Marko Nikolić
Duško Dimitrijević[1]
Institute of International Politics and Economics
Belgrade

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"MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (MOC)" IN FORMER YUGOSLAV STATE

Abstract

After World War II, multi-religious and multi-national socialist Yugoslavia faced the need to resolve the complex national issue or actually to bring it into accord and make closer to the internal, but also to the international goals and interests of the Yugoslav state. Its atheistic-secularist nature basically conditioned its relationship to the religious communities in the state, whose "potentials" should be controlled, directed and used in a desirable way. The state, actually, supported the secular (non-church) principle by which every nation should have its own Church, striving in time directly, consistently and firmly to exert influence on its application in practice as such. Taking such activities, it disregarded the church reasons and needs, what particularly made a negative impact on the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). The Roman Catholic Church (RCC), as the second church (religious) community in the country by the number of its believers, recognised that its interests coincided with such endeavours and activities of the state. It discretely supported the political process of gaining of "autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church" (MOC).

Key words*:* Yugoslav State, atheism, Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC), "Macedonian Orthodox Church" (MOC), Roman Catholic Church (RCC).

Introduction

The gradual, but deep relativisation of moral and social values in former Yugoslavia (FPRY and SFRY) logically resulted from its secularist-atheistic nature, the attempts to revise the painful historical facts and the unprincipled position of the state to its religious communities. The direct "management" of the state even in the religious field in time had shaped the social assumptions in such a way that after the break-up of the state and its ideological system they led to the open

1 E-mail: markon@diplomacy.bg.ac.rs, dimitrijevicd@diplomacy.bg.ac.rs.

social and war conflict.[2] *De facto*, communist Yugoslavia discredited in public and marginalised the social position and influence of the religious communities, its representatives and believers in the name of ideology. In its acting, it only looked out for its own interests behaving in a manipulative way and neglecting the basic ecclesiological and pastoral reasons and needs of the religious communities. In that sense, the state pursued a repressive policy that in time gained most varied manifestation forms (tacit neglect of the obligations it had taken, threats and blackmailing, pressures and impelling to the establishment of co-operation, murders). It had not changed basically and conceptually until the final collapse of former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Actually, all the time it strove towards taking control over the activities of the religious communities and of aiming their acting in the direction that suited it. The state considered the religious communities a significant instrument of influence, shaping and resolving of the national issue in its territory.

Within the environment of aggressive secularism, in both science and socio-political fields, and within the context of establishing and promoting *Political Sciences of Religion* or *Politology of Religion* as a separate field of study within the political science,[3] this enquiry attempts to shed some light on complex and persisting relationship issues, and influence and contribution of atheist communist Yugoslav state to the process of "gaining of independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and her removal from the body of the Serbian Orthodox Church", starting from ideological, national and political reasons and interests.

The relationship of the state to religious communities

In spite of the Law on Religious Communities that had formally treated them equally the Yugoslav state took an unprincipled position not treating all religious communities equally. In that regard, the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) had especially negative experiences, which for this fact was in a rather unenviable social position. The state mostly neglected its vital needs and interests striving to influence "inside" the relationships within SOC, especially through the established Priest Associations as the main instrument for separating the church "leadership from the common people" with the aim of strengthening its ideological influence. On the other hand, in spite of very difficult personnel and financial conditions under which it had existed and acted after World War II, assuming Christian ideals, pastoral needs and the vision of social peace and co-existence SOC took a clear co-operative position to the state. This resulted from its con-

2 Николић Марко, *Екуменски односи Српске православне и Римокатоличке цркве од 1962-2000. године*, Службени гласник, Београд, 2011, стр. 646.

3 Wider to be considered and consulted in: Мирољуб Јевтић, *Религија и политика увод у политикологију религије* (*Religion and Politics Introduction into Political sciences of religion*), Институт за политичке студије, Факултет политичких наука, Београд, 2002; and Miroljub Jevtic, Political Science and Religion, *Politics and Religion Journal,* Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007.

scious determination, but also from the rather repressive policy of the state. The first misunderstandings and differences in their mutual relations resulted from the political decision of the state leadership to proclaim "the Macedonian Orthodox Church" (MOC) autocephalous in July 1967 as well as from neglecting of some requirements that were of vital importance for SOC (not making possible building of the Saint Sava Church at Vračar for many decades, tacit disregard of the pressures and unlawful acts against SOC in Croatia and Kosovo and Metohija). In spite of that, SOC served as an example to all other religious communities in Yugoslavia how to regulate their relationships with the state. It tolerantly accepted its difficult position for the purpose of establishing co-operation with the state that would serve to achieve the vision of general social well-being. On the other hand, e.g., at first, representatives of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) in the country had taken an opposed and conflicting position to the state justifying it by the need to criticise its atheistic and ideological nature. In that period, they also faced with a very repressive policy of the state. However, after the initiative from the Vatican in the late 1960s and in the mid-1970s, which accepted the then state and political leadership the two factors conducted a more intensive dialogue arranging their mutual relations and finally establishing concealed cooperation, which in time implied making more and more concessions to RCC. For example, in the mid-1970s the Yugoslav state enabled the Vatican to totally independently from it make decisions on some church issues, which even had to do with the state sovereignty. In this way, the state gave up the principles of the policy it had applied until then to the religious communities. One can recognise in this a compromise that was made and in some sense a kind of "religious and practical partnership". In the similar case, for instance, the state acted in a different way when the Greek Church opposed to gaining of autocephaly by MOC, since it treated it as a matter of internal policy.

