichnago Tserkovnago Sobora* 1922, Title Page). There were officially 155 participants at the Council (Seide [1983], Part I, Ch. 3, 33). Patriarch Dimitrii was given the title of honorary president of the Council. All the Serbian bishops were invited to the council, yet only three, including the Patriarch, were present. The other two were Metropolitan Ilarion of Tuzla and Bishop Maksimilian of Sremska Mitrovitsa (*Deianiia Russkago Vsezagranichnago Tserkovnago Sobora* 1922, 8 & 15). Eight other Serbian bishops sent their greetings. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church was also

⁷ It is interesting to note that the HCA, at its next meeting on January 4/17, 1922, read the statement of the SOC about the opening of a diocese in North America. This statement of Patriarch Dimitrii was received on December 20, 1921/January 2, 1922. The HCA accepted the statement and applied the following act: “The decision of the Serbian Church Powers opening a diocese in North America is received into consideration, Archbishop Aleksandr and Bishop Antonii of the Aleutians and Alaska are to be notified, and His Holiness the Patriarch of All-Russia is to be reported this at the first chance of it” (“Opredelenie Vysshego Russkago Tserkovnogo Upravlenia zagranitsei,” *Tserkovnyiia Vedomosti*, No. 2 (1922): 9).

represented for one day of the proceedings by Metropolitan Stefan of Sofia (Seide [1983], Part I, Ch. 3, 33–34). Priest Georg Seide writes in his manuscript *The History of the Russian Church Abroad* the following about the council:

“Originally, the Council was convened as an ‘ecclesiastical assembly’ for the Russian emigration. The assembly did not at first claim to be a Council. The Resolution of July⁸ spoke definitively of a ‘convocation of an ecclesiastical assembly abroad.’ The participants, who included Archbishop Evlogy, spoke as much of a ‘religious assembly’ as of a ‘Council.’ The Serbian Patriarch Dimitry and King Alexander called the assembly a ‘Council’ in their messages of greeting. A group of participants moved that the assembly be considered a ‘Council’; this motion was passed.”

Only a few months after the council on April 15/28, 1922, the Serbian Patriarchate received a letter (No. 3902) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in regards to the status of the ROCA:

“The ministry of foreign affairs is honored to request the Patriarchate to report about the conditions under which the independent Russian Church Administration in Karlovtsi has been recognized by the Patriarchate, within what boundaries its authority lay, as well as whether the recognition came in agreement with our government.

The ministry of foreign affairs poses this question because a report came from our consul in Athens, in which he says that the Russian consul in Athens received a letter from the Russian Metropolitan Dimitrii from here (who is abiding with us), who asks that the Greek government be notified that the Russian Administration in Karlovtsi is the only Church authority for all Church matters –

⁸ Refers to Letter No. 484 of July 17/30, 1921 quoted above.



Fig. 2. Members of the First Pan-Diaspora Council, Sremski Karlovtsi, 1921

dogmatic and personal.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Letter to the Patriarchate of the Serbian Orthodox Church. April 22/May 5, 1922. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

Within one week, the Serbian Patriarchate replied by the order of Patriarch Dimitrii with the following letter (No. 31):

“The Russian Church Administration in Sremski Karlovtsi exists with the blessing of His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow, exclusively for the church affairs of the colonies of Russian Orthodox refugees, which are dispersed all over Europe. This Church Administration takes care of the liturgical life and administration of sacraments to the refugees, of keeping the church discipline among Russian clergy, of church courts (church-law issues) among the refugees and generally of fulfilling their religious needs.

As far as the Patriarchate knows, such Church Administrations also exist in America, Asia, and Africa.

Our Church has, of course, approved the Russian Church Administration's performing of these businesses within Russian colonies. If the Russian Church Administration in Athens has requested an approval to perform such work among the Russian refugees in Greece, then it has certainly contacted their Church Administration, just as it has done here with us.

The Lord Minister-President is also aware of the happenings within the Russian Church Administration as well as of the gatherings [communities] of their members." (Patriarchate of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. April 22/May 5, 1922. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

On March 3.16, 1922, Patriarch Dimitrii was sent a *gramota* from Patriarch Tikhon of Russia. In the *gramota*, the Patriarch thanks Patriarch Dimitrii for his hospitality to the Russian émigrés:

"Our heart is even more filled with the feeling of joy and thankfulness to Your Beatitude, that we feel all the living good that was done and is being done by You in regards to the Russian exiles – the bishops, clerics and laymen, who were left outside the borders of their native land due to the power of the events, and found themselves the hospitality and asylum within the borders of the Serbian Patriarchate. May the Lord return to You a hundred fold for this blessed work.

May the days of your Patriarchal service be blessed." ("Gramota," *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 5 (1922): 3)

Interestingly enough, in Patriarch Dimitrii's response to Patriarch Tikhon, no mention is made of the Russian émigrés ("Gramota," *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 8–9 (1922): 1–4).

Other General Relations throughout the Patriarchal Rule of Patriarch Dimitrii of Serbia

During the 1920's, there were many minor and major signs of support and charity within the relationship of the SOC and the ROCA, the SOC always upholding her commitment of support to the Russian Church émigrés. The SOC even ordained a bishop for the Russian Church. "In the Summer of 1921, Metropolitan Evlogii received a letter from Patriarch Tikhon in which the desire for a worthy bishop to be found abroad for Alaska for a self-governing Aleutian Diocese established by the All-Russian Council, was expressed. Metropolitan Evlogii informed the Higher Church Authority about it, which assigned Archimandrite Antonii to the cathedra [*or diocese*] of Bishop of the Aleuts" ("Episkop Antonii Aleutskii," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 4 (1934): 66). Bishop Antonii Aleutskii was ordained in July of 1921 by Patriarch Dimitrii, Metropolitan Antonii and Bishop Maksimilian (SOC) ("Episkop Antonii Aleutskii," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 4 (1934): 66).

Serbian clergy would serve with ROCA clergy on other sorts of occasions as well. One example was on March 15, 1923, the Serbian Bishop Irinei⁹ served a memorial service in the Russian Church with other Russian clergy in Novi Sad for the "Tsar-Martyrs" Aleksandr II and Nikolai II ("Panikhida po Tsariam-Muchenikam," *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 7–8 (1923): 9). The Russian bishops would also be invited to participate in the celebration of Patriarch Dimitrii's *slava*. At one of the *slavas* of Patriarch Dimitrii, Metropolitan Antonii was presented with 2,000 dinars for the needs of especially needy Russian immigrants. This was presented by S.N. Paleolog, the Government Commission-

⁹ Bishop Irinei of Novi Sad finished at the Theological Academy of Moscow (Sava 1996, 199). It is interesting to point out that he was the bishop who was sent to Sofia, Bulgaria from the SOC to serve with Patriarch Aleksii I of Moscow after his election to the Patriarchate of Moscow and All-Russia in 1945 (Rodzianko, Vladimir, Archpriest. Letter to Archpriest Georgii Grabbe. January 21/February 3, 1979: 3. Stanford University Library.)

er for the Organization of the Russian Refugees on behalf of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (“Den’ Slavy Patriarkha Serbskago,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 21–22 (1924): 9). Patriarch Dimitrii would also show his good will to the Russian émigrés around the festal times of the Church. On the first day of Pascha in 1924, Patriarch Dimitrii invited the 34 poorest Russian immigrants to eat with him. On the second day, he invited other representatives of the Russian émigrés, and on May 23, 1924, he invited S.N. Paleolog to discuss the situation of the Russian refugees (“Vnimanie Sviateishago Patriarha Serbskago k russkim bezhentsam,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 9–10 (1924): 14). Patriarch Dimitrii would also be involved in the founding of different church organizations. One instance is when he blessed for the starting of the “Russian Orthodox Brotherhood in Memory of Fr. John of Kronstadt” (“Patriarshee blagoslovenie Pastyrskommu Bratstvu,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 9–10 (1924): 14).

Also, when important events were taking place in the SOC, representatives of the ROCA would be called to be present. When a delegation from the Jerusalem Patriarchate was in Sremski Karlovtsi, 14 bishops were present from among the Russian hierarchy. At this event, the Serbian Patriarch Dimitrii was presented with the Order of the *Panagios Tafos* from Metropolitan Dosifei of Sebaste (“Torzhestvo v Sremskikh Karlovtsakh,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 19–20 (1924): 20). The SOC would also take up collections for the Russian Church and cause. In 1930, the SOC called for a collection for the Russian church in Brussels, which was to be built in memory of the Czar-Martyr Nicholas II. This collection was done in Serbian churches with the blessing of the local diocesan bishop (“Opredelenie Sv. Arkhiereiskago Sobora Serbskoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 5–6 (1930): 3). The Serbian People would in general simply send money to help the Russian cause. In a donation sent for the Russian Church in Berlin, one Serbian Sergeant-General named Fadin Khairorich wrote that “the desire for a collection of donations was awoken by gratitude for that which all feel, in relation to the sacrifice of the Russian mercenaries who fought for our [Serbian] liberation from

the Turkish yoke” (“Trogatel’noe otnoshenie serbov k russkomu hramu v Berline,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 5–6 (1930): 11). The Serbian Patriarch Dimitrii also made an appeal to all the other Orthodox Churches on behalf of the suffering Russian land (“Ob-rashchenie,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 3–4 (1930): 2). He wrote:

“The Serbian Orthodox Church in its deep commiseration with the suffering of its sister Russian Orthodox church and her faithful, asks of its sisters – all Orthodox Churches, with the request that they would lift up prayers to the Lord God for the deliverance and salvation of the Russian Orthodox Church and our brotherly Russian People who find themselves in difficult temptations, even being threatened with their existence.”¹⁰ (“Obrashchenie,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 3–4 (1930): 2).

Patriarch Dimitrii also informed Metropolitan Antonii about this document in an official letter (February 5/18, 1930. No. 458, *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 3–4 (1930): 3). Metropolitan Antonii replied with a letter of great thanks to the Patriarch of Serbia (February 15/28, 1930. No. 161, *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 5–6 (1930): 3). Patriarch Dimitrii would also give his blessing to major events in the ROCA. For example, when Metropolitan Antonii went to Palestine and Archbishop Feofan of Poltava was to act as the Temporary Chairman of the ROCA, Patriarch Dimitrii gave his blessing and wished Archbishop Feofan all the best (Patriarch Dimitrii, “Letter to Archbishop Feofan,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 9–10 (1924): 1).

Patriarch Dimitrii also gave his help and support to the Russians when unpleasant situations arose. In 1924, for example, there was a rumor that all the Eastern Patriarchs, including Patriarch

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that this letter is addressed to all the autocephalous Orthodox Churches, as well as ROCA and the Carpatho-Russian Diocese, which were not autocephalous: “Appeal of His Holiness the Patriarch and the Holy Hierarchical Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch; to the Churches of Romania, Greece and Bulgaria; to the Archbishopric of Cypress; to the Bishopric of Czech and Silvsko-Moravia and to the head of the Russian Church in Immigration Metropolitan Antonii” (“Appeal,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 3–4 (1930): 2).

Dimitrii of Serbia, felt that Patriarch Tikhon should be relieved of his duties as Patriarch of Russia. Patriarch Dimitrii was notified about this by Archbishop Feofan, the Temporary Chairman of the ROCA, and quickly replied, assuring Archbishop Feofan that he, the Patriarch of Serbia, had nothing to do with this rumor and still regarded Patriarch Tikhon as the Patriarch of Russia and commemorated him at services (Patriarch Dimitrii, “Letter to Archbishop Feofan,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 17–18 (1924): 2).

In 1926, Patriarch Dimitrii again showed his support to the Russians in Yugoslavia in a letter he wrote Metropolitan Antoinii which stated that a new Russian church in Belgrade would be built for the Russians. This was in response to the veneration of the Chapel of St. Mark¹¹ in Belgrade by the Russians. The Russians were constantly coming to services there and asked that they hang a bell on the chapel. Because of such a large amount of Russians coming, the Patriarch felt it necessary to build another Russian church there (“December 23, 1924/January 5, 1925. No. 4271,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 1–2 (1926): 1).



Fig. 3. Holy Trinity Russian Church in Belgrade.
Now a dependency of Moscow Patriarchate
(source: ROCOR Studies / www.rocorstudies.org/)

¹¹ This is the chapel that eventually became the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church in Belgrade behind the Cathedral of St. Mark. The Serbs have a tradition of building a small chapel on the site of the building of a cathedral so that services can be served there everyday until the cathedral is completed. After the completion of the cathedral, the chapel is torn down. While the Russians were in Belgrade, the building of St. Mark's was underway, but because so many Russians attended services there, it was decided to give the Russians the church for themselves to use. The eventual new building of a Russian Church in Belgrade never came to surface.



