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Asymmetric Relations Between Indonesia and Singapore:
A Study on the Failure of the 2016 Repatriation Program for Indonesian
Citizens' Wealth and Assets Abroad

Mohammad Mohtar Mas'ood

Counterterrorism Diplomacy:
ASEAN's New Chapter of Regional Engagement

Frega Ferdinand Wenas Inkiriwang

The Logic of U.S. Deployment in Norway:
The Trump Administration and NATO's Northern Front

Dylan Motin

Angela Merkel's Leadership in Germany's Open Door Policy on Handling
the Refugee Crisis in Europe

Muhamad Dasep

The Separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow
Patriarchate as a Reflection of Ukrainian State Identity

Civa Syadza Masnun

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This article discusses the formation of Ukrainian state identity in the struggle for the status of an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate. Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, the country has had two national churches and one Orthodox church originating from Russia, namely the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. The presence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate prompted national church figures to establish an independent (autocephalous) church to become a truly independent country without Russian oversight. However, establishing this church was difficult due to Russian intervention until events occurred that successfully pushed for the ratification of Autocephaly status in 2019. Using Ted Hopf's Constructivism theory regarding identity formed from a country's interaction with external actors and its internal construction, this article examines events between Ukraine and Russia and the social construction within Ukraine. It also highlights the strong public opinion, church actions, and government actions unified in one identity: an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Introduction

The status of Autocephaly, interpreted as the separation of Russian control over the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, was finally ratified in 2019. This means that Ukraine is no longer under Russian control in religious affairs. Initially, Russia was the parent of one of the Orthodox churches in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. This church was the canonical or legitimate church recognized by the Orthodox world in Ukraine, while the other two national churches, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, were not recognized in the Orthodox world (Ukrainian Research Institute, 2019). The difference in canonical status between the church under the Moscow Patriarchate and the national churches persisted for years in Ukraine. However, Ukraine,

one of the countries that emerged from the Soviet Union, should have shared identities such as race, language, and culture with Russia but had different views that extended to religious issues.

The formation of this independent church shocked the Orthodox world and became an important international historical record (Wilson, 2018). The separation of the Orthodox church is interpreted as a reflection of Ukrainian state identity, which did not form instantly but through internal and external factors from events in Ukraine. Identity is formed through social construction within the country and prolonged interaction with other actors, so identity is not something given (Steans, 2010). In this case, Ukrainian identity formed through social construction within the country and its interaction with Russia, which had controlled Ukraine for years.

The issue of Ukraine represents the notion that identity is important for a country, especially in the current development of international relations. Since the end of the Cold War, physical power is no longer the only debated issue; ideas, norms, ethnicity, culture, and even religion influence countries worldwide. A world without identity is chaotic because identity answers questions about who you are and tells you who others are (Hopf, 2012, p. 174). In this matter, Ukraine tries to depict its state identity through the decision of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's autocephaly, which also reflects its view of Russia. This decision becomes an international relations event affecting Russia's position and its relationship with Ukraine, starting with the Maidan Revolution.

The Maidan Revolution was the beginning of the idea of separating the Orthodox church, attracting pro-Ukrainians to fight for it. Thus, Ukraine's dependence on Russia became less important, prioritizing its religious identity. This resulted from protests against President Viktor Yanukovich, a pro-Russian president who canceled economic cooperation with the European Union. This event escalated to military battles between Ukraine and Russia during the Donbas War, further responding to the Maidan Revolution. The military debate between the two countries led to religious issues (Borovkova, 2019). In the Donbas War, attacks on churches, kidnappings, and persecutions were based on declarations to adhere to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate (Kovalenko, 2015). Russian military involvement united civilians and the church in a common cause, as civilians and church figures participated in the Donbas War, with church leaders praying and joining other demonstrators, considering themselves representatives of civilians (IECS, 2016). The Donbas events shocked all of Ukraine, as important state elements were involved.

The elements referred to are the roles of society, church figures, and the government in the Ukrainian church decision. The idea of eliminating Russian influence on the Orthodox Church became strong under Poroshenko's leadership as a pro-Ukrainian president who took office after Viktor Yanukovich was ousted in the Maidan Revolution. Poroshenko's cooperation with other Ukrainian churches in fighting for the autocephaly status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church became highly discursive and accepted by the Orthodox world (Borovkova, 2019). Poroshenko's leadership showed that the three state elements—society, church, and government—were unified in one identity. Poroshenko's role was a significant factor in bringing Ukraine to its desired identity. Therefore, Poroshenko's role, along with society and the church, will be internal factors analyzed in forming Ukrainian identity.