State influence and support to MOC

The religious conditions in Macedonia during the 1960s were characterised above all, by the attempt to make schism within SOC, which was mostly caused by the Yugoslav state leadership. Taking as a starting point the national criterion it initiated the question of "making MOC independent" being quite aware of the fact that SOC could not accept it.[4] The presence of the state could particularly be noticed during the Church-Public Meeting in Ohrid in October 1958. Then, it had been decided to restore the Ohrid Archdiocese and autonomy of the "Macedonian Orthodox Church" (MOC). The Synod of SOC agreed with such a decision in May 1959 since "MOC has retained unity in canon law with

4 „Однос између Српске и Македонске Цркве Кратак историјски преглед", Информације Савезне комисије за верска питања, СИВ, 22. март 1966, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 100, архивска јединица 639.

SOC recognising Serbian Patriarch German as its own".[5] It is of vital importance to mention that SOC, assuming the church principle of "iconomy" (indulgence based on "love"), agreed with the mentioned "autonomy", although it was not fully in accordance with the canon law criteria.[6] From this historical distance, it can be said that the political factor abused its principally well-intentioned, tolerant and pluralist position, what was not an excuse for SOC itself to be partly responsible for its own naiveness. Some theologians would say that it logically resulted from the deviation from purely theological postulates. Metropolitan of Dabro-Bosnia Nektarije pointed out that the autonomy of "MOC is an internal matter", while the question of its autocephaly goes beyond state borders and requires the agreement of other Orthodox churches.[7] He alluded to the pressure made by the Yugoslav state. Metropolitan of Zagreb-Ljubljana made clear that SOC "has always kept in mind the development of brotherhood and unity of our peoples" taking this into account also when the decision was made in 1959, while "MOC" did not respect those principles. Like Metropolitan of Montenegro-Primorje Danilo, he was of the opinion that "MOC should openly say what it wants and not to make its Constitution even six times".[8] Within SOC, an opinion prevailed that it should meet the nature and interests of the political system, by which it obviously expected reciprocity. Bishop of Žiča Vasilije pointed out that when he had talked to Macedonian Metropolitan Dositej he had an impression that "MOC does not want to keep the unity with SOC", while Bishop of Zahum-Herzegovina Vladislav believed that "MOC behaves like an autocephalous church" asking that other Orthodox churches should be informed about that by sending a "peace letter".[9] Bishop of Braničevo Hrizostom remarked that "the autonomy of MOC" was accepted by the decision of the Synod of SOC, while Patriarch German tried to observe this problem through the prism of "good relations" with the Greek Church and Constantinople Patriarchate, which should not be endangered for this problem. As the representatives of the Yugoslav government confirmed he pointed out that most of the Serbian Bishops were willing to agree that "MOC" should gain autocephaly, by which, after this, it should "not have anything in common with SOC".[10] The credibility of this statement should be considered with reserve, especially keeping in mind the fact that this affected "the interests of the state".[11] It is important to stress that then President of the Federal Commis-

5 „Забелешка о разговору председника Мораче са члановима Архијерејског Сабора СПЦ", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 208/66, 20. мај 1966, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 95, 1966, стр. 3.

6 *Ibidem*.

7 *Ibidem*.

8 *Ibidem*

9 *Ibidem*, стр. 4.

10 *Ibidem*.

11 *Ibidem*.

sion for Religious Issues Milutin Morača made attempts to convince the Serbian Bishops that the state would not permit "MOC to go over to any other Church" pointing that SOC should above all, focus on the problem of "expansion of RCC in the areas where SOC has been dominant".[12] One can also see here that the attention of SOC should be focused on another problem recognising its principally manipulative approach to SOC. By all this, it should be pointed to the fact that the representatives of the state made pressure on the Synod of SOC to make a decision recognising that "MOC" had brought into accord its Constitution with the recommendations adopted by the Synod of SOC in 1959. Some Serbian Bishops opposed to this considering it a "precedent".[13]

In May 1966, the Synod of SOC stated that "the Synod of MOC has accepted the recommendations of the Synod of SOC from June 1959 and has brought into accord its Constitution" with them, by which "MOC has made arrangements concerning its organisation keeping unity with SOC through the Serbian Patriarch.[14] In this way, in practice, the Patriarch remained the only connection between SOC and "MOC". It is of special importance to point out that the principle that "MOC" could not change its Constitution without an agreement of the Synod of SOC had been affirmed and accepted by both parts.[15] However, immediately after that the Synod of "MOC" expressed its discontent with the fact that its demand for autocephaly was rejected".[16] The Yugoslav state acted this time in an unprincipled way emphasising that SOC was "forced" to make such a decision so to not to "cause separation" recognising also that "MOC got its national Church gaining almost fully independence", which was reflected in "all autocephalous rights" of the Macedonian Metropolitan and the Synod of MOC, which were limited by Patriarch German as the supreme head of both churches.[17] It temporarily respected the canon law fact, since SOC, as the mother church was "the only one authorised to grant autocephaly to MOC" as well as that all other Orthodox churches should agree with that. However, as early as in the second half of 1966 in the talks with Patriarch German the Yugoslav state kept on insisting on the "Macedonian reality" by which "SOC and MOC have nothing in common" emphasising "the fact" that SOC "would lose nothing" by granting autocephaly to "MOC".[18] Patriarch German and Bishop of Šabac-Valjevo Jovan pointed to the authorities that the Synod of SOC would and could not agree with the autocephaly

12 *Ibidem*, стр. 5.

13 „Информација о раду редовног заседања Архијерејског сабора СПЦ од 11. до 23. маја 1966. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 261/1, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 95, 1966, стр. 3.

14 *Ibidem*.

15 *Ibidem*.

16 *Ibidem*.

17 *Ibidem*.