Fig. 4. A detail from the reinterment of General Vrangeli in the Holy Trinity Russian Church in Belgrade, October 6, 1929: Patriarch Dimitrii, on the left with Met. Antonii (in the middle), and Bishop Dosifei of Nish, a new martyr

Before the repose of Patriarch Dimitrii, he blessed for a gathering to be held in Belgrade in memory of the victims of the Bolshevik regime. The Serbian hierarchy supported this event which took place on February 10, 1930. Along with Metropolitan Antonii and Bishops Feofan of Kursk and Sergii of the Black Sea, Serbian bishops attended the gathering as well. They included Metropolitan Gavriil of Montenegro (the future Patriarch of Serbia), Bishop Ioann of Mostar, Bishop Iosif¹² of Bitola, Bishop Mardarii¹³ of North America, and Bishop Viktor of Skadar. The Serbian hierarchs offered their support to the suffering Russian people (“Belgradskoe sobranie v pamiati zhertv bolshevitskago rezhima,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 8 (1930): 11).

It is also necessary to point out Metropolitan Antonii’s rank among the hierarchy of the SOC. He was not only respected by

¹² Bishop Iosif of Bitola studied in Kiev at the Theological Academy there at the beginning of the Twentieth Century (Sava 1996, 261).

¹³ Bishop Mardarii finished the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg (Sava 1996, 307).

all, but was given the honor of serving as the highest Metropolitan in rank at all hierarchical services that were conducted in the SOC. Even at the funeral of Patriarch Dimitrii, Metropolitan Antonii served as the oldest in rank, leading the funeral ceremony (“Pogrebenie Sviateishago Patriarkha Dimitriia,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 7 (1930): 6). Although he was supposedly a guest, Metropolitan Antonii was regarded as a man in his own home. Unfortunately, Metropolitan Antonii, occasionally overextended the hospitality of the Serbs to himself. One instance of this is in regards to Archimandrite Kiprian (Kern). Archimandrite Kiprian was a cleric of the SOC under the Serbian Bishop Iosif and taught at a Serbian Theological Faculty; however, Archimandrite Kiprian was moved to the jurisdiction of the ROCA as if he were a cleric of the ROCA and not the SOC¹⁴ service (Patriarchal Archive of the SOC. Minutes from the 4th regular assembly of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, held on August 18/31, 1921, in Sremski Karlovtsi).

Russian Monasteries in the Jurisdiction of the ROCA

As mentioned earlier, the Russian bishops who were living in Serbia were scattered throughout Serbian monasteries, mainly in the area between Belgrade and Novi Sad called Frushka Gora. For example, Archbishops Germogen (Maksimov) and Feofan (Gavrilov) were at Hopovo Monastery (Seide 1990, 48). Bishop Mikhail of Aleksandrov was living in monastery Grgeteg until his death in October of 1925 (*Gramota* No. 3405 from Patriarch Dimitrii to Metropolitan Antonii, *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 19–20, 1925).

¹⁴ Archimandrite Kiprian in his memoirs of Metropolitan Antonii seems to portray him (Metropolitan Antonii) as having acted contrary to the will of the Serbian Church. This portrayal seems incorrect based on the speeches and greetings constantly given to the hierarchs of the ROCA, as well as according to the research that has been done in the writing of this document in the Archives of the SOC. The displeasure of the SOC is almost never seen in any historical occurrences, especially during Metropolitan Antonii’s lifetime.



Fig. 5. Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) with the brotherhood of the Milkovo Monastery in Serbia. At the right hand of Metropolitan: Schema Archimandrite Amvrosii (Kurganov), Hieroschemamonk Mark, Hieromonk Callistus. On the left: Bishop Tikhon (Troitskii, later Archbishop of San Francisco and Western America) and Archimandrite Theodosius, behind him the extreme left is the Hieromonk John (Maximovich, later Archbishop of San Francisco), and next to him Hieromonk Antonii (Sinkevich, later Archbishop of Los Angeles). In the lower left row in the center sits the novice Artemii (Medvedev, later Archbishop Antonii of San Francisco).

Text by M. Woerl (source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

In general, the Russian monastic spirit was not quenched by the movement of the Russian faithful to Yugoslavia. Two major monasteries filled with Russian monastics existed in Yugoslavia: the Convent of the Icon of the Mother of God of Lesna at Hopovo and the Milkovo Monastery near Lapovo. The Convent of the Icon of the Mother of God of Lesna was originally a Russian monastic community located in the Zhabskii Convent in the Kholmosp province near the Russian border in an area that had many Uniates. Because of political pressure, it was impossible for the nuns to re-

main there. At the sisterhood's request, an invitation from the King of Serbia and the Serbian Patriarch was received and accepted by the community in 1920 (Seide 1990, 43 & 47). "The invitation was made in the hopes that the sisterhood might help inspire a rebirth of monasticism among Serbian women" (Seide 1990, 43).

This move brought 62 nuns, including their Abbess Ekaterina and Assistant-Abbess Nina to the Hopovo Monastery located in the Frushka Gora region. The monastery soon opened an orphanage which was supported by Serbian and Russian families for the aid of Russian immigrants. Throughout the existence of the sisterhood at Hopovo monastery, it helped with the establishment of 32 Serbian convents, the sisters having gone out to form new monastic communities and often becoming the abbesses of them. The sisterhood remained in Hopovo until 1950 when it was forced to move to France because of political distress within the new communist Yugoslav Government. The other major Russian monastic community was the Milkovo Monastery near Lapovo. This community was refounded on the Morava River by the ascetic of the Optina Hermitage, Archimandrite Amvrosii (Kurganov). This monastery had about twenty-five monastics. Many of the Russian hierarchs would come and visit the spiritual center. The monastics were ascetical and diligent in their service to God. This monastery eventually provided the Russian Church Outside of Russia with a number of bishops, including Archbishops Antonii (Bartoshevich) and Antonii (Medvedev) and Bishop Leontii (Bartoshevich) (Seide 1990, 47–52).

The Russians also had an effect on the Serbian monastery Visoko-Dechanska Lavra which was founded by Stefan Nemanja in the region of Kosovo and Metohia, near the river Bistritsa. The monastery was already being spiritually run by Russians when the émigrés had arrived, but the influx of Russians only contributed to the situation. Because of the constant pressure put on the monastery by the Albanians and Turks against the Serbian monastics, the Serbs were forced to hand over the monastery into the spiritual protection of the Russian monastery of St. John Chrysostom on Mount Athos. Some of the Russian abbots were Fathers Arse-



Fig. 6. St. John of Shanghai and Fr. Feodosii (Mel'nik), on the right with Serbian students of theology in Belgrade in the 1930s. Fr. Feodosii was an abbot of the Decani Monastery during WWII (source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

nii and Varsonofii. At the beginning of World War II, the abbot of the monastery was Bishop Mitrofan of Kharkov. After the death of Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii), the Metropolitan's former cell-attendant Archimandrite Feodosii (Mel'nik) became abbot of the monastery. Archimandrite Feodosii remained abbot of the monastery as a cleric of the SOC until 1957 when he reposed. Monastery leadership was then returned to native Serbians (Paganuzzi 1976, 22–23). The Serbian Church also had jurisdiction over some of the Russian monasteries outside the borders of Yugoslavia. The most well known of these monasteries is the monastery of St. Job of Pochaev in the Carpathian Mountains, especially for its missionary activity with its printing of church books. The monastery printshop was founded and run by Archimandrite Vitalii (Maksimenko). In the early 1920's, Archimandrite Vitalii was given a blessing by Patriarch Dimitrii of Serbia to print books for the Russian émigrés in Serbia and abroad. This was undertaken in the monastery Grgeteg in the Frushka Gora region of Serbia. It was very difficult for Archimandrite Vitalii in Grgeteg because, according to Patriarch Dimitrii's blessing, he was not allowed to have any help-

ers. Soon, Archimandrite Vitalii moved and eventually ended up in Vladimirovo, Slovakia. He established the monastery there, became the abbot and carried on the tradition of the Pochaev Monastery printshop, which he reestablished before World War I in Volynia. One of the printing presses in the new printshop was paid for mainly by the donations of the Serbian King Aleksandar I, Patriarch Varnava of Serbia and Metropolitan Iosif of Skoplje, as well as the Serbian people. In 1932, the printshop was blessed by Bishop Damaskin¹⁵ of the Mukachevsko-Pryashev Diocese (Maksimenko 1955, 191–193). While Archimandrite Vitalii was abbot of the monastery, it was under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Church, as is evident by Bishop Damaskin's presence, and its being the canonical territory of the SOC. After Archimandrite Vitalii was made bishop and sent to America and Archimandrite Serafim (Ivanov) became head of the monastery, a resistance was shown there towards Bishop Damaskin, and Archimandrite Serafim declared loyalty solely to the ROCA, refusing to recognize the monastery as part of the SOC and wanting to assure that it was a monastery of the ROCA (Monk Gorazd 2000, 126). From this monastery came forth much of the brotherhood of Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY after World War II (Seide 1990, 58).

The Carpathian Diocese in the Jurisdiction of the SOC

The Carpathian Diocese itself was a part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople while the territory was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1910, the then Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii) of Zhitomir was given the title Exarch of Carpatho-Russia by Patriarch Ioakim III of Constantinople (Burega 2004, 218). In 1920, however, the diocese of Carpatho-Russia beckoned to the Serbian Church in Karlovtsi for assistance based on the archival

¹⁵ Bishop Damaskin was a hierarch of the SOC. He completed the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg in 1917. He was later assigned to the Diocese of America and Canada (1938), then to the Diocese of Banat (1939–1946) and finally to the Diocese of Zagreb as Metropolitan (1947–1969) (Sava 1996, 149–150).

evidence that Carpatho-Russia had once been under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Zadar and the Metropolitanate of Karlovats (SOC). The jurisdiction of the SOC was recognized by the government of Czechoslovakia (Sava 1996, 136). In mid-1920, the Hierarchical Council of the SOC sent Bishop Dosifei of Nish¹⁶ to Czechoslovakia as its delegate, and he was accepted as an official delegate by the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Burega 2004, 218–219). In 1921, Bishop Gorazd, a former Roman Catholic by the name of Machej Pavlik, was consecrated a bishop and appointed as bishop of the Czech-Moravian Diocese (Sava 1996, 136).¹⁷ At his hierarchical consecration, the Serbian Patriarch Dimitrii, Metropolitan Antonii (the First-Hierarch of the ROCA), and the Serbian Bishops Varnava and Iosif participated (Monk Gorazd 2000, 112). Bishop Gorazd was eventually martyred on September 4, 1942, by the Nazis (Sava 1996, 136). In 1923, Patriarch Meletios of Constantinople invited Archimandrite Savvatii from Prague to come to Constantinople and be consecrated a bishop. As a result, Archimandrite Savvatii was made Archbishop of Prague and All-Czechoslovakia on February 26, 1923. This caused conflict between the Churches of Constantinople and Serbia because the Serbian Church had already begun its organization of a diocese in Carpatho-Russia, as well as already having had a bishop there, i.e. Bishop Gorazd (Burega 2004, 226–228).

Constantinople did not accept the actions of the Serbian Church. On April 2, 1923, Bishop Dosifei sent a letter to Metropolitan Evlogii (Georgievskii), the administrator of the Russian Orthodox parishes in Western Europe, in which Bishop Dosifei informed Metropolitan Evlogii that he was incapable of taking the regular care of the Orthodox Church in Carpatho-Russia and

¹⁶ Bishop Dosifei of Nish studied in Kiev at the Theological Academy there, finishing in 1904 (Sava 1996, 175).

¹⁷ In Bishop Sava's book *Srpski Jerarsi*, it states that Bishop Gorazd was made Bishop of the Mukachev-Pryashev Diocese (Sava 1996, 136), but according to Monk Gorazd in "Sud'by Pravoslavnoi Very v Chekhoslovakii," the Mukachev-Pryashev Diocese only came into existence in 1930 (Monk Gorazd 2000, 126). It is therefore left to understand that Bishop Gorazd was appointed as Bishop of the Czech-Moravian Diocese, which is the title first given to him in *Srpski Jerarsi*.

asked for Metropolitan Evlogii's agreement to send Bishop Sergii (Korolev) of Kholm from Prague to Carpatho-Russia and to make him the administrator of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church. Metropolitan Evlogii informed Bishop Dosifei that he was concerned about sending Bishop Sergii there without the consent of the Czechoslovakian government¹⁸ (Burega 2004, 226–228). Bishop Dosifei responded to this letter on May 2, 1923, stating:

“My actions in the Republic of Czechoslovakia and in Carpatho-Russia are correct and received by me from the Holy Council of Bishops [of the SOC]. . . . All changes in this right can only be made with the consent of the Holy Council of Bishops. . . . I repeat, the acts of the Patriarch of Constantinople in regards to my current actions have no definitive power without the decision of our Holy Council of Bishops.” (Burega 2004, 228).