This study focuses on identity with the indicator of religion. Religion has long been considered an indicator to be separated from international relations research due to secularism. Secularism sidelines religion from state affairs, international politics, and international law, considering religion irrelevant in analyzing state affairs and international relations (Hurd, 2013, p. 943). This understanding prevented events like the World War, believing religion was the root cause of global issues, leading to religious disputes and wars between countries, making religion something to be avoided in studies (Sandal and James, 2010, p. 5). However, the researcher sees that with the Ukrainian issue, religion still plays a role in depicting state identity. The research aims to reinstate religion as an important indicator in international relations, particularly in illustrating a country's identity.

Besides reinstating religion as a critical indicator for international relations, this issue is crucial for discussing the formation of state identity through the separation of the Orthodox Church. With the successful separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate, this article will discuss how the Ukrainian state identity was formed. The article assumes that the decision to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate is an identity of the Ukrainian state formed by events between Ukraine and Russia during the Maidan Revolution from 2013 to 2019. The article also examines the unity between the Ukrainian government, church, and society as an identity reflected by Ukraine through the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2019.

Theory: Constructivism

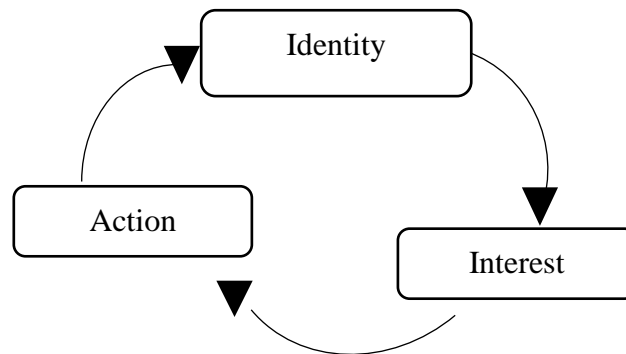
The constructivist approach is one of the post-positivist theories that emerged at the end of the Cold War. The key idea of constructivism is that human construction creates a

country's social conditions, including broad scopes such as international relations (Jackson and Sorensen, 2005, p. 307). This human construction forms a state's identity, and constructivism focuses on the social conditions of the state and international relations. Constructivism emerged to address issues that other theories could not answer regarding the importance of a state's identity. The belief that identity is something given is considered incorrect by constructivism (Jackson and Sorensen, 2005, p. 307). Constructivism believes that identity is formed through a process.

Ted Hopf states in his book "Reconstructing the Cold War" that each country has different identities, which are social products from the interaction between states and their domestic society, forming a state's identity (Hopf, 2012, p. 8). This statement reinforces that identity is not something given or created spontaneously. The researcher concludes that constructivism views a state's social conditions as internal factors and interactions with other actors as external factors, leading to a state's identity. Ted Hopf's theory is used to analyze Ukrainian identity through events during the Maidan Revolution from 2013 to 2019.

The relationship between identity and state interests is explained through two constructivist principles: 1) Structure formation results from ideas, not material power, and 2) The identity and interests of actors are not natural but the result of these ideas' construction (Mellon, 2009). These constructivist statements show that identity is essential for a state. It does not mean that material needs are unimportant, but constructivism helps understand how material relates to a state's actions, where material strength is determined by an idea or concept (Pfefferle, 2014). In this issue, the researcher sees that Ukraine is striving for its strength through ideas, not merely to maintain its material needs.

Constructivism views identity as a state's preference, and actions taken by a state result from its identity (Hopf, 2012, p. 175). Ukraine's decision to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate is a consequence of its state identity formed through its interaction with Russia. Therefore, to understand Ukraine's view of Russia, it is not seen structurally but based on its actions. State actions do not stem from a single or absolute idea, and each state has different abilities to interpret its identity and understand phenomena. Constructivist logic illustrates that identity, interests, and actions are interrelated, all returning to an idea, as shown below:



Therefore, if this constructivist thinking logic is related to the issue raised in this study, it is that social construction within domestic Ukraine and its interaction with Russia is a product of Ukraine's identity. Thus, Ukraine has an interest in establishing an Orthodox Church with autocephaly/independent status. Following this interest, the action taken by Ukraine to reflect its identity and interests was to decide to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate in 2019. This action by Ukraine was an effort to avoid Russian influence in its religious affairs, emphasizing that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is an identity of the Ukrainian state.