18 *Ibidem*.

of MOC persisting that "the autonomy of MOC" was the only acceptable solution, which was also in "the interest of ecumenism" that strove to bringing churches close together and not to their "separation".[19] The authorities were, however, persistent in their position that "MOC has the right to make this demand because it had its clergy, language and the national characteristic, by which the "hard" position of SOC "only harms its reputation in the Orthodox world".[20] As for the negative reactions of the Greek Church concerning the autocephaly of "MOC", the authorities pointed out that "nobody has the right to interfere in church affairs off the religious communities in the country".[21] They obviously kept this right for themselves, disregarding the church reasons. On the other hand, in comparison with such acting of the state, the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church was gradually enabled to take interdependently from the state some decisions concerning appointments of higher clergy. In this way, in practice, the state abandoned the legal principles of the Law on Religious Communities that had been implemented in the country until then.

On 8 November 1966, at the celebration of the October Revolution in the Soviet Embassy in Belgrade Patriarch German met with Macedonian Metropolitan Dositej who was in white "gown."[22] He wished to leave the celebration but did not do this because he did not want "to make any incidents".[23] This event also proves great tolerance shown by SOC. However, the Patriarch "reproached the Russians" for inviting Metropolitan Dositej at the reception because he was not head of an autocephalous church, and especially because the invitation was not sent through the Serbian Patriarchate.[24] It was on this occasion too, that the representative of the Yugoslav authorities persistently asserted that "MOC" should be granted autocephaly suggesting to Patriarch German to do so in order to prevent convening of the Synod of "MOC and unilateral proclamation of its autocephaly".[25] The Patriarch asked for not taking any hasty decision that would make SOC initiate a church-disciplinary action against MOC and inform about all this other Orthodox churches. He stressed that "the separation was neither suitable for the Church nor for the state". By all this, he characterised "the autonomy of MOC" as appropriate and justified, pointing out that the issue of au-

19 „Забелешка о разговору са Патријархом Германом", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 379, 26. октобар 1966. године, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 95, 1966.

20 „Забелешка о разговору Петра Шегвића са епископом шабачко–ваљевским Јованом", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 390/66, 5. новембар 1966, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 95, 1966, стр. 2.

21 *Ibidem*.

22 White gown is worn only by head of a church.

23 „Забелешка о разговору Петра Шегвића са Патријархом Германом", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 421/66, 17. новембар 1966, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 97, 1966, стр. 1.

24 *Ibidem*.

25 *Ibidem*, стр. 2.

tocephaly is "the one only the church should deal with".[26] He took the same position in early 1967.[27] It can be concluded that Patriarch German believed that all factors in the whole process could in time become willing to respect the canon law norms of the Orthodox Church and that this was an open, tolerant and compromise approach. The alternative is the assumption that he was forced to do that. One should also know that the representatives of the republic authorities in Croatia principally supported their Macedonian colleagues in their demand for autocephaly of "MOC" taking into consideration only some possible political consequences that could be caused by the schism between SOC and "MOC".[28] Within this context, in 1967, President of the Federal Executive Council (FIC) Petar Stambolić stressed that SOC should, like RCC, "adjust" to the contemporary social trends, what would in this case mean "taking a more flexible position to MOC".[29] From the present aspect, his position looks outrageous when he said that the Yugoslav state "did not interfere in the dispute that was harmful for both Churches" as well as that FIC "could not influence" the political leadership of Macedonia in this matter.[30] It should be qualified as hypocritical.

Although the Synod of SOC had rejected the demand for autocephaly of "MOC" at its meeting which took place on 23 May 1967, at the new Church-Public Meeting in Macedonia it was unilaterally proclaimed as early as from 17-19 July 1967.[31] Patriarch German explained that SOC had to reject the demand of "MOC" since conditions provided by the canon law were not fulfilled for gaining of its autocephaly. For this reason, the Synod of SOC would pronounce it a schismatic church.[32] Regardless of the unambiguous and irrefutable church-canon law arguments, President of the Commission for Religious Issues of FIC responded that the "demand of MOC was justified" emphasising that the whole issue was not only a church but a political one with significant implications for the national relations in the country.[33] The positions taken by Bishops of SOC in the newly-created situation differed not only methodologically but substantially,

26 *Ibidem*, стр. 2.

27 Белешке из разговора председника СИВ Петра Стамболића са Патријархом Германом и члановима Синода СПЦ, Митрополитом црногорско–приморским Данилом и Епископом далматинским Стефаном", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 120/67, 7. март 1967, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 103, 1967.

28 „Записник са седнице Комисије Хрватске 22. децембра 1966. године", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–219/1–1966, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 102, архивска јединица 655, 1967.

29 „Белешке из разговора председника СИВ Петра Стамболића са Патријархом Германом и члановима Синода СПЦ, Митрополитом црногорско–приморским Данилом и Епископом далматинским Стефаном", *ibidem*.

30 *Ibidem*, стр. 5.

31 „Забелешка председника Савезне комисије за верска питања Мила Јовићевића", СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 299/67, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967.

32 *Ibidem*.