In the letter, Bishop Dosifei also included that the actions of Archbishop Savvatii were illegal because Bishop Dosifei was the legal bishop in Carpatho-Russia, and therefore there was nothing illegal about his own actions there in regards to the government. Metropolitan Evlogii was not in agreement with this since he had requested that Bishop Sergii keep brotherly relations with Archbishop Savvatii. This is found in his letter of March 19, 1923, to Bishop Sergii. He requested that all the Russian parishes in Czechoslovakia commemorate Archbishop Savvatii and he disregarded the act of the SOC in the establishment of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese as a part of the SOC. Archbishop Savvatii also accused the SOC in a letter to Patriarch Meletios of Constantinople of uniting with Russian émigré bishops in order to make Carpatho-Russia fall into its jurisdiction (Burega 2004, 228–229). At some point in 1923, Bishop Veniamin of Sevastopol' was invited to Czechoslovakia by Archbishop Savvatii. According to the letter of Bishop Dosifei to Bishop Gorazd, Patriarch Dimi-

¹⁸ He was evidently concerned about the reaction to this by the Patriarchate of Constantinople based on Bishop Dosifei's reply.

trii did not bless Bishop Veniamin to visit Archbishop Savvatii. However, Archbishop Savvatii affirms in a letter to the *locum tenens* of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Metropolitan Nikolaos of Caesarea that Patriarch Dimitrii gave his blessing (Burega 2004, 230, 240–241). According to Bishop Dosifei in his letter to Bishop Gorazd, the exact words of Patriarch Dimitrii to Bishop Veniamin were the following: “Go wherever you want, but that which you are doing are intrigues” (Burega 2004, 240). Bishop Dosifei was in Carpatho-Russia once again in 1924 and continued his work there (Burega 2004, 262). Already in 1925, the Minister of Education in the Republic of Czechoslovakia accepted the diocese in control by the SOC as the official Orthodox Diocese. In this way, Archbishop Savvatii and the Patriarchate of Constantinople were defeated, yet they did not give up hope of gaining power there, having churches which were under the guidance of Archbishop Savvatii until World War II (Burega 2004, 262–263).

In 1927, Bishop Irinei of Novi Sad was sent to administrate the diocese in Carpatho-Russia. In his first epistle to the flock, Bishop Irinei wrote: “We are now here representing the one, legal hierarchical power, which it is necessary to declare to all the Orthodox people,” i.e., the Serbian Orthodox Church (Monk Gorazd 2000, 125). After Bishop Irinei had spent a year in Carpatho-Russia, Bishop Serafim¹⁹ (Monk Gorazd 2000, 125). He was there for one year, trying to regulate church affairs (Sava 1996, 442). In December of 1930, the Council of Bishops of the SOC decided that Bishop Iosif of Bitola be sent there. He himself felt that he should go in order to pay back the Russians for all the help they had shown the Serbian people throughout history (“Istoricheskoe Zasedanie Serbskago Sv. Sobora,” *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, No. 24 (1930): 2). He was thus given the title “Exarch of Carpatho-Russia” by the SOC. Hieromonk Iustin (Popovich) traveled with Bishop Iosif to the Carpathian Mountains. During their trip, Bishop Iosif received consent from the Czechoslovakian government on behalf of the

¹⁹ Bishop Serafim of Rashko-Prizren finished the Theological Academy in Moscow in 1902.

Serbian Church to have a permanent hierarch in Carpatho-Russia with the title *Mukachevsko-Priashevskii* (Monk Gorazd 2000, 125–126). In 1931, Sindjel²⁰ Damaskin (Grdanichki), former First-Secretary of the Serbian Patriarchate, was elected and consecrated Bishop of the Mukachev-Priashev Diocese (Sava 1996, 149). During Bishop Damaskin's time as bishop of the Mukachev-Priashev Diocese, many people came back to Orthodoxy from the Uniatism of the Roman Catholic Church, churches being built throughout Carpatho-Russia for the faithful. In 1938, Bishop Vladimir (Rajich)²¹ was sent from the SOC to the Mukachev-Priashev Diocese (Sava 1996, 91).

A Reflection on the Serbian Reaction to Russian Immigrant Theology

Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) is considered to be the great theologian of the ROCA. However, he received both positive and negative attention within the Serbian Church where he was living. Among the positive reactions are the words of Archimandrite Iustin (Popovich) who wrote that “In the latest times, no one has had such a powerful influence on Orthodox thought as Blessed Metropolitan Antonii. He took Orthodox thought that was mixed with the scholastic-rationalistic path and changed it into a grace-filled-ascetical path” (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. X, 247). He writes that there is no one like Metropolitan Antonii, saying that his works are completely patristic based and compares him to the great ecumenical teachers of the Church, Sts. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom (Rklitskii 1959, Vol. X, 245 & 250).

In mid-1917, the then Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii) published his most controversial theological work called “The Dogma of Redemption.” Here it is not necessary to go into great detail in regards to the essence of the work. Archimandrite Iustin does not contradict the writings of Metropolitan Antonii, but

²⁰ The first award-title given to a priest-monk in the Serbian tradition.

²¹ Bishop Vladimir of Rashko-Prizren finished the Theological Academy in Moscow (Sava 1996, 91).

rather supports them in his book on dogmatic theology (*Dogmatika Pravoslavne Tsrkve*). Thus, great respect for Metropolitan Antonii's theology was accepted by one of the most respected dogmatists of the Orthodox Church in the twentieth century. On the other hand, this work of Metropolitan Antonii was frowned upon by others. Archpriest Milosh Parenta, an academic who taught at the Belgrade Theological Faculty during the time that Metropolitan Antonii was in Yugoslavia, wrote a critical report on this document in 1926 in the official news organ of the SOC *Glasnik*, disapproving of the teaching, saying that in even just a few lines does the author write many anti-Orthodox teachings. Parenta claims that Metropolitan Antonii makes God the responsible one for man's fall (Parenta [1926]).

Part IV: The 1930's – Patriarch Varnava and the Divisions in the Russian Orthodox Church

The ROC (MP) and the ROCA

Patriarch Varnava (Rosich)²² was a key figure in the life of the Russian Church during the 1930's. He made his position clear to the Russian faithful soon after his enthronement on the Patriarchal Throne of the SOC on April 12, 1930, with his sermon

²² It is necessary to point out that Patriarch Varnava had an idealistic notion of the Russian people. In an interview with a Belgrade-based Russian magazine in the beginning of the 1930's, he states the following: "Everyone knows of the sad events which took place in Russia. It is difficult to speak of them, but I often give myself the question: 'Is the Russian people, that trusting and good people, guilty in the downfall of its best sons and daughters?' I answer this question to myself: 'No.' You cannot blame the Russian people. In it you must see only God's testing, sent to the Great People, of which it will pass as a conqueror of its inner and outer enemies . . ." (Maevskii n. d., 273). In another place, Patriarch Varnava also calls that which the Russians suffer as testing and struggles, praying that the Mother of God would protect them with Her Omophorion (*Znamenitel'nyi Iubilei* 1936, 6).

at the Russian Church of the Holy Trinity in Belgrade (“Slovo,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 8 (1930): 6–7). In his sermon on June 22, 1930, the new Patriarch said:

“You ought to know that the fanatics who persecute the Church not only torture it but are trying to split it, to divide it, and in many ways stretch out their criminal hands even toward you who are beyond the boundaries of your fatherland. You, the true sons of Russia, must remember that you are the only support of the Russian people. You are bound at any cost to preserve undamaged the national church traditions in all their purity.

This is your duty before God, before your native country, and before the Christian world. The church dissensions sown by the enemies of your homeland must be halted at any cost. Among you there is a great hierarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Antony, who is the adornment of the Universal Orthodox Church. He is a lofty mind, equal to the first hierarchs of the Church of Christ at the beginning of Christianity. He is the repository of Church truth, and those who have separated must return to him.

All of you, not only those living in our Yugoslavia, but also those in America, Asia, and in all countries of the world, must compose, with your great hierarch Metropolitan Antony at the head, a single, indestructible whole, which will not be susceptible to the attacks and provocations of the enemies of the Church.

I, as the Serbian Patriarch, am like your own brother, and I fervently pray God that He unite the Russian people in exile into a single unit, so that Russia may rise to that same stature which was her’s when headed by the Orthodox ruler, the Czar, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and all His Saints I give you my Patriarchal blessing.” (Rodzianko 1975, 15–16).

This sermon was given in the Russian language. Petar Rosich, the future Patriarch Varnava, always had an attraction to Russia and had a desire to study there from his early youth (Paganuzzi 2003, 149). He ended up studying in Russia at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy. On April 30, 1905, Petar was tonsured into the small schema by Bishop Sergii (Stragorodskii) of Iamburg, the future Metropolitan of Gor’kii (Sava 1996, 50), claiming that “the religious life of the Russian people had such an effect on him, that [he] because of that decided to accept monasticism” (Paganuzzi 2003, 149). On May 5, 1905, Monk Varnava was ordained into the diaconate by Bishop Sergii. On June 5, of the same year, Hierodeacon Varnava was ordained a hieromonk (Sava 1996, 50).

As a hierarch, Bishop Varnava²³ fled to Russia during the Balkan Wars and spent time with Russian hierarchs. For example, he spent more than one month with Archbishop Antonii of (Khrapovitskii), the future head of the ROCA, then Archbishop of Khar’kov, and celebrated Pascha in Moscow with Archbishop Tikhon, the future Patriarch of Moscow and All of Russia. He also was present in Moscow for the All-Russian Church Council of 1917–1918. When the Russian émigrés came to Yugoslavia, the then Metropolitan Varnava of Skoplje immediately tried to bring the priests into his diocese. He even gave one of the city churches to the Russians so that they would be able to serve in the Russian practice (Paganuzzi 2003, 150–153). In fact, when Metropolitan Antonii and, at that time, Metropolitan Varnava of Skoplje saw each other for the first time after Metropolitan Antonii had arrived in Belgrade, they “both wept, silently standing in one another’s arms. Vladika Varnava kissed Vladika’s hand, kissed his face, embraced him like his own brother, and Vladika Antony, all in tears, pulled away his hand and did not give it to him to kiss, and sometimes even attempted himself to kiss the hand of Vladika Varnava” (Melnik 1972, 18). They would meet together every night for tea and to talk about different issues (Melnik 1972, 18). Vladika Varnava was also very protective of Metropolitan Anto-

²³ Bishop Varnava was consecrated on April 10, 1910.

nii. Once, when he went away, he gave orders to the cook to make sure that the Metropolitan was taken care of: “If I so much as hear of or notice any carelessness in relation to the Metropolitan – I shall instantly dismiss you. Know this: he is my friend, he is more to me than my own father, do you understand?” (Melnik 1972, 23).

Even when Metropolitan Varnava was chosen as Patriarch of Serbia after the repose of Patriarch Dimitrii, he said in his enthronement address: “We, celebrating the glory of our Church, our Patriarchate, must remember that the Russian Church participated with us today in the person of His Eminence Metropolitan Antonii, the great theologian. I bequeath you to commemorate the suffering of Russian People, which is persecuted by antichrist!” (Paganuzzi 2003, 153). At the services of elevation of the Patriarch, Metropolitan Antonii served as the oldest Metropolitan in rank until the elevation of Patriarch Varnava to the Patriarchal Throne, he (Metropolitan Antonii) immediately afterwards receiving the order of the “White Eagle of the second degree” from the hands of the new Patriarch of Serbia, Varnava, on behalf of the King of Yugoslavia, Aleksandar I (Melnik 1972, 21). So, Patriarch Varnava was connected with both parts of the Russian Orthodox Church; with the First-Hierarch of the ROCA, Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) who was with him in Yugoslavia, and with Metropolitan Sergii (Stragorodskii) of Gor’kii who was in Moscow acting as the substitute of the *locum tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne of the ROC (MP), Metropolitan Petr of Krutitsa.²⁴ This fact in and of itself would place Patriarch Varnava in the position of being a mediator for the two sides. Although Patriarch Varnava undoubtedly showed support to the Hierarchical Synod of the ROCA, as can be seen from the above quote, he did not think it was mandatory for himself to look at all events with the eyes of the ROCA. For example, during this period which was filled with confrontation between the ROC (MP) and the ROCA, Patriarch Varnava greeted Metropolitan Elevation of Lithuania, who was in charge of the parishes of

²⁴ Metropolitan Petr was in exile and under confinement from 1925.

the ROC (MP) in Western Europe, with the following words in his Nativity greeting: “My beloved brother in Christ. . . ,” thus showing the spiritual union of the Serbian Patriarch with Metropolitan Elevation, and de facto the ROC (MP) (*Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi Eparkhii*, No. 1 (1933): n.p.).