The action taken by Ukraine in the religious context is the subject of this research, examining religion's role in international relations. The researcher aims to challenge the secularism notion that modernization has shifted religion out of international view. Religion can form the background for a country's foreign policy (Djatkiko, 2017, p. 9). The policy of separating the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate shows that religion remains an important aspect in analyzing a country's foreign policy, with identity as the answer.

Jeremy Menchik (2017) in his article "The Constructivist Approach to Religion and World Politics" explains that international relations scholars are trying to reintroduce religion into world politics as a relevant aspect by using constructivist theory. The recent emphasis on religion strengthens the issue for analysis with a constructivist approach, which can address the identity of the Ukrainian state. Using this approach, international relations scholars attempt to understand how religion in international relations becomes an important subject to study rather than something to be avoided.

In resolving religious issues, religious leaders and communities are involved, becoming variables to explain the cause and effect of conflicts, impacting international relations (Hurd, 2013, p. 944). Religion also influences policymakers, potentially affecting decisions that could lead to peace or conflict, impacting international conditions

(Djatkiko, 2017, p. 72). This research aims to understand how religious identity is formed by examining the social construction within Ukraine, correlating church leaders, Ukrainian society, and even the Ukrainian leader as variables.

Interaction Between States

The interaction between Ukraine and Russia during their time in the Soviet Union inspired Ukraine to separate from Russian control both in its church and state. According to Ted Hopf's constructivist thinking, identity formation involves Ukraine's identity towards Russia and Constantinople, as countries possess multiple identities (Hopf, 2012, p. 8). This identity first emerged from the interaction between Ukraine and Russia, leading Ukraine to view Russia as an aggressive state and a threat to be avoided, disregarding cultural, linguistic, and historical ties within the Soviet Union.

Ukraine's view of Russia began with the Maidan Revolution, which involved Russia. This event drew international attention as the largest demonstration. President Yanukovich, a pro-Russian president, canceled Ukraine's cooperation with the European Union, angering Ukrainians and leading to Yanukovich's removal, despite Eastern Ukraine's pro-Russian support (Withnall, 2014). This indicated that Ukraine already had its identity, wanting to align more with the European Union. The Maidan Revolution shifted public identity to pro-European, evidenced by a survey showing 53% of Ukrainians favoring closer ties with the EU (Kucheriv, 2019). The Euromaidan movement aimed to remove Russian influence from Ukraine's economy, although it did not initially involve religious conflict. However, this event highlighted strong public opinion at that time.

Although the Maidan Revolution did not cause religious conflict between Ukraine and Russia, Russia's aggressive stance on religious affairs surfaced during the Crimea annexation. Russia's requirement for re-registration of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate and the Crimean referendum triggered a response from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate. Kiev's patriarchate in Crimea refused re-registration, believing it signaled acceptance of Crimea's separation from Ukraine (Savchuk, 2014). This resistance was a reaction to Russia's perceived intervention and restriction of spiritual activities in Crimea.

The Kiev Patriarchate's response demonstrated its nationalist stance, indifferent to Russia's interests in Crimea. Diplomatic efforts with Russia failed, resulting in restrictions and property seizures, leaving only eight active parishes (Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, 2018). During the annexation, the Russian Orthodox Church,

alongside the Russian military, engaged in various diplomatic efforts for Crimea's separation from Ukraine. Pro-Russian Crimean priests supported this by providing churches for the military and weapon storage (Yapparova, 2020). One source stated, "the Cossacks would stay in Simferopol at the Peter and Paul Cathedral. When priests allow military people carrying weapons into their church, this stops being a church and starts being an organization that answers to the state" (Yapparova, 2020). This statement further indicated that the Russian Orthodox Church's actions contradicted the church's role in promoting peace, instead supporting state-driven intervention and violence for political or defense purposes.