33 „Забелешка о разговору председника Савезне комисије за верска питања са Патријархом Германом, Митрополитом црногорско-приморским Данилом и Епископом сремским Макаријем", 1. јул 1967, СИВ, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967.

too. Bishop of Šumadija Valerijan thought that SOC should act "tolerantly" and that its Synod would not make a decision on "canon law dismissal" of its schismatic part in Macedonia. Bishop of Braničevo Hrizostom, who was characterised as the "most progressive" by the authorities was of the opinion that the Synod of SOC would support the decision of "MOC", while Bishops of Žiča Vasilije and of Timok Emilijan, respectively, together with Patriarch German remained consistent in their position that was taken by SOC.[34] Also, Bishop of Raška-Prizren Pavle and Bishop of Srem Makarije were "resolutely against granting of autocephaly to MOC".[35] Bishop of Niš Jovan believed that in spite of the unilateral decision of "MOC", schism would probably not occur, while Bishop of Šabac-Valjevo Jovan pointed out that "MOC" should wait for "a better moment" after the appointment of the Greek Archbishop.[36] Bishop of Banat Visarion inclined to recognising autocephaly of MOC, emphasising that no one could expect from the Synod of SOC to do such a thing. Bishop of Bačka Nikanor was indeterminate and uncertain taking a similar position.[37] Patriarch German remained resolute that SOC "must respect the canon law" pointing out that if "MOC" proclaimed autocephaly by itself this could lead to "a religious war".[38] He proposed that the whole problem should be resolved by the highest representatives of the two churches, stressing that when the state interfered in church affairs "the church ceases to be a church".[39] President Jovićević responded that in that case "this was not the question of interference but of co-operation".[40] It was obvious that the autonomy of MOC was the maximum concession SOC remained willing to give, by which such a position had its strongpoint in church and canon law reasons and arguments. On the other hand, the Yugoslav state remained persistent in its formally "partnership" relationship with SOC, which was actually hypocritical and hostile.

In late August 1967, Patriarch German repeated to the President of FIC Mika Špiljak that according to the canon law no Orthodox church could recognise the church that had seceded as an autocephalous unless "the mother Church agrees with that".[41] Before the meeting of the Extraordinary Synod of SOC in 1967 Bishop Emilijan, together with Bishops Valerijan and Nikanor, respectively, man-

34 „Информација о разговорима са Епископима СПЦ обављеним пред заседање Сабора по питању односа између СПЦ и МПЦ", Републичка комисија за верска питања Србије, СИВ, строго поверљиво, бр. 10, 26. мај 1967, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967.

35 *Ibidem*.

36 *Ibidem*.

37 *Ibidem*.

38 „Забелешка о разговору председника СКВП Јовићевића са патријархом Германом", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 257, Београд, 10. јун 1967, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967.

39 *Ibidem*.

40 *Ibidem*.

41 „Забелешка о разговору председника СИВ Мике Шпиљка са Патријархом Германом", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 318/67, 29. август 1967, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967, тр. 3.

aged to persuade most bishops of SOC to take a "moderate" decision, unlike Bishops of Žiča Vasilije and of Dalmacija Boca, who advocated the idea that bishops of "MOC" should be striped of their ranks and that MOC should be proclaimed a schismatic church.[42] "A moderate decision" was supported by Bishops of Slavonija Simeon, of Braničevo Hrizostom, of Raška-Prizren Pavle, of Zvornik-Tuzla Longin, respectively, and Metropolitan of Dobro-Bosnia Vladislav, who made a "sketch" that was adopted by the Synod of SOC. [43] On that occasion Bishop Boca pointed to the "interference of the state in this matter" and to the committed "error" since "in a state, there can exist only one autocephalous church." He confirmed that "for the time being" SOC had made a decision "not to deteriorate the existing situation" taking into consideration the interests of the state as well.[44] On this occasion too, the Serbian Orthodox Church remained consistent in its position that with its spirit of reconciliation it would make the state change the course and accept a compromise. At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Synod of SOC that took place on 14 and 15 September 1967 the bishops agreed "that MOC arbitrary and in a way which was not in accordance with the canon law seceded from its Mother Church turning into a schismatic organisation." For this reason, it was decided "to cease religious and canon law communication" with its clergy authorising the Synod of SOC to "bring charges against those guilty for the schism".[45] It is important to emphasise that on this occasion it was decided that SOC "would not cease communication with the faithful people from Macedonia" and that students from this Republic could keep on enrolling at the Faculty of Theology of SOC.[46] After the Synod of SOC had submitted a report the Synod of the Greek Church very severely condemned "the act of proclaiming autocephaly of MOC", after which on 19 March 1968 the Synod of SOC made a decision to initiate a church-disciplinary actions against the highest representatives of "MOC". Bishop of Žiča Vasilije was appointed the prosecutor.[47] Since it had no other choice SOC decided to take disciplinary measures considering high church representatives

42 „Забелешка о разговору Ивана Лазића са епсикопом пакрачким Емилијаном Мариновићем", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–61/1–1968, 9. мај 1968, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968.

43 *Ibidem*.

44 „Забелешка о разговору са епископом шибенским Боцом на дан 14. јула 1968. године", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–197/1–1968, 25. септембар 1968, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 112, 1968, стр. 2.

45 „Одлука Архијерејског Сабора СПЦ по питању проглашења аутокефалности МПЦ од 15. септембра 1967. године, Патријарх српски Герман Савезној верској комисији", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 335/67, 19. септембар 1967, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 104, 1967.

46 *Ibidem*.

47 ДСИП, Амбасада у Атини, поверљиво, бр. 527, 15. септембар 1967. године, Београд и „Информација о телефонском разговору проте Веселина Петровића из Новог Сада са председником Комисије Србије Гуцуња Костом", Републичка комисија за верска питања Србије, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 148, 8. април 1968, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968.

in Macedonia schismatics and not believers. The position of the Greek Church exerted a great influence on taking such a position. The lower clergy of SOC from the diocese of Dalmacija and Slavonija thought that the Orthodox Church should not be "divided" at the time when Christian churches promoted "ecumenism and unity". They were of the opinion that the bishops of "MOC" should be striped of their ranks.[48] It is particularly important to point to the statement made by Patriarch German during his talks with high official in Serbia Đurica Jojkić in May 1968 – "I wish to die, you don't understand that you are doing injustice to us". Jojkić responded that "the autocephaly of MOC is unavoidable and the matter is closed".[49] The Patriarch stressed that he would "do his best to avoid the worst" keeping in mind "striping of rank of Bishop Dionisije" "for which even now he suffers and regrets".[50] It seems that till the end the Patriarch believed that the position of the authorities in this case could be changed.