Metropolitan Sergii soon asked Patriarch Varnava to be a mediator between the ROC (MP) and the ROCA in an epistle written on March 23, 1933. In this letter, Metropolitan Sergii explains that the organization of the ROCA, with the participation of its émigré hierarchs, is a political role and asks that Patriarch Varnava pass the following suggestion to the bishops of the ROCA:

- a) give the ROC (MP) the commitment that they would cease to speak against the Soviet regime – those who cannot do this must be dismissed to another Orthodox Church, but their churches and institutions must be given to the ROC (MP), and
- b) the ROCA must liquidate its center as the head of the Russian Church Diaspora (*Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii v 1931–1935 godu* 2001, 157–164).

On May 1, 1933, Patriarch Varnava answered with the agreement to be a mediator between the two churches in the healing “of the chronic church illness” and asked that Metropolitan Sergii “prolong the term for one year to think about it and get necessary advice . . . so that we can do all that depends on us for the pacification of the pieces of the Russian Church that are abroad” (Troitskii 1968, 21). On May 19, 1933, the Hierarchical Council of the SOC decided to ask Patriarch Varnava to, “in brotherly love try, if it is possible, to reconcile the two hostile sides for the good of our brother Russians, and in the like the whole Orthodox Church” (Troitskii 1968, 21). They did this on the basis of reading the letter of Metropolitan Sergii from March 23, 1933, and the answer of Patriarch Varnava, as well as on the basis of a survey of the SOC on the problems of the Russian Church (Troitskii 1968, 21). Count George Grabbe, who served at that time as head of the office of the Synod of Bishops of the ROCA in Sremski Karlovtsi, pointed

out that the letter of Patriarch Varnava to Metropolitan Sergii was written by Sergei Viktorovich Troitskii²⁵ (Grabbe 1964, 156).

In his Nativity Epistle from December 19, 1933, Metropolitan Sergii asks Patriarch Varnava to respond quickly to his inquiry about the measures to be undertaken by them in regards to the ROCA (Troitskii 1968, 22). On December 24 1933/January 6, 1934, Patriarch Varnava answered Metropolitan Sergii in a personal letter in which he suggested that as far as the clergy of the ROCA are concerned, the presenting of the testimony of loyalty to the Soviet powers is impossible and that they should be excluded from the clergy of the ROC (MP). The parts of the Russian Orthodox Church which find themselves in Yugoslavia must temporarily be in submission to the Serbian Church, while those outside its canonical territory and under the guidance of the ROCA may act in the regions of the diaspora, where a few autocephalous Orthodox Church are allowed to act. After the acceptance of the ROCA into the jurisdiction of the SOC, the question of church court over it by the ROC (MP) will go out of its (ROC [MP]) competence. Every attempt to change the hierarchs of the ROCA with Russian bishops loyal to the ROC (MP) calls for dis Temper in the Russian Church diaspora (Troitskii 1968, 22–23).

It is noteworthy to say that Metropolitan Antonii's letter to Patriarch Varnava had an influence on this letter. The letter it states: Metropolitan Sergii was forced to sign a list of declarations and decrees that would cause temptation in the proof of their loyalty to the Soviet powers. His letter to Your Holiness [on March 23, 1933], which included a list of demands which are directed right to the destruction of the Russian Church affair abroad, serve without a doubt to the proving of the correctness of that standing, knowing that if Metropolitan Sergii has at least some correct information about the state of the minds and feelings in the Russian emigration, then he must know that his representatives,

²⁵ Sergei Viktorovich Troitskii was a historian of church law. He left Russia after the Revolution and settled in Belgrade. He taught in Paris at the St. Sergius Theological Institute as well as in a Yugoslav Law School. He was the author of the book *O nepravde Karlovatskogo raskola* and completed his life in Belgrade (Kosik 2000, 257).

Metropolitan Elevation and Archbishop Veniamin are meeting general resentment and have very few followers and only call for destruction and temptation (Khrapovitskii, Metropolitan Antonii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. April 29/May 12, 1933. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

In response to Patriarch Varnava's question regarding to how ready the Synod of Bishops of the ROCA is coming into an agreement with the demands of Metropolitan Sergii, Metropolitan Antonii replied that insofar as the demands are not of a canonical character, but rather dictated by the Soviet government, the hierarchy of the ROCA does not have the right to accept them, but must preserve itself as a self-governing part of the Russian Church according to the *ukaz* of Patriarch Tikhon, the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Council about the temporary self-government of the parts of the Russian Church (*Ukaz* No. 362 from November 7/20, 1920) until the reinstatement of a free, legal church power in Russia. No church disciplinary measures against the ROCA given by Metropolitan Sergii will be recognized by its (ROCA) legal leadership (Khrapovitskii, Metropolitan Antonii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. April 29/May 12, 1933. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

In a response to this letter on February 6, 1934, Metropolitan Sergii points out that he cannot release the bishops and clergy of the ROCA into another jurisdiction because they hold an aggressive and hostile position towards the ROC (MP). In order for the ROC (MP) to grant itself authority over the Russian clergymen, they (the ROC [MP]) would have to liquidate the church-administration of Sremski Karlovtsi and hand over all the pre-revolutionary church property to the ROC (MP). A transfer of the entire church organization of Karlovtsi from one jurisdiction to another would be a "change of flags", as Metropolitan Sergii feels (Metropolitan Sergii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. January 25/February 7, 1934. No. 119. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade). The letter of Metropolitan Sergii continues: "Such a transfer would only add new transgressions to the existent canonical infractions: the attempt to take cover be-

hind a different authority from the responsibility before the legal church court. In similar situations, both those taking cover and those covering are responsible according to the church canons”²⁶ (Metropolitan Sergii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. January 25/February 7, 1934. No. 119. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade). Patriarch Varnava’s response in his letter to Metropolitan Sergii on May 25, 1934 (No. 448), he points out the inconsistency of Metropolitan Sergii, (having in mind the question of the transfer of the émigré clergy from the jurisdiction of the ROC (MP)²⁷ because he cannot be a mediator between Metropolitan Sergii and the hierarchs abroad who refuse to fulfill the conditions of Metropolitan Sergii because of his restricted condition and suggests that he resort to the canonical

²⁶ After receiving news of this letter, Metropolitan Antonii wrote Patriarch Varnava a letter in which he states his feelings towards that which is happening with Metropolitan Sergii. He writes: “This letter intensifies our sorrow in regards to the difficult situation and our persecuted Mother-Church with the hierarchy, the part along with the Locum Tenens who is in exile and the part which finds itself in complete captivity under godless rule . . . I never will believe that he [Metropolitan Sergii] voluntarily wrote a demand for the complete destruction of the entire realm of the Russian Local Church” (Khrapovitskii, Metropolitan Antonii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. April 24/May 7, 1934. No. 3759. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate, Belgrade).

²⁷ In a private letter to the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad dated September 12, 1926, Metropolitan Sergius urged them to accept an autonomous existence: “Your letter gave me cause to ask you a general question, whether the Moscow Patriarchate can be now a guide to the Orthodox emigrants in their Church life, when between us there is virtually no communication? I think that for the benefit of the Church you either should create, by common consent, a Center of Church government, with enough authority to solve all conflicts and disagreements and prevent all disobedience, without reaching for our support (there always could be found a reason to suspect the authenticity of our orders or interpret them with lack of sufficient information: some will recognize some, some not. . .), or if it seems difficult to create such a Church Center universally recognized by all emigrants, it is better to submit to God’s will, admit that a separate existence cannot be organized by emigrants, and therefore it is time for all of you to step on the ground of the canons and submit (perhaps temporarily) to the Local Church government, for example in Serbia to the Serbian Patriarch. In non-Orthodox countries you can organize independent communities or Churches, members of which could be non-Russians. . .” (Translation taken from the unpublished manuscript of Monk Benjamin [Gomarteli], *Time Line of the Orthodox Church in the XX Century*).

arbitration tribunal (Troitskii 1968, 23, and “Postanovlenie Zamestitelia Patriarshego Mestobliustitelia i pri nem Patriarshego Sviashchennago Sinoda o Karlovatskoi gruppe,” *Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarhii v 1931–1935 godu* 2001, 226).

In an answer to that letter in June of 1934, Metropolitan Sergii wrote in thanks of “the Head of the Serbian Orthodox Church for the mediation and aspirations towards the guarding of the Russian Orthodox Church from new shocks, yet still does not regard it possible to not impose on those of Karlovtsi disciplinary sanctions and simply exclude them from the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate with the following handing over into the Serbian jurisdiction without the commitment to abolish the Karlovtsi rule (The Archive of the Office of External Church Affairs, Citation 1, Troitskii 1968). Metropolitan Sergii felt that a court of arbitration was not the appropriate choice, because according to him, the squall was not between to equal parties, but rather about an erudite schism of clerics within the jurisdiction of the ROC (MP) (Troitskii 1968, 23–24). The decision of Metropolitan Sergii and the Synod of the ROC (MP) from June 9/22, 1934 (No. 50) came about from the results of the correspondence with Patriarch Varvava. The more active hierarchs of the ROCA, with Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) at its head, were suspended from serving. All clerics and laymen who stayed in communion with them and accepted their Holy Sacraments were told that they would be liable to the same punishments as the suspended bishops²⁸ (*Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarhii v 1931–1935 godu* 2001, 228–229).

²⁸ It must be mentioned here that the fundamental body of all Orthodox Church canons were written during the time when Christianity was the ruling religion. For that reason, during the period of persecution of the Church, it must be understood that church life should be organized according to the spirit of the New Testament, not according to the letter of the church law which have in mind calm conditions of church life. In this spirit, the Russian bishops left abroad with their firm upholding of a political monarchy as well as an anti-Soviet political stance were not able to come to a spiritual unification with the other parts of the Russian Church. The leadership of the ROCA, although it was in an unprecedented church condition, thought itself to be the one church center of the Russian Diaspora with its hierarchs remaining in subordination to canonical measures.

On the other hand, in order to show the worth of Patriarch Varnava's actions in relations to the Russian Church in the homeland and abroad, it is necessary to look at the problematical situation of Metropolitan Sergii himself: after his release from imprisonment in Spring of 1927, Metropolitan Sergius commenced a second period of governing the Church. Due to an apparent agreement between Metropolitan Sergius and the government, the authorities began at that time to provide support to the Substitute *Locum Tenens*, Metropolitan Sergius, thus hoping to create a new division within the Russian Church, in the same way that earlier the authorities had sought to divide and conquer when they initiated the Renovatianist and Gregorian movements.

Metropolitan Sergius was himself only a substitute for the arrested Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy, the Patriarchal *Locum Tenens*. In the first period of his government, prior to his arrest, Metropolitan Sergius was an exponent of the will of the body of Bishops of the Russian Church. In his second period, after his release from prison in the Spring of 1927, Metropolitan Sergius now began to claim that he de facto possessed the same rights as Metropolitan Peter since the latter was under arrest. After his release from prison, Metropolitan Sergius received the right to live in Moscow, which he did not have prior to his arrest. In May of 1927, Metropolitan Sergius received the state registration to convene a Temporary Synod. All the authority of that Synod flowed from the authority of Metropolitan Sergius, but not from the Council of the Russian Church as in [the] case of the Supreme Church Administration of Patriarch Tikhon. Such a prominent hierarch as Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan was concerned that the freedom of the Church was again replaced by the Synod. Metropolitan Sergius, under pressure from the authorities, ceased liturgical commemoration of Metropolitan Peter²⁹ since he had been

²⁹ This is stated in a paper by A. V. Zhuravskii entitled "Ekkleziologicheskaia i Etiko Kanonicheskaia Pozitsiia Mitropolita Kirilla (Smirnova) v ego Vozzreniiaakh na Tserkovnoe Upravlenie i Tserkovno-Gosudarstvennyia Otnoshenie." This paper was read at a conference in Santandre, Hungary in 2001. Cited from: *Istoriia Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi v XX veke (1917–1933): Materialy Konferentsii* 2002, 417–418.

convicted as a criminal. Therefore several dozen Bishops in Russia ceased communion with Metropolitan Sergius. They considered different aspects of Metropolitan Sergius' course improper but were united with the Church through the commemoration of Metropolitan Peter who considered Metropolitan Sergius as his secretary, but not a person in the position to undertake such acts as an establishment of the Synod. Metropolitan Peter did not cease communion with Metropolitan Sergius, although he called for him to return to the course of his first period of government. The Bishops abroad espoused the policy of the Bishops in Russia who refused to participate in Metropolitan Sergius' Church organization. The Bishops of the Church Abroad never accepted Metropolitan Sergius as their *kyriarch*.