Russia attempted to maintain its influence in Ukraine with the support of pro-Russian clergy and ethnic Russians in Eastern Ukraine. This intervention aimed to subdue Ukraine amidst the created crisis. However, Crimea's annexation made Ukraine increasingly indifferent to Russian economic or military needs, as these could still be met through the European Union. Hence, the researcher views Ukraine's efforts as solidifying its identity.

This identity strengthened with the Donbas War, which unified two national churches and some bishops from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP. Russia's increasing pressure to restrict religious freedom in Ukraine only reinforced Ukraine's identity in establishing its national church. Russia's extreme actions in the Donbas War, including deploying the Russian military, propagating separatism, and rejecting other national churches, led to persecution, abductions, church property seizures, and shootings at prayer tents. These actions violated spiritual norms and values, prompting national church leaders to focus more on separating from Russia. Consequently, the war was considered the largest conflict between Russia and the West since the Cold War (Katchanovski, 2016, p. 2).

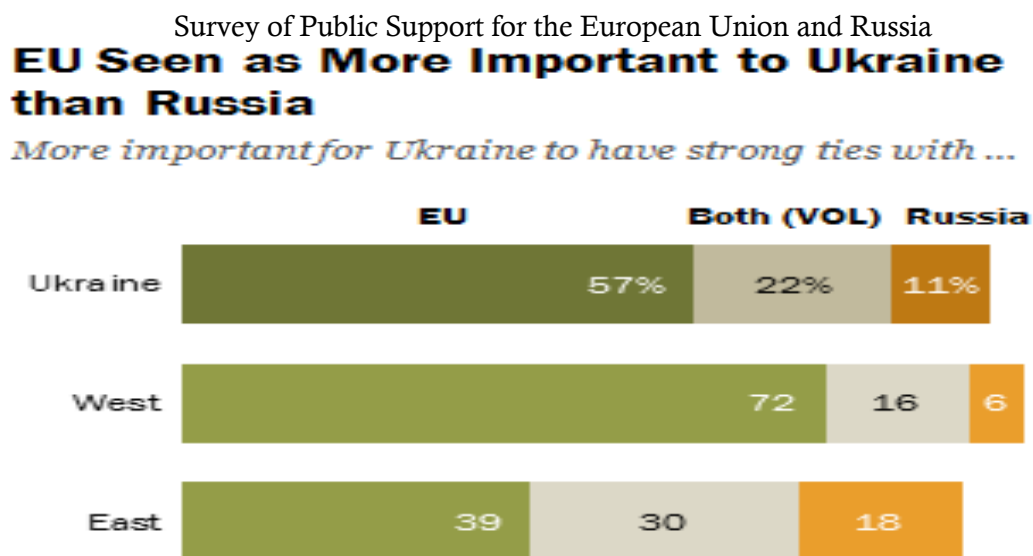
In response to Russia's actions, Ukraine declared the separation of the Russian church's control, leading church leaders to integrate and seek support from the Orthodox world. Ukraine-Russia interactions before and after the Maidan Revolution showed that Russia's aggressive actions against the Ukrainian church heightened Ukraine's reaction, manifesting in its separation ideology. These events demonstrated Ukraine's process in forming its identity, transitioning from an idea among Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church leaders to integration with other bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP due to Russia's actions.

This analysis confirms that Ukraine's idea did not emerge spontaneously. As basic constructivist theory suggests, identity is not given but a social product. After Ukraine-Russia interactions during the Maidan Revolution and Crimea annexation, the researcher observed a stronger identity formation in the Donbas War. “Although this event did not change the ethnic population of Eastern Ukraine, which still connects and supports Russia, these three events sharpened the identity conflict between Ukraine and Russia” (A. Arifianto, personal communication, August 31, 2020). Thus, it can be concluded that the tensions from the interactions between these two countries strengthened Ukraine's efforts to counter Russia's increasingly aggressive actions, violating church norms and international standards.

Domestic Societis

Public Opinion in Ukrainian Society

The interaction between Russia and Ukraine in these three events influenced public opinion on the European Union and Russia. Nationalism tends to rise during crises or conflicts, prompting support for national identity (A. Arifianto, personal communication, August 31, 2020). A 2015 survey shows that Ukrainians had already formed an identity towards Russia:



Note: Ukraine sample does not include Luhans