Trying to find a solution in January 1969 Bishops of Srem Makarije and of Banat Nikanor, respectively, visited "MOC" on behalf of the Synod of SOC. However, after that meeting the two parties retained their positions. Makarije confirmed that in that regard SOC had not other choice stressing that the Patriarchs of other Orthodox churches as well Pope Paul VI "suggested that MOC should go back under the wing of SOC".[51] This confirms again that the main to be blame for the schism was the Yugoslav state, while the Vatican acted in two directions and in a diplomatic way. In mid-1969 all bishops of SOC in Croatia openly expressed the opinion that the autocephaly of "MOC" had resulted from personal ambitions of some bishops and the interference of the political leadership, after which "they were advised not to intensify the matter".[52] It was obvious that the pressure of the

48 „Забелешка о разговору Недић Илије са свештеницима далматинске епархије Антонијем Пинчетићем, архијерејским намесником, и Стеваном Мрђеном, свештеником из Книна, Јаковом Мандићем, председником епархијског удружења из Ђеврске, Ратком Добротом, свештеником из Шибеника, Павлом Козлицом, игуманом из манастира Крупе, и Петром Олујицом, свештеником из Врлике", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–104/1–68, 24. април 1968, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968; и „Забелешка о разговорима Илије Недића са православним свештеницима Јованом Балићем из Нове Градишке, Жарком Касићем из Славонског Брода, Душаном Јеловцем из Винковаца, Петром Самарџијом из Осијека и Стеваном Новаковићем из Вуковара", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–105/1–1968, 24. април 1968, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968.

49 „Забелешка о разговору председника ИВ Србије Ђурице Јојкића са Патријархом Германом 3. маја 1968. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 192, 28. мај 1968, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968, стр. 8.

50 „Забелешка о разговору председника ИВ Србије Ђурице Јојкића са Патријархом Германом 3. маја 1968. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 192, 28. мај 1968, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 110, 1968, стр. 8.

51 „Забелешка о разговору Мила Јовићевића са Патријархом Германом на дан 5. фебруара 1970. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 29/70, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 124, 1970.

52 „Забелешка о разговору Златка Фрида са загребачким митрополитом Дамаскином, и епископима славонским Емилијаном, горњокарловачким Симеоном и далматинским Стефаном на дан 12. август 1969. године", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 08–145/1–1969, 22. август 1969, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 119, стр. 2.

state had kept on being made.

In the early 1970s, after Metropolitan Dositej had been removed from the position of head of "MOC"[53] Patriarch German asked the representatives of the authorities why this had happened against his own will.[54] On that occasion, he pointed to Jovićević that the Metropolitan had obviously realised that no Orthodox church in the world could obviously recognise "MOC" as an autocephalous. For this reason, he advocated the revision of the earlier decision and "searching for an agreement" with SOC.[55] Jovićević responded that "the Synod of MOC made such a decision since Dositej was ill for a long time".[56] It was obvious that it was only the Yugoslav state that at that moment was not willing to make a compromise refusing to abandon its "secular-national" goal directed towards fragmentation of the organism of SOC. It is important to stress that after all, Constantinople Patriarch Atinagora sent a letter to Patriarch German condemning the arbitrary action of "MOC" by which SOC was openly supported also by the Greek and Alexandria Churches.[57] Orthodox Churches logically remained consistent in the common defence of its canon law order.

The Position of Vatican and Roman Catholic Church (RCC)

The Vatican was undoubtedly informed of the intentions and political initiative of the Yugoslav state concerning granting of "autocephaly to MOC", in which it objectively had its strategic interest. During the Council, Bishop of Skopje Čekada pointed out that RCC had a "will" for the unification of the two church, promoting, of course, "the leading role" of RCC in that process.[58] He saw the biggest obstacle in Orthodox churches in socialist countries as "tools in the hands of regimes".[59] He advocated the well-known position of RCC by which "athemisation and etatisation" of Orthodox churches made impossible bringing them closer to RCC. However, at this point of analysis it is interesting to note that the influence of atheistic states on Orthodox churches was practically becoming

53 Patriarch German pointed out that "he was sent for medical treatment against his will". In private talks, we found out that after all this, Metropolitan Dositej was willing to "repent" and go back under the wing of SOC, but the authorities obviously did not allow this.

54 54„Забелешка о разговору Мила јовићевића са Патријархом Германом на дан 28. април 1971. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 60/71, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 132, 1971, стр. 4.

55 *Ibidem*.

56 *Ibidem*, стр. 2.

57 „Депеше о посети Патријарха Атинагоре", Савезна комисија за верска питања, председник Мило Јовићевић, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 387, 27. октобар 1967, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 105, 1967, стр. 3; и „Забелешка Радосава Петровића о ручку који је Патријарх Герман приредио у част Александријског патријарха Николаоса у Патријаршији", Савезна комисија за верска питања, поверљиво, бр. 171/69, 9. мај 1969, Београд, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 118.

58 „О контактима између бискупа и епископа у земљи и курсу који води Римокатоличка црква према СПЦ", *ibidem*, стр. 19.

59 *Ibidem*.

more and more identical with the interests of RCC.