It should be noted that all the circumstances of Church life in Russia at that moment were extraordinary. Therefore, the entire situation met the provisions of *Ukaz* 362. Metropolitan Sergius had a right to continue with his Church organization in boundaries of *Ukaz* 362. This was presumed recently at a conference of historians in Hungary. The problem was that Metropolitan Sergius considered himself not as an entity of the Church, in spirit of *Ukaz* 362, but the responsible executor of the central Church administration. He started to act as though he were in fact the head of the Russian Church, even to the point of banning the Bishops who did not agree with him. ... In May of 1934, Metropolitan Sergius had received from his Synod the title, His Beatitude, Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, "along with the right to wear two *panagias*. Moscow was a patriarchal see and it was a duty of the Patriarchal *Locum Tenens* and his Substitute to administer and keep the see vacant until the convening of a Council; consequently, Metropolitan Sergius had no right to the title Metropolitan of Moscow" (Psarev 2002). Regardless of the profound divergence with Metropolitan Sergii in the relationship to the Russian Church emigration, Patriarch Varnava still considered the hierarchs of the ROC (MP) to be his brothers in Christ. In his Nativity greeting to Metropolitan Eleverii on December 3/16, 1934, Patriarch Varnava still calls him his "beloved brother

in Christ,” asks for his holy prayers and assures him of his brotherly love (“Obmen privetstviiami,” *Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi eparkhii*, No. 1–2 (1935)).

Divisions in the Russian Church Diaspora

Patriarch Varnava was a true friend to the Russian people. He was very saddened by all that which took place in the Russian diaspora in regards to schisms. For this reason, he could not be indifferent to the happenings within the divisions of the Russian Diaspora.³⁰ In his address to Metropolitan Antonii in 1931, Patriarch Varnava mentioned: “I, with my side³¹ as a steadfast and sincere friend, constantly am saddened by its misfortune, and with great joy am ready to be a mediator in the act of unification of the Russian People, so necessary for the salvation of Russia” (Maevskii n. d., 280).³² At the same time in an interview of a Serbian magazine *Vreme*, Patriarch Varnava states: “...Our Church, according to its duty and from its feeling of thanks to the Russian People, is undertaking brotherly measures so that it can unify the divisions of the Russian hierarchy abroad” (Maevskii n. d., 293).

The position of the Russian Church emigration intensified when Metropolitan Evlogii left from submission to the ROC (MP) in 1930 and was accepted into the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Troitskii writes:

“In May of 1931, Metropolitan Elevation, in agreement with the instruction of Metropolitan Sergii, forwarded copies of all the documents in regards to the transfer of Metropolitan Evlogii into the jurisdiction of Constantinople to the Serbian Patriarch Varnava

³⁰ Metropolitan Evlogii of Western Europe and Platon of North America left from submission to the Council of Bishops of the ROCA at the Council of Bishops in 1926.

³¹ Implying the Serbian Church.

³² Vladislav Al'bimovich Maevskii was a historian. He was Patriarch Varnava's secretary as well as the librarian at the Patriarch Library in Belgrade. He moved to the United States after World War II (Kosik 2000, 244).

and expressed hope that “the reading of these documents would not leave him indifferent, but would rather awaken the showing of brotherly help to the Russian Church for the reconciliation of this new division.” Patriarch Varnava in his letter to Metropolitan Elevation on February 14, 1932, accuses Metropolitan Evlogii in the organization of a schism, and the Patriarch of Constantinople not having the right to accept him to himself.” (Troitskii 1968, 20).



Fig. 7. The solemn celebration of the anniversary of Metropolitan Antonii (50th anniversary of service in the bishop’s ministry) in 1935. Standing: Archbishop Anastasii (Gribanovskii), Patriarch Varnava of Serbia, Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii). Behind Patriarch Varnava sits Y. P. Grabbe, and behind Metropolitan Antonii — Archimandrite Feodosii Meľnik (source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

In 1934, the idea for the restoration of communion between the Russian Metropolitans outside of Russia began to take shape. Metropolitan Evlogii came to Belgrade and he and Metropolitan Antonii made peace between themselves. Bishop Vasili (Rod-

zianko), who participated in all of these events in his youth, recalled the following: After this, everyone was waiting for joint-services in the Church of the Holy Trinity, but Count Grabbe, Petr Sergeevich Lopukhin and a whole list of other “really righteous people” who were there said, “No, you can’t do it like that. You need the agreement of the Council of Bishops. That is their personal reconciliation, but this is a question of principle, that is, a principle of *sobornost’*.”³³ Patriarch Varnava was very interested by all of this. He learned of everything from me and fully took my side. He came to the Council³⁴ and said: “I will speak not only on behalf of myself, but in the name of King Aleksandr. If you do not take away the suspension from all of those who you suspended in other countries now and do not reinstate full Eucharistic communion, then unfortunately, the King feels that he cannot continue to show his hospitality to you any longer.” The bishops understood the threat and quickly removed the suspensions (Kosik 2000, 46–47). In order to not weaken these tendencies, the representatives of the Russian Church community in Belgrade visited Patriarch Varnava in Sremski Karlovtsi. In the delegation were Archpriest Vladislav Nekliudov, the warden of the Russian Church of the Holy Trinity, N. I. Ivanov and Mikhail Mikhailovich Rodzianko (Rodzianko 1975, 33). “At their leave-taking, the Patriarch said that he would do everything possible to help the work of church unity” (Rodzianko 1975, 33). Patriarch Varnava created a plan for the regularization of the problems of the Russian Church Diaspora, especially with regard to Metropolitans Evlogii in Western Europe and Feofil in North America. The first plan was directed towards Metropolitan Evlogii and had six points:

- 1) the Russian Church Abroad has four Metropolitanates – a) Western Europe, b) the Balkans, c) the Far East and d) America;
- 2) the unified higher organ of these bodies is to be comprised of representatives who meet for periodical councils;

³³ An overall agreement of the Church Hierarchs, coinciding with the canons of the Church as well as the spirit of the canons.

³⁴ The Fall Council of Bishops of 1934.

- 3) the jurisdiction of the Russian Hierarchical Synod in Sremski Karlovtsi is to be confined to the territory of the Serbian Church;
- 4) Western Europe must be comprised up of Russian hierarchy of one jurisdiction;
- 5) the differences between Metropolitan Evlogii and the Executive Board of Karlovtsi are to be decided by the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Serbia; and
- 6) Metropolitan Evlogii remains the Exarch of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Russian Church in Western Europe remains under the patronage of this [the Serbian] Patriarchate until the time when a new organization of the Russian Church in Dispersment receives a blessing from the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Serbia (Notes of the Serbian Patriarchate of Letters of Patriarch Varnava. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

The second plan was directed towards Metropolitan Feofil, also having six points:

- 1) the Russian Church abroad must be divided into autonomous metropolitanates, of which one must be in America;
- 2) these circles must have a common center for decisions on questions that concern the entire Russian Church abroad and questions that cannot be answered by the circles;
- 3) until the refounding of the free Russian Church in Russia, the common center will be under the patronage of the Serbian Patriarch, so that the center will function properly;
- 4) that center must be organized at a conference of representatives of the circles under the auspices of the Serbian Patriarch;
- 5) the suspension of Bishop Arsenii [Chagovets, who was in Canada,] from serving must be disregarded; and
- 6) there must be a hierarchy of one jurisdiction in America (Notes of the Serbian Patriarchate of Letters of Patriarch Varnava. Russian Orthodox Church Abroad File. Archive of the SOC, Belgrade).

In 1935, Patriarch Varnava invited Metropolitans Evlogii and Feofil from North America to visit him. Bishop Dimitrii of Hailar in Manchuria was also invited (Rodzianko 1975, 34). *The Truth about the Russian Church Abroad* states:

“The hierarchs mentioned answered the Patriarchal summons and arrived in Sremski Karlovtsy. At the meetings, the Patriarch was chairman. The first of these sessions was on October 18/31 [1935]. From the minutes one can see how Metropolitan Theophilus expressed the complete readiness on his part to meet half-way with the general desire to institute peace and unity on the basis set forth in the report, which he immediately read. After a thorough discussion, extending over several meetings, ‘The Temporary Situation of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad’ appeared. This ‘Situation’ was signed by Patriarch Varnava, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Evlogy, Metropolitan Theophilus, Metropolitan Anastasy, and Bishop Dimitry.

The main parts of this ‘Situation’ are:

The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, composed of dioceses, spiritual missions and churches finding themselves outside the borders of Russia, is an inseparable part of the Russian Orthodox Church, temporarily existing on autonomous principles.

The highest organ of legislation, trial and administration for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is the Council of Bishops, meeting annually, and its executive organ – the Holy Synod of Bishops.

The exiled part of the Russian Church is composed of four provinces: Western Europe, Near East, North America and the Far East, in each of which metropolitan districts are formed . . . Patriarch Varnava offered to mediate in talks with the Oecumenical Patriarch about the release of Metropolitan Evlogy from the Church of Constantinople. Metropolitan Evlogy accepted this proposal with thanks and expressed his readiness to unite with all parts of the

Russian Church Abroad. The brotherly unity of the hierarchs . . . was witnessed and strengthened by the concelebration of two Divine Liturgies. Heading the service in the Serbian Cathedral was His Holiness, Patriarch Varnava, and serving in the Russian Trinity Church were Metropolitan Evlogy, Metropolitan Theophilus, Metropolitan Anastasy, and Bishop Dimitry (Metropolitan Antony did not serve because of illness).” (Rodzianko 1975, 34–35).

These actions of Patriarch Varnava caused Metropolitan Sergii to protest in a telegram which he sent to the Patriarch requesting that the Patriarch quit his project of a new church organization of the Russian émigrés (Metropolitan Sergii, [“Letter to Patriarch Varnava of Serbia.”] March 14, 1936, *Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi eparkhii*, No. 7–8 (1936): 3–4). Patriarch Varnava refused to stop showing his protection to the ROCA and points out that Metropolitan Sergii was in restricted conditions and was not properly informed about the church conditions of the Russian émigrés. Patriarch Varnava made a point that Metropolitan Sergii’s lack of desire for reconciliation in regards to the Russian Church émigrés profited only the Patriarch of Constantinople, with his attempts towards universal power, which was supported by the nationalism of the Greek Church and was being fought against by Patriarch Varnava himself (Metropolitan Sergii, [“Letter to Metropolitan Elevferii of Vil’no.”] March 14, 1936, *Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi eparkhii*, No. 7–8 (1936): 4–7). For the last time Metropolitan Sergii asked Patriarch Varnava to use his authority to make the Russian émigrés go into submission to him (Metropolitan Sergii). He wrote that if Patriarch Varnava continued to demonstrate his prayerful communion as well as all other methods of support to the Russian Church émigrés who were not in submission to Metropolitan Sergii, then that would lead to the ceasing of prayerful and Eucharistic communion of the ROC (MP) with the SOC, which he planned to officially release³⁵ (Metropolitan Sergii, [“Letter to Patriarch Varnava of Serbia.”] March 14, 1936, *Go-*

³⁵ There are no documents following up on this threat.

los Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi eparkhii, No. 7–8 (1936): 4). Regardless of what Metropolitan Sergii wrote to Metropolitan Eleverii, Patriarch Varnava did not allow representatives of the ROCA to participate in a church procession because of the demands of Metropolitan Sergii (Metropolitan Sergii, [“Letter to Patriarch Varnava of Serbia.”] March 14, 1936, *Golos Litovskoi Pravoslavnoi eparkhii*, No. 7–8 (1936): 4), and “in the official calendar of the Serbian Patriarchate, ‘Tsrkva’ (‘The Church’) for 1936 a photograph of Metropolitan Sergii was published with his full title, and the words, ‘He who sorrows with the Church in Russia’” (Rodzianko 1953, 196). This official title mentioned was never accepted by the ROCA.