Bishop of RCC Čekada met with Metropolitan of Skopje Dositej Stojković at the end of the Second Vatican Council in Rome (1962-65). Čekada expected him to visit him first after his installation since Čekada had been established in Skopje for 18 years.[60] He thought that they should not meet in public as well as that "social norms and nice behaviour" should be respected.[61] However, when it was obvious that Metropolitan Dositej would be the main figure in the initiated schism within SOC Bishop Čekada was the one that visited him first on Orthodox Christmas on 7 January 1965. He informed him of the decisions adopted by the Council pleading, among other things, for stricter discipline in fasting and within RCC.[62] In this way, it seemed as if he promoted the denominators in the relations between the two churches supporting indirectly, but on this occasion even openly Metropolitan Dositej. The Metropolitan responded that with building of a Roman Catholic and Orthodox Church in Skopje "ecumenism would be attained".[63] This example points to the attempt of building of agreement and co-operation. When he met Bishop Čekada and Secretary General of "Caritas" Bauer Metropolitan Dositej received money assistance from RCC from Trieste for the "Macedonian Orthodox Church" with a photo of Pope Paul VI hugging Constantinople Patriarch Atinagora.[64] It was obvious that Metropolitan Dositej should be persuaded to agree with that and that bringing closer with RCC was supported by the leading circles of the Orthodox Church, where "becoming independent" from SOC was evidently very important. When he was informed of the celebration of Saint Kliment Ohridski in 1966 in September 1966 President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity from Rome Cardinal Augustine Bea asked the Yugoslav diplomats in Rome to mediate with SOC for the purpose of sending him an invitation to visit Ohrid "for the sake of ecumenism". Patriarch German disagreed with his proposal qualifying the visit as "undesirable". The Patriarch, actually, believed that Bea should first visit the Serbian Patriarch and then after that go to Ohrid.[65] Bearing in mind the church etiquette and the respect of its hierarchy of values, such positions were quite logical. Within this context, the Patriarch made it clear that several months before the Synod of SOC had drawn attention

60 „Писмо бискупа скопског Чекаде Верској комисији Македоније", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 02–73/1, 11. мај 1963. године, Скопје, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 66, стр. 1–2.

61 *Ibidem*.

62 „Информација о контактима Митрополита Доситеја са представницима Католичке цркве", Републичка комисија за верска питања Македоније, Секретар Доне Илиевски, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 21/65, ДБ, 19. јануар 1965, Скопје, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 84, 1965.

63 *Ibidem*.

64 *Ibidem*, стр. 2.

65 „Забелешка о разговору председника Мораче са Патријархом Германом обављеном 23. јуна 1966. године", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 279/66, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 95, 1966, стр. 5.

to their clergy to the "intensified activity of RCC" in the field in the country.[66] It was obvious that in the way it was planned a potential visit by the Cardinal under such complicated circumstances would be directly opposed to the vital interests of SOC. Therefore, at this point, the Vatican and SOC disagreed considerably. On the other hand, the Embassy of SFRY in Rome asked the authorities to mediate with Patriarch German to agree with the visit of Cardinal Bea considering that it would be "useful for the promotion of the state in international relations".[67] Actually, one should know that before everybody else the Macedonian republic authorities had sent a written invitation to the Cardinal to come to the celebration, who would be replaced by Bishop Vilebrands, if necessary.[68] It was clear that the republic authorities could do this only with the agreement of the Yugoslav state leadership. The Synod of "MOC" invited itself Patriarch German as well as representatives of other Orthodox churches to come to the celebration in Ohrid.[69] Just after that, the Yugoslav state took a position that Cardinal Bea should be invited to the celebration only if Patriarch German attended to it.[70] The co-ordinated activities were obviously aimed at creating the conditions for coming of the Patriarch to Ohrid, what he and SOC could not accept for symbolic and procedural reasons.

Some Vatican circles were considerably interested in "the autocephaly of MOC" during 1967 and 1968 when it was unilaterally proclaimed and then was church-legally sanctioned by SOC.[71] At that time, the Yugoslav authorities assessed that RCC "approved" this pointing to "the attention the Vatican" devoted to the Macedonian delegation at the funeral of Cardinal Bea in Rome in 1969.[72] For them, this was an obvious" contribution to the recognition of the Macedonian nation and the autocephaly of MOC". They recognised that their interests were largely identical and that this would enable the promotion of their mutual relations with the Vatican.[73] RCC devoted the same "attention" to the representatives of "MOC" who came to Rome in 1969 to attend marking of the 1100th anni-

66 „Кардинал Беа–Охрид", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, број 183/66, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 94, 1966.

67 Документ ДСИП, Београд, поверљиво, бр. 41465, 23. април 1966.

68 „Забелешка о разговору са Корен Антоном, Исусовцем из Русикуна", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 197/66, 4. мај 1966, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 94, 1966.

69 Документ Републичке комисије за верска питања Македоније, СИВ, поверљиво, број 02–130/1, 11. јул 1966. године, Скопје, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 94, 1966, стр. 2.

70 „Информација о положају и односима Римокатоличке цркве према СР Македонији и МПЦ", Републичка комисија за верска питања Македоније, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 01–70/1, 4. април 1969, Скопје, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 118, 1969, стр. 5.

71 *Ibidem*.

72 „Телеграм изасланика Цврље", ДСИП, Изасланство СФРЈ при Светој Столици, Рим, бр. 139, 18. септембар 1967.