Fig. 8. ROCA Bishop Council of 1935 that restored communion within the Russian emigre Church. Serbian Patriarch Varnava is in the center. Sitting from left to right: Met. Feofil (Pashkovskii), Met. Evlogii (Georgievskii), Patriarch Varnava, Met. Anastasii (Gribanovskii), Bishop Dimitrii (Voznesenskii). Sremski Karlovtsi, October 1935 (source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

Other General Relations During Patriarch Varnava's Time

During the leadership of Patriarch Varnava, the SOC acted as a major participant in the life of the ROCA. Patriarch Varnava himself would take opportunities to show his love to the Russian people. His closeness to the Russian people was extraordinary. Protopresbyter A. Zhivanovich, a Serbian priest, spoke of Patriarch Varnava as being a “Serb by blood and birth, but Russian by upbringing, spirit and piety” (Paganuzzi 2003, 143). He would also go to the Russian hospital to visit the Orthodox there before Christmas. Patriarch Varnava also believed strongly that Russia would rise again (Paganuzzi 2003, 142–143). Soon after Patriarch Varnava's enthronement on the Patriarchal Throne of the SOC, he went to Sremski Karlovtsi along with Bishop Mardarii of America and Canada, a representative of the Belgrade Spiritual Court and his personal secretary, and met with the manager of the Synodal Office (ROCA), E. I. Makharoblidze, on behalf of Metropolitan Antonii who was unable to attend the meeting (he was at another church event in the Serbian city of Panchevo). While there, he assured Makharoblidze that he would remain the same to the Russians as he always had been (“Pribytie Sviateishago Patriarkha Varnavy v Sremski Karlovtsi,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 9–10 (1930): 10). At the Council of Bishops of the SOC held in 1930, Patriarch Varnava passed an act which called for the commemoration in Serbian churches of the Russian Orthodox Church and the much-suffering Russian people (“Patrijarkh Srpski Varnava,” *Glasnik*, No. 11 (2004): 282). On May 24/ June 6, 1930, Patriarch Varnava sent a *gramota* to Metropolitan Antonii which related his trust in the brotherly love of the ROCA and sent God's blessing on Metropolitan Antonii and the Russian people (“Gramota,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 11–12 (1930): 1). On June 14, 1930, Patriarch Varnava sent a *gramota* to the Commission for the Construction of the Russian Orthodox Church in Brussels and accepted their request for him to serve as the honorary president of the commission as Patriarch Dimitrii had before him. The *gramota* also asked God for the resur-

rection of Great Orthodox Russia (“Gramota,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 13–14 (1930): 1). On June 9/22, 1930, Patriarch Varnava served Divine Liturgy in the Russian Church in Belgrade with Metropolitan Antonii and Bishop Mardarii of America and Canada (“Sluzhenie Sviateishago Patriarkha Serbskago Varnavy v Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi v Belgrade,” *Tserkovnyia Vedomosti*, No. 13–14 (1930): 4). In 1931, an issue arose in Romania which involved the ROCA. The Romanian government was forbidding the Russian Orthodox there to conduct services in Church Slavonic and insisted that all services be conducted in Romanian. Since there were many Russians in Romania, Metropolitan Antonii and Archbishop Anastasii wrote to Patriarch Varnava on May 24/June 6, 1931, to help in the situation, the Romanian Church being persecuted (Metropolitan Antonii and Archbishop Anastasii. Letter to Patriarch Varnava. ROCA File. Archive of the SOC). The Romanians were basically trying to cleanse Romania of Russians. Bishop Dosifei of Nish wrote a report based on this letter, asking the Patriarch to work out the matter directly with Patriarch Miron of Romania with regard to the petition written by the head of the National Union of United Russian Landholdings in Romania (Report of Bishop Dosifei of Nish. ROCA File. Archive of the SOC). It is necessary to point out that during this time period, Serbian clerics had the right to serve with all the different parts of the Russian Church – the ROC (MP), the ROCA and with the “Evlogians”. Priest Vladimir Rodzianko³⁶ was officially a cleric of the SOC under Bishop Irinei of Bachka. He stated in a letter to Archpriest Georgii Grabbe³⁷ in 1979, that (During World War II) he was allowed to serve with Metropolitan Serafim (Liade) of Berlin and Germany (ROCA) and with Archimandrite Sergii (Musyn-Pushkin), who was from the “Evlogians,” while he was in Budapest, thus showing the Eucharistic unification between the Churches (Rodzianko, Vladimir, Archpriest. Letter to Archpriest Georgii Grabbe. January 21/February

³⁶ Later Bishop Vasilii (Rodzianko) in the OCA.

³⁷ Later Bishop Grigorii (Grabbe) of Manhattan in the ROCA.

3, 1979: 3. Stanford University Library). Patriarch Varnava would also try to spiritually encourage the Russian émigrés. For example, when Archbishop Nestor returned to Harbin from Europe, Patriarch Varnava sent a portion of the relics of St. Arsenii of Serbia to the Far East with him for the edification of the Russians there (“Serbskaia Sviatynia v Harbine,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 4 (1934): 67). Also, Patriarch Varnava would attend the openings of the Councils of Bishops of the ROCA. In an issue of *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’* from 1934, the following is recorded:

“The regular Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad was held with the permission of His Holiness Varnava, the Serbian Patriarch in Sremski Karlovtsi in the Patriarchal Palace.

Before the opening of the Council on August 19 o.s. [old style], all of the present hierarchs from abroad were received by the His Holiness Patriarch Varnava, whom they greeted and asked a blessing for the beginning of the Council proceedings.” (“Arkhiereiskii Sobor,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 9–10 (1934): 154).

When King Aleksandar I was assassinated in Marseilles on October 9, 1934, Patriarch Varnava sent a *gramota* to Metropolitan Antonii thanking him for his brotherly participation in the ceremonies for the newly martyred King Aleksandar I, comparing the suffering of the Serbians at this time to that of the Russians when Czar Nicholas II was martyred (“Gramota,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 11 (1934): 169). Patriarch Varnava also sent greetings for Nativity and Pascha, remembering Metropolitan Antonii as his brother and commemorating him in his prayers (“Rozhdestvenskiia Privetstviia,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 1 (1935): 1; “Gramoty,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 4–5 (1936): 52). Patriarch Varnava would also send Metropolitan Antonii his sympathies at the death of a fellow hierarch of the ROCA, for example, when Archbishop Damian of Tsaritsyn reposed (“Gramoty,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 4–5 (1936): 53).

In 1935, both Patriarch Varnava and Metropolitan Antonii celebrated major events. Patriarch Varnava celebrated his fifth anniversary as Patriarch of Serbia. This jubilee was conducted during Pascha. On May 2, 1935, Patriarch Varnava met with Metropolitan Antonii, Archbishops Germogen and Feofan, as well as Bishop Serafim of Vienna, Archimandrite Feodosii (Mel'nik) and Count Iurii P. Grabbe. They presented the Patriarch with a *Panagia* in honor of his anniversary. In return, Patriarch Varnava gave 10,000 dinars to Metropolitan Antonii for needy parishes in the ROCA. Ten days later, Patriarch Varnava was in Sremski Karlovtsi in the Russian Synodal Church for the vigil, and on the following day was present at the Divine Liturgy, after which he accepted greetings from those present. In his response, Patriarch Varnava thanked all for the greetings and showed his love and dedication to the ROCA, sharing with them his personal feelings of sorrow for the Russian Church, wishing peace and goodwill to those Russians abroad (“Iubilei Sviateishago Patriarkha Varnavy,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 5 (1935): 77–78). Soon after this, on May 6/19, the Patriarch served in the Russian Church in Belgrade along with Bishop Nikolai (Velimirovich)³⁸ of Okhrid and Bitola. Of the Russian bishops, Archbishop Feofan of Kursk and Bishop Ioann of Pecher served. The Patriarch spoke about his great love for the Russian Church in his sermon, and the joy he received by serving in a Russian Church. He also conveyed his feelings that Serbia cannot have good things happen to it without Russia (“Patriarkh Varnava v russkoi tserkvi,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 6 (1935): 90–91).

On September 29/October 11, 1935, Metropolitan Antonii celebrated his fiftieth anniversary as a hierarch. The jubilee services were conducted in Belgrade in the cathedral of the Holy Archangel Michael. Patriarch Varnava served with Metropolitan Antonii, other Russian clerics, as well as Metropolitan Elias of Lebanon. After the services, Patriarch Varnava greeted Metropolitan Antonii with words of great honor, describing Metropolitan An-

³⁸ Bishop Nikolai spent time in Russia in the beginning of the 1900's by the directive of Metropolitan Dimitrii of Serbia, and thus new the Russian people well (Sava 1996, 375).

tonii's great love for everyone, especially those Serbs who studied in Russia. As the Patriarch finished his greeting, he presented Metropolitan Antonii with the Order of the Yugoslavian Crown of the First Degree on behalf of the young King Petar II, as well as 8,000 dinars of his own money to Metropolitan Antonii ("Chestvovanie Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 9–10 (1935): 145–150). In 1936, five bishops of the ROCA were awarded orders by Patriarch Varnava on behalf of the Deputy of the King of Yugoslavia. Metropolitan Evlogii and Feofil were awarded the Order of St. Sava in the First Degree and Archbishops Germogen and Feofan along with Bishop Dimitrii were awarded the Order of St. Sava in the Second Degree ("Nagrazhdenie russkikh ierarkhov," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 3 (1936): 45). As Metropolitan Antonii became ill, Patriarch Varnava would constantly visit, checking on the status of his condition, putting aside his own schedule in order to be with his teacher as he prepared for the next life. When Metropolitan Antonii died on July 28/August 10, 1936, Patriarch Varnava was present (Melnik 1972, 23). The Patriarch said, "If only the Lord would grant me also to die so consciously, so peacefully and well" (Melnik 1972, 23). At Metropolitan Antonii's funeral in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Archangel Michael in Belgrade, Patriarch Varnava served with many other bishops and clergy of the Serbian and Russian Churches, Metropolitan Anastasii, the successor to the First-Hierarchal throne of the ROCA, among them³⁹ (Khrapovitskii 1988, 129). In Patriarch Varnava's eulogy for Metropolitan Antonii, he related that Metro-

³⁹ *The Calendar* of the Serbian Orthodox Church from 1938 lists Metropolitan Anastasii's succession as First-Hierarch of the ROCA. In it is found Metropolitan Anastasii's biography. It is interesting, however, that the article is in a section of the *Calendar* entitled "News from Other Sister Churches and Country Visits" and is the first article in the section, preceding news about the Patriarch of Alexandria's visit to Belgrade. In the article, the author writes about Metropolitan Anastasii saying, "We wish that he lives to joy in the sight of his Fatherland, Great Orthodox Russia, which is dear to all Slavs, and especially to us Serbs" ("Visokopreosvecheni gospodin Anastasije, mitropolit Kishinjevski i Hotinski, poglavar Ruske Tsrkve u inostranstvu," *Tsrkva – 1938 Kalendar Srpske Pravoslavne Patrijarshije* (1938): 102–103 [Archive of Holy Trinity Seminary. Maevskii File]).

politan Antonii should be considered as an equal to one of the early fathers of the Church (“Rech’ Sviateishago Patriarkha Varnavy nad grobom Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 8–9 (1936): 121). He continued:

“Only in the future will they rightly appraise him and understand what a great meaning Metropolitan Antonii has, not only for the Orthodox Church, but for all of Christianity and for all humanity, as a person in whom a high expression of religious and moral beginnings was found in our time. . . . Bidding farewell to Metropolitan Antonii now, standing at his lifeless casket, we all must always protect his holy testament, that Orthodox Tsarist Russia should be restored to that which it was then. In that is all of our salvation. That is what our great deceased one felt, what I feel and what you all feel. . . . It is a lie that Soviet Russia thinks about other Slavs. No, it is preparing them for destruction, and we must free the great Russian people from the Jews and their tyranny.⁴⁰ We must safeguard the Russian Church, dispersed throughout the whole world in this frightful time, and until now for as long as I remain in my position, I will not allow for even one hair to fall from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.” (“Rech’ Sviateishago Patriarkha Varnavy nad grobom Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 8–9 (1936): 122).

⁴⁰ It is imperative here to mention that some supported the idea of starting an All-Slavic Orthodox Church led by Patriarch Varnava of Serbia. Archbishop Vitalii (Maksimenko) is even quoted with supporting this idea (“Drug russkago naroda,” *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, No. 7 (1935): 3). In an article by Abbot Serafim (Ivanov), the following is stated about an All-Orthodox Church: The unification of an All-Slavic Orthodox Church under the highest leadership of Patriarch Varnava – what a strong power which would give the strength to Slavdom and would be the deciding factor in the task of the resurrection of Russia (Ivanov 1935, 3). Patriarch Varnava was idealized for this because he was one of the only free Orthodox Patriarchs at that time and because he was a great “patriot, slavophile and grecophile, he being before all else an admirer and worshipper of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church and its Holy Canons” (“Novyi Serbskii Patriarkh i Tserkov’ ot nego chaiania,” *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, No. 10 (1930): 1). It is said by some that Metropolitan Evlogii joined with Constantinople and Moscow at different times in order to prevent the forming of an All-Slavic Orthodox Church (Zamoiski 1998, 60).



Fig. 9. Procession at the funeral of Metropolitan Antonii, Belgrade 1936
(source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

In the same year, after the death of Metropolitan Antonii, Patriarch Varnava was present at the Council of Bishops. At lunch on September 15/28, 1936, Patriarch Varnava gave a speech which included the following:

“... It is sad, of course, that our Blessed Metropolitan Antonii, our great and wise leader, has left us. He was not only for you, but also for our Serbian Church, a wise counselor in the days of its founding. But a worthy successor succeeded him in the person of the Very Most Reverend Metropolitan Anastasii. I always was of the conviction that Bolshevism and Communism were misfortunes not only for Russia and the Russian Church but for all the Christian world. I, in every possible way, attempted to assist in the organization of the Russian Church and supported it. It is true, even I earlier tried to defend my teacher and friend Metropolitan Sergii, but finally now, I have been assured that he is in captivity by the Bolsheviks and that his com-

mands bring great injury to the Russian Church. It was difficult for me earlier to speak in defense of Russia in regards to the Communists and international Jews and to prove that until national Russia is restored, there cannot be peace and order in Europe. I was completely on my own. The Catholics showed themselves to have so little foresight, that instead of substantial help to the suffering Russian Church, they tried to use its misfortune. ... We are orientating ourselves towards the national, and more importantly, Tsarist Russia.

I greet you, as friends of mine, as friends of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Serbian People. I ask for you to believe in my firm determination: as long as I am alive and stand on this post, I will implement this according to the extent of my powers.” (“Arkhieireiskii Sobor,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 10–11 (1936): 162–163).

On the next day, the Patriarch had dinner with many of the participants in the Council (“Arkhieireiskii Sobor,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 10–11 (1936): 163). On October 25/November 7, 1936, Patriarch Varnava released an epistle in which he addressed the Russian People in regards to the monument that was erected in Bitola for the martyred Consul of the Russian Emperor, Aleksandr Arkadievich Rostovskii, who was martyred on July 26, 1903. Patriarch Varnava regarded him as a great Slav and because of that, he felt it necessary for the Russians to be addressed. At the end of his epistle, the Patriarch encouraged the Russian people to do well in the trials God sent them, so that they would stay firm in their Orthodox Faith, and explained to them that he himself hoped and prayed for the freeing of Russia (“Patriarshee Poslanie,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 12 (1936): 181–184). This was a general trend of the Patriarch and is seen in all of his addresses to the Russian people.



Fig. 10. When the Bolsheviks destroyed the Iveron Chapel in Moscow, it was built at the cemetery in Belgrade. The chapel became a sepulcher for Metropolitan Antonii. On the photo: Patriarch Varnava at its consecration in 1931 (source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

Part V: The End of the 1930's until 1941

Patriarch Gavriil and His Interaction with the ROCA

From the time of Patriarch Varnava's repose on the evening of July 23, 1937, there was quite a while until a new Patriarch was placed on the throne.⁴¹ This was due to the heated situation be-

⁴¹ Patriarch Varnava was immediately thought by doctors to have been poisoned; however, his actual cause of death is not fully known (Sava 1996, 109). The two brothers of Patriarch Varnava, Aleksandar and Urosh Rosich both also suddenly died shortly after the repose of the Patriarch. Some unfair play may be a part of the occurrences. It is necessary to point out that the concordat between the SOC and the Roman Catholic Church passed on the day of Patriarch Varnava's death. Patriarch Varnava was ardently set against the concordat. It was on this day that there was held a procession in Belgrade with prayer service for the speedy recovery of Patriarch Varnava. The police did not approve of this procession in response to their disapproval of the SOC's approach to the concordat with the Roman Catholic Church. A riot broke out and many were injured (Pavlovich 1989, 230).

tween the Serbian Patriarchate and the Yugoslav Parliament. According to the laws for the election of a new Patriarch, the government needed to be involved in the election process. However, at this time, there was tension in regards to a concordat that was being formed by the Yugoslav Parliament and the Roman Catholic Church which would have given the Roman Catholic Church a status of almost equality with the SOC in Yugoslavia. This was completely unacceptable to the SOC. In fact, all of the Orthodox members of Parliament who voted in favor of this concordat were excommunicated for their actions. Eventually, the government yielded to the SOC and the concordat was vetoed. Some of the government officials who supported the concordat were relieved of their duties (Pavlovich 1989, 232). *The History of the Serbian Orthodox Church* by Paul Pavlovich states:

“The Church had gone even further, demanding a form of compensation to all those who had suffered materially through the crisis, and thus all who had lost their jobs and had been transferred to different positions because of their anti-Concordat stands, were to be redressed in the appropriate manner; the government, for its part, had demanded that the Church annuls its excommunication of the government officials and supporters. As eventually, both sides had agreed to the demands of the other, the path to normal cooperation was closer at hand.” (Pavlovich 1989, 232–233).

On February 21, 1938, Metropolitan Gavriil (Dozhich) of Montenegro and the Littorals was chosen as the next Patriarch of Serbia (Sava 1996, 109). At the election, Metropolitan Anastasii, the First-Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, was present along with Archbishops Germogen and Nestor, as well as some Russian clergy. Metropolitan Anastasii was the first hierarch to congratulate the newly elected Patriarch. On the following day at the official enthronement of Patriarch Gavriil, Metropolitan Anastasii served to the right of the Patriarch, as the eldest Metropolitan, and Archbishops

Germogen and Nestor also served. After the enthronement, there was held a banquet for the newly enthroned Patriarch of Serbia. Metropolitan Anastasii was given the highest honor, sitting directly across from Patriarch Gavriil (“Sbory i intronizatsiia Serbskago Patriarkha,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 3 (1938): 45–47). After toasts were raised by Patriarch Gavriil for the King and the Royal House and by Metropolitan Petr of Dabro-Bosnia for Patriarch Gavriil, Metropolitan Anastasii raised a toast for the new Patriarch:

“With a feeling of deep joy, our Russian Church Abroad also participates in this jubilee and in the joy of the Serbian Orthodox Church, at the same time remembering with thankfulness that love which was shown to her by the Blessed-reposed King Aleksandr and Your successor, the Blessed-reposed Serbian Patriarch Varnava. The Russian Church and the Russian people who use Your hospitality, greet Your stepping onto the throne of Your glorious successors, laid down by Your first Pastor, St. Savva. I am sure that at this moment that joy is shared with us by all the Eastern Patriarchs, who know of Your great accomplishments before the Orthodox Church. I pray to God, that in Your person the Serbian Church will again receive a great and worthy leader, as Your successor was.” (“Sbory i intronizatsiia Serbskago Patriarkha,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 3 (1938): 47–48).

In response to this, the newly elected Patriarch said:

“Very Most-Reverend brother, may I assure you, and I think that with this I express the feelings of all those present, that our Fatherland and its sons feel that you are not different, but that you are brothers and that they will always accept you and in a brotherly manner help you. May our prayers, Very Most-Reverend brother, be brought to the Lord God for the speedy resurrection of the Russian land, people and Church. May the Russian Church and Russian People be healthy.” (“Sbory i intronizatsiia Serbskago Patriarkha,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 3 (1938): 48).

On February 25, 1938, four days after Patriarch Gavriil's election, Metropolitan Anastasii was officially informed by a telegram from Patriarch Gavriil of his "canonical election to the Throne of the Serbian Patriarchs" ("Telegramma Patriarkha Serbskago," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 3 (1938): 1). Metropolitan Anastasii quickly responded to the Patriarch's telegram, acknowledging the Patriarch's canonical election and wishing the Patriarch blessed service to the SOC ("Pis'mo," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 3 (1938): 1). On April 9, 1935, Patriarch Gavriil sent Metropolitan Anastasii a *gramota* in which he writes the following:

"His Holiness and Beatitude in Christ God Our Regularity's most-beloved brother and co-server, the Lord Anastasii, kissing Your Eminence with a brotherly kiss, we heartily greet You. ... According to the old tradition of Sister-Churches and the agreement of our Holy Synod of Bishops, we inform Your Eminence and all the brother Hierarchs with love, as we have already done by telegram, having already received an answer, that We have stepped onto the God-protected Throne of the Serbian Patriarchs with according solemnity by the mercy of God on March 9/22 of this year, 1938, taking all the canonical rights and duties of the Head-Server of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Confessing the true, Holy Orthodox Faith and protecting in inviolability and wholeness the dogmatic teaching and canonical order which is accepted by us, we inform Your Eminence of this and assure You, that the service will go by with the closest relations and cooperation with the other Sister-Churches, in hope that the grace of the Holy Spirit in these difficult days for Orthodoxy will give us strength and strengthen Our ties and the cooperation with all the Sister-Churches to the glory of the most-holy name of God and unto the salvation of the souls of those entrusted to us in our flock.

Asking of brotherly help and prayers from Your Eminence and Your God-entrusted flock for the blessed success of Our works in

the vineyard of the Lord, We pray for the health and long years of Your Eminence, Who has the honor to stand as the Head-Server, and for the great success of the Holy Church, embracing You in the Lord, we remain Your Eminence's devoted brother and co-server in Christ God." ("Gramota," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 4 (1938): 52).

The Participation of the SOC

in the Second All-Diaspora Council of the ROCA

The Second All-Diaspora Council of the ROCA began on August 1/14, 1938 in the city of Sremski Karlovtsi with the blessing of Patriarch Gavriil of Serbia. On the first day of proceedings, Patriarch Gavriil was unable to attend due to illness, but Bishop Serafim of Rashko-Prizren was present in place of the Patriarch. Metropolitan Anastasii asked that Bishop Serafim convey to the Patriarch best wishes for the health of and asked that God would send His grace to help him, the "Rudder of the Serbian Church" (*Deianiia Vtorogo Vsezarubezhnago Sobora Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi za-granitsei* 1939, 25–26). On August 4/17, Patriarch Gavriil replied to the greetings of Metropolitan Anastasii. Bishop Ioann of Shanghai read the greeting of the Patriarch, which read, "With warm prayers to the All-Powerful God for the success and fruitful work of Your Council, for the good and glory of Russia and the Russian People, Holy Orthodoxy and all of Slavdom, we thank You [Metropolitan Anastasii] and all the members of the Council for the greetings and well wishes with all our heart and brotherly love. We send Our Patriarchal blessing". On this day there was also read to the council a telegram from Bishop Veniamin⁴² of Branichevo. The council ended on August 11/24, 1938. The day after the council, all the hierarchs traveled to Oplenats to the graves of all the Serbian Monarchs of the Karadjordjevich Dynasty. When they returned, the bishops were invited to dinner with Patriarch Gavriil

⁴² Bishop Veniamin graduated from the Seminary in Kishinev (Sava 1996, 67).

(*Deianiia Vtorogo Vsezarubezhnago Sobora Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi zagranitse* 1939, 22). At the dinner, the Patriarch related his feelings for the Russians to all the hierarchs, saying:

“With joy I greet you, Most Reverend brothers, pious Russian pastors and all the members of the Russian Church Council who have come from different countries of the world for your Church Council in the city of Sremski Karlovtsi. The Serbian Orthodox Church never thought of you Russians as different from itself, but always acted towards you as to its own brothers; it is only unfortunate that the contemporary conditions do not allow us to show you a more wider form of hospitality. The will of Providence gives tests to peoples, and look, now your pious Russian people is experiencing difficult tests, but we cannot forget that blessed time when great Russia lived in glory and welfare, was focused on Orthodoxy, and Russian Emperors showed themselves to be protectors and defenders of Holy Orthodoxy throughout the world. We are sure that from your trials by fire, Russia will come out cleansed and renewed and once again will fulfill its calling in the world as a protector and defender of Holy Orthodoxy. With these thoughts, we kiss you, Most Reverend brothers, and we give our Patriarchal blessing to all of your contributors – the members of the Russian Church Council.” (“*Rechi Sviateishago Patriarkha Serbskago Gavriila*,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 10 (1938): 161–162).