73 „Информација о положају и односима Римокатоличке цркве према СР Македонији и МПЦ", Републичка комисија за верска питања Македоније, СИВ, поверљиво, бр. 01–70/1, 4. април 1969, Скопје, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 118, 1969, стр. 5.

versary of the death of Ćiril Solunski. In particular, together with the representatives of Macedonian authorities and the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts they were present at the mass, which was served by Pope Paul VI.[74] After the ceremony at the reception in the Yugoslav Embassy in Rome, the talks were conducted by Yugoslav envoy Vjekoslav Cvrle, Cardinals Šeper and Cazzaroli, Bishop Vilebrands, Dean of the Theological Faculty for Promotion of Religion Monsignor Vodoprivec and representatives of the Executive Council of FR of Macedonia.[75] It was obviously important to establish stable political bridges that would enable support for achieving significant church issues, too. This is supported by the fact that the greatest contribution in the organisation of the visit of the delegation of MOC to Rome afterwards was made by the Mission of SFRY in Vatican. It was composed of Metropolitan of Prespa-Bitolj Kliment, Metropolitan of USA-Canada-Australia Kiril and Priest Kliment Malevski.[76] Along with the Yugoslav authorities, the Macedonian "church" emigration kept making a significant contribution to the whole process.

With RCC itself there were, actually, different opinions on gaining of "autocephaly of MOC". For the strategic interest but also for the sensitivity of the whole issue, RCC decided to engage itself half publicly at the medium and lower levels. Within that context, the position of priest and lower official Pierre Duprey from the Secretariat for Christian Unity was to be above all, shaped and directed pointing out that his President and superior Bishop Vilebrands "was not informed" and "was not familiar with the matter.[77] Pope Paul VI was willing to receive in a special audience the above mentioned state-church delegation from Macedonia considering that a "compromise" was made since Metropolitan Dositej and high representatives of the Yugoslav state were not in its composition.[78] Vatican obviously believed that the process of "gaining of independence" of "MOC" should start from below, from the lower level. The Pope evidently did not trust either Metropolitan Dositej or the state leadership being of the opinion that SOC would be informed of the activities of RCC through them. On the other hand, the Yugoslav authorities also stressed that they did "their best to achieve what they could" pointing to the significance of "affirmation of FR Macedonia and MOC".[79] Then, they mediated in organising the coming of Macedonian Metropolitan Naum to the celebration mentioned above that took place in Rome in

74 *Ibidem*.

75 „Делегација из Југославије положила венац крај гроба Кирила Солунског", рађено 13. фебруара 1969. у згради Патријаршије у Београду.

76 *Ibidem*.

77 „Забелешка о разговору са Стјепаном Шмитом (*Stjepanom Schmidtom*), D. I. 18. фебруара 1969. године", ССИП, Изасланство СФРЈ при Светој Столици, Рим, поверљиво, бр. 40/69.

78 *Ibidem*.

79 „Депеша Извршном већу СР Македоније", Савезна комисија за верска питања, СИВ, поверљиво, број 115, 15. мај 1970, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 125, 1970.

1971 when he visited Croatian Cardinal Šeper and Secretariat for Christian Unity. In this body that pursues activities of RCC and whose goal is to bring Christians together Metropolitan Naum was, however, received by Deputy of Cardinal Vilebrands and President of the Secretariat, his secretary Jerome Hamer.[80] This also proves that the Vatican's approach to this issue was very cautious attaching importance to it but not in public. During the celebration of the Day of Culture of the Nations and Nationalities of SFRY entitled "Yugoslavia in Honour of Saint Ćirilo" which had taken place in Rome from 21-26 May 1979 the prayer ceremony was headed by Macedonian Metropolitan of Debar-Kičevo Angelarije together with Croatian Cardinal Franjo Šeper.[81] It is important to emphasise that on that occasion the delegation of "MOC" was received by Pope John Paul II to whom Metropolitan Kiril delivered a letter from Metropolitan Dositej expressing content for "the successful co-operation of the two Churches based on evangelical and ecumenical principles".[82] Next year at the ceremonial service at the basilica of Saint Clement in Rome, Metropolitan Angelarije performed the service again visiting the Secretariat for Christian Unity on this occasion, too. He was received by the officials, priests Moller and Schmidt, respectively, together with Bishop Wyroll.[83] The Pope received Metropolitan Angelarije again at the honorary general audience. He was introduced and greeted separately and the Pope invited him to together with other present pilgrims share the apostle blessing.[84] It can be assumed that this gesture meant an open and direct recognition and support to the church status and legitimacy of "MOC" on the part of the Vatican from its highest level. As an "Archbishop of MOC" Metropolitan Angelarije paid a private visit to Pope John Paul II for the third time on 23 May 1984 emphasising that "MOC is a genuine church of love and patience".[85] He obviously indirectly asked RCC to keep on supporting it. Bishops of RCC in Yugoslavia were also very interested in the issue of "MOC". Concerning the "schism" between "MOC" and SOC Bishop of Split (later archbishop) Franić stressed that acting and behaviour of the higher and especially lower clergy of SOC pointed to its "old-fashion conceptions, a lack of understanding of the new situation and the trends in the country, but also to "chauvinism, too".[86] He obviously indirectly, but also directly supported the demand of "MOC" explaining it by the political reasons. It is interesting that he

80 „Тито посетио Ватикан у првој половини 1971. године", ССИП, Амбасада СФРЈ при Светој Столици, Рим, поверљиво, број 72/71 од 1. јуна и 73/71 од 3. јуна 1971, стр. 2.

81 „Predstavnici Makedonske pravoslavne crkve kod Pape", *Glas Koncila*, God. XVIII, Br. 12 (407), 10. lipnja 1979, str. 4.

82 *Ibidem*.

83 „Pravoslavni Makedonci na grobu Svetog Ćirila u Rimu", *Glas Koncila*, God. XIX, Br. 11 (431), 1. lipnja 1980, str. 9.

84 *Ibidem*.

85 „Predstavnici Makedonske Pravoslavne Crkve pohodili grob svetog Ćirila u Rimu i bili kod Ivana Pavla II —'Crkva danas sjaji u očima makedonskog naroda'", *Glas Koncila*, God. XXIII, Br. 12 (532), 10. lipnja 1984, str. 3.

86 „Информација о разговору изасланика Цврље са сплитским бискупом Франићем 26. септембра 1967. године", ДСИП, Изасланство владе СФРЈ при Светој Столици, Рим, поверљиво, број 124/67, стр. 2.

complained to the representative of the Yugoslav authorities for the fact that in the Statement of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Croatia submitted at the session of its Executive Committee that dealt with the position of the League of Communists with regard to church and religion he was the only one that was mentioned for "pursuing proselytism" towards SOC.[87] His act can be interpreted as a reproach to the Yugoslav authorities under conditions when they had common activities and interests and needs to come closer to each other. Bishop of Šibenik Arnerić also primarily treated the issue of "MOC" as a "national issue" pointing out that the Macedonian demand was "right", but remarking that he as bishop did not want to "interfere in internal affairs of SOC".[88] In regard to Franić, he at least took into consideration the fact that in this case SOC should be after all, asked about its opinion. Bishop of Poreč and Pula Nežić thought that "the autocephaly of MOC" was the process that "cannot be stopped", by which RCC should "be very cautious and tactical" in its acts, since this was "a very delicate issue".[89] It should be said that at the "election synod", which took place in the church of Saint Sofia in Ohrid on 18 and 19 August 1981 when Metropolitan Angelarije was appointed "head of MOC", Bishop of Skopje and Prizren Herbut was present on behalf of RCC in Yugoslavia. On this occasion, Archbishop of Zagreb Kuharić sent him a letter "with best wishes to MOC on the 15th anniversary of its independence "with Croatian greetings in the Lord".[90] The bishops of RCC in Yugoslavia obviously had different opinions only on the methodology to be used in support to gaining of autocephaly of MOC, what was undoubtedly approved by the Vatican. From their angle, an important aspect and result of such an approach should be the promotion of relations with the Yugoslav authorities and the improvement of their own position in the country.

Conclusion

"The autocephaly of MOC" was and has remained above all, a political, non-church issue that was originally initiated by the Yugoslav state. It had the interest and need to direct solving of the national question in Yugoslavia at the moment it found appropriate for itself, in which the policy to religious communities played a significant role. This is credibly shown by the historical fact that after World War II the authorities did not allow the Serbian bishops to return from

87 *Ibidem*, стр. 3.

88 „Забелешка о разговору са бискупом шибенским Арнеријем", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, број 08–175/1–1968, 22. јул 1968, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 111, 1968.

89 „Забелешка о разговору Стјепана Ивековића са поречко–пулским бискупом др Драгутином Нежићем", Републичка комисија за верска питања Хрватске, СИВ, поверљиво, број 08–135/1–1968, 25. септембар 1968, Загреб, Архив Југославије, фонд 144, фасцикла 112, 1968, стр. 4.

90 „Novi poglavar makedonske Pravoslavne Crkve", *Glas Koncila*, God. XX, Br. 17 (462), 30. kolovoza 1981, str. 2.

exile to their seats in Macedonia, although, e.g. before that SOC had appointed and sent on regular basis their bishops to its three episcopates in this republic. One of them, Varnava, was later elected Patriarch of SOC. The facts mentioned above undoubtedly point to the cause of the problem that was later directed only by the political management. In order to overcome the tensions and resolve the problem it is of essential importance to re-affirm the impact of the logical principles by which church issues should be resolved above all, in accordance with the church criteria. This is even more, since today, the need to respect the principle of separation of church and state is more and more openly mentioned. Within this context, it should be concluded that in the communist Yugoslavia the state openly interfered in church affairs, while such heritage is still present in the newly-created Balkan states. The practice of interference of the state in church affairs is a basis for further manipulation of the religious issue and its instrumentalisation for political purposes. RCC undoubtedly discretely supported the initiative of the Yugoslav state towards gaining of "autocephaly of MOC" with various intensities and at various levels. It had an objective interest to do that so, since strategic (church) goals are achieved more easily under the conditions of "regional balance of power" of smaller (and opposed) factors, then in a dialogue with "more powerful" partners. The authors consider this article the contribution to development of Politology of Religion shedding some light on complex issue of relationship between the state and SOC in former Yugoslav state that openly "politically managed potentials" of its religious communities. The attempt is of much more importance since research in large extent has been based on confidential government reports and documents from that period (over 40). For that reason it is to be considered important prevention of manipulation this issue for political purposes in contemporary Balkan Region, as well as contribution to development of Politology of Religion strengthening scientific dialogue that would lead the problem towards constructive and comprehensive solutions.

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Марко Николић, Душко Димитријевић

''МАКЕДОНСКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЦРКВА (МПЦ)'' У БИВШОЈ ЈУГОСЛАВИЈИ

Резиме

Након Другог светског рата, вишеверска и вишенационална социјалистичка Југославија је морала да реши сложено национално питање или да га барем усклади са својим унутрашњим али и интернационалним циљевима. Њена атеистичко – секуларна природа је условила однос према верским заједницама у земљи, чији су потенцијали морали бити контролисани, усмеравани и кориштени у жељеном правцу. Држава је, уствари, подржавала секуларни принцип по којем би свака нација требала да има своју цркву, истовремено тежећи да директно, константно и доследно утиче на њихову праксу. Таквим активностима су занемариване црквене потребе, што је имало негативан утицај на Српску православну цркву (СПЦ). Римокатоличка црква, друга верска заједница у земљи по броју верника, је препознала да се њени интереси поклапају са таквим подухватима и државним активностима. У складу са тим, она је дискретно подржала стварање политички процес добијања аутокефалности ''Македонске православне цркве'' (МПЦ).

Кључне речи: Југославија, атеизам, Српска православна црква (СПЦ), ''Македонска православна црква'' (МПЦ), Римокатоличка црква

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