At a lunch at the Serbian Patriarchate only a few days after the council, Patriarch Gavriil addressed the attendees with the following speech:

“In the difficult and bitter dale in which Russia is experiencing right now, the Russian Church and the Russian People, to whom, according to the words of the Psalmist David, the Lord gave “great and ferocious misfortunes,” they are now dispersed throughout the whole world suffering and carrying the cross of Christ in torments and misfortunes. However, you, according to your arch-pastoral and patriotic duty, try to preserve your flock dispersed

throughout the whole world and help your enslaved Mother-Homeland – Russia. In the time of your difficult, yet God-pleasing and patriotic mission, you with the clergy and people in the emigration have gathered in Yugoslavia for the great Council of the Russian emigration which in these days with God's blessing occurred in complete brotherly unity with bountiful results.

The entire Christian world knows that you lead the difficult, yet royal and upright fight against “the head, the power and the ruler of the darkness of this age,” which in the person of anti-christ rules the great Russian Fatherland. All impartial people of cultured humanity see and recognize that the martyric Russian people now “bear on their body the death of the crucified Lord Jesus Christ” and is worried about the dreadful Golgotha in its own awful dale. The Serbian Orthodox Church in brotherly love with its pious flock, shows its sincere sympathy to you, your souls and hearts, to your woe, your suffering, and prays to God for the deliverance and freedom of the age-old great Slavic Russia. Your Eminence wisely said a few days ago, that the resurrection of Russia will occur in the triumph of the Orthodox Christian Church. We all believe in that. The words of St. Apostle Paul say that suffering with Christ brings forth glory and salvation in Christ. We believe that with its current dreadful Golgotha, new Russia glows forth in her great and royal calling for the welfare of Orthodoxy and Slavism, and to the good of all humanity and to the glory and victory of the Kingdom of God on earth.

With such faith and such feelings, We, in the name of the Holy Serbian Orthodox Church and the brotherly nation, greet you with this frugal brotherly meal and lift up warm prayer to the All-Mighty Creator God, so that He in His immense mercy would quickly change the martyric crown of Russia to the crown of her freedom and her glory and greatness, so that the power of the indestructible righteousness of God would overthrow the foothold of the antichrist-like godlessness and lawlessness and would resurrect Orthodox and nationalistic Russia.

Wearing the garment of Christ's stronghold of faith with prayer in our mouths and patience in our hearts, we lift up to the Lord the Resurrectional Hymn: 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.'" ("Rechi Sviateishago Patriarkha Serbskago Gavriila," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 10 (1938): 162–163).



Fig. 11. The Second Pan Diaspora Council of the ROCA, Sremski Karlovtsi, 1938
(source: ROCOR Studies / <https://www.rocorstudies.org/>)

Other General Relations During Patriarch Gavriil's Time until 1941

The SOC constantly remained in close contact with the ROCA even during Patriarch Gavriil's time. For example, when Metropolitan Anastasii went to Berlin in 1938 to consecrate the cathedral there, Patriarch Gavriil sent his representatives, Archimandrite Vladimir (Raich) and the dean of the Church of St. Sava in Vienna, Archpriest Milevoi Oranitskii ("Novyi Berlin-skii Kafedral'nyi Sobor," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 5–6 (1938): 94).

Also, Patriarch Gavriil would also always remember Metropolitan Anastasii along with his flock during the Paschal and Nativity times of year, ending each letter as Metropolitan Anastasii's "brother and co-server in Christ" ("Paskhal'nyia Privetstviia," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 4 (1939): 49; "Rozhdestvenskiia Privetstviia," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 1 (1940): 1; "Paskhal'nyia Privetstviia," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 5 (1940): 65; "Rozhdestvenskiia Privetstviia," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 1 (1941): 1). In his New Year Epistle in 1940, Patriarch Gavriil asked the Serbian People to pray "to the All-Merciful God with warm prayers for the great Slavic land of Russia and for the brotherly Russian people so that He would grant the resurrection of freedom and return peace and goodwill to it." He continues: "We warmly and sincerely pray for all of its [Russia's] people who are tormented and suffer on the account of the fierceness and mercilessness of the present time" ("V inykh pomestnykh Tserkvakh," *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, No. 3 (1940): 6). The Patriarch also helped the Russian émigrés financially. In 1939 on Pascha, Patriarch Gavriil gave Metropolitan Anastasii 5,000 dinars for the help of the needy Russian émigrés in Belgrade ("Dar Sviateishago Patriarkha Serbskago," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 4 (1939): 60). He would also send his greetings on major events in the life of the ROCA. For example, he sent a *gramota* to Metropolitan Anastasii for Protopresbyter Sergii Orlov's anniversary of 50 years of service to the Church, even sending 3,000 dinars to Fr. Sergii for the feast which was to be prepared for his jubilee ("Gramota," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 2 (1941): 17).

The ROCA hierarchy also participated in major events of the SOC. On May 10, 1939, Patriarch Gavriil blessed the foundation for the new cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade. At the blessing, Metropolitan Anastasii and Archbishops Germogen and Feofan participated in the celebrations as representatives of the "Holy Russian Church" ("Torzhestvo Serbskoi Tserkvi," *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, No. 5 (1939): 75). At the meal following the services, Archbishop Germogen spoke on behalf of the ROCA, Patriarch Gavriil having already greeted and thanked the ROCA hierarchy for their participation in the festivities ("Torzhestvo Serbskoi Tserk-

vi,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 5 (1939): 76). On the feast of Christ’s Nativity in 1940, Metropolitan Anastasii visited Patriarch Gavriil, greeting him with the feast, and on the following day, Patriarch Gavriil along with Bishops Damaskin and Dionisii visited Metropolitan Anastasii (“Poseshchenie Sviateishim Gavriilom Patriarkhom Serbskim, Vysokopreosviashchenneishago Mitropolita Anastasiia,” *Tserkovnaia Zhizn’*, No. 1 (1940): 14).

At the beginning of 1941, there was an incident that occurred between the SOC and the ROCA. The Serbian Bishop Gorazd of the Czech-Moravian Diocese allegedly asked Archbishop Serafim (Liade) of Berlin and Germany (ROCA) to accept under his jurisdiction the Czech-Moravian Diocese (Shkarovskii 2002, 251). However, in a letter from January 23/February 5, 1941, written by Bishop Nektarije of Zvornik and Tuzla on behalf of Patriarch Gavriil, it is evident that the SOC believed that Archbishop Serafim was working with the Nazis⁴³ and putting pressure on Bishop Gorazd to turn over his diocese to Archbishop Serafim, thus leaving the jurisdiction of the SOC (GARF. Nektarije, Bishop of Zvornich-Tuzla. [Letter to Metropolitan Anastasii.] January 23/February 5, 1941. SOC File). Although the letter of Metropolitan Anastasii to Archbishop Serafim was not retrieved, Archbishop Serafim’s response is clear evidence that Metropolitan Anastasii wrote to him about the matter. In his letter, Archbishop Serafim denied the accusation of the SOC and claimed that someone was spreading lies to the hierarchy of the SOC in order to create bad relations between the SOC and the ROCA (GARF. Seraphim, Archbishop of Berlin and Germany. [Letter to Metropolitan Anastasii.] February 14/27, 1941. SOC File). Interestingly enough, on October 7, 1941, Archbishop Serafim came to Prague and left Bishop Gorazd with an act stating that Archbishop Serafim was taking the Czech and Slovakian Dioceses under his protection until the end of the war (Sava 1996, 137). Unfortunately, the exact occurrences of the in-

⁴³ This was most likely believed because Archbishop Serafim was the only Orthodox bishop in Germany that was accepted by the Nazis, he being a German himself.

cidents are unknown and seem to have been left alone by both the SOC and ROCA due to the difficult situation that existed in Czechoslovakia because of the Nazi occupation.

Part VI: Conclusion

This research has made clear a general understanding of the relationship of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad between 1920 and 1941. Overall, the relationship was outstanding. The Serbian Church, through the persons of its leaders, constantly showed its support to the Russian Church Abroad.

Patriarch Dimitrii went out of his way many times in order to defend and protect the Russian Church. He put himself on the line in order to protect and preserve the Russian Church. Even though his own situation in Yugoslavia was unstable, he took in and defended the Russian émigrés. He welcomed the great hierarch of the Church, Metropolitan Antonii. Perhaps he did so not simply for the good of Metropolitan Antonii and the Russian émigrés, but also for the good of the Serbian Church.

The actions of Patriarch Varnava can be seen as an example of some of the greatest Christian love. He endlessly defended the Russian Church and attempted to keep peace within it. It is obvious that his greatest concern was for the Russian Church to have no divisions. In everything he did, he tried to unite the divided parts and keep a Eucharistic union between all who were under the protection of the Russian Saints and Church. Nevertheless, one has to consider that nationalism has the ability to turn against people who do not belong to the same particular tribe. In the case of Patriarch Varnava, it is also noteworthy that besides having a high ideal of the Russian people, he shared a conspiracy theory with them, as can be seen from his speeches, and thus most sympathized with the right-sided contemporary political movements in Europe.

Regardless of political issues, Patriarch Varnava knew that the only path to salvation was that of a spiritual communion with God, as is upheld by the fathers of the Church, old and

new. Perhaps the great Russian Theologian Saint Theophan the Recluse says it best in his book *The Path to Salvation*: “The essence of Christian life consists in communion with God, in Christ Jesus our Lord—in a communion with God which in the beginning is usually hidden not only from others, but also from oneself” (St. Theophan 1998, 27). I believe that Patriarch Varnava lived by these words and deeply believed in them, that for this reason, he forced himself to be the guiding light of the Russian Churches so that they would be in communion with God, and thus be in communion with each other. According to the actions that he took for unification of the churches, it may be said that he followed this logic: “If we believe that we are in communion with God through the Holy Mysteries and believe that all the Russian Churches are in communion with God through the Holy Mysteries, who are we to say that we are good enough for Christ but not good enough for each other.” It is certain that his personal ties to Metropolitans Antonii and Sergii were great and that he had a strong love and respect for both. It is evident in all of his letters to both of the hierarchs, as well as in their replies to him. This may also be why he struggled so diligently in order to mediate between the Russian Churches. And that which was decided by Patriarch Varnava, Metropolitans Antonii, Evlogii, Feofil and Anastasii and Bishop Dimitrii in 1935 must be stressed: “The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, composed of dioceses, spiritual missions and churches finding themselves outside the borders of Russia, is an inseparable part of the Russian Orthodox Church, temporarily existing on autonomous principles” (Rodzianko 1975, 34). It seems as if this is forgotten by many people. Regardless of opinions, this is the ecclesiology of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

Patriarch Gavriil also made sure to comfort the Russian hierarchy, knowing that the émigrés were in need, even though by the time he was made Patriarch, the Russians had already been in Yugoslavia for about 18 years, and had already become a normal part of Serbian life. Thus, he did not call them guests, but rather brothers, constantly making sure of their comfort.

But, based on the research that has been done, what can we say really kept the churches together for such a long time? The answer is simply love. The love of Christ that abided formed the Serbian Patriarchs and the First-Hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad into the persons they were. They completely lived by Christ's teachings and example – evangelically. If they had not lived by Christ, the relationship would have been so brutal, that neither side would have been able to bear one another's burdens. Another attribute to the Christian love was the love of Slavdom – the idea and belief that all the Slavic nations needed to be united spiritually in Christ in order to overcome the darkness of this world, the darkness of Marxism, atheism, and communism. St. Nikolai of Zhicha (Velimirovich) writes that Marxism did away with free-will and Darwinism killed the image of God in man; Communism united the two concepts together. This deep understanding of what defines the atheistic Bolshevik rule is what the Russian Church Abroad fled. Patriarchs Dimitrii, Varnava, and Gavriil understood this concept, and along with Metropolitans Antonii and Anastasii and the hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad, undertook a great task: to keep Orthodoxy free of the filth of this world and from the spirit of anti-christ which led Russia to its fall.

Summing up, the Serbian and Russian Churches had a common interest throughout their coexistence. This interest was Orthodoxy. This unifying concept provided a path for harmony between the two churches so that the glory of God would shine forth from them and that the main goal of the Church of Christ would be fulfilled – to save souls. Having united, the Churches were able to accomplish this goal and be as one unit, serving God and His Holy Church. Regardless of the misunderstandings that exist in contemporary Orthodoxy, one must realize that the goal is the same today as it was then and it must remain this until the end of time.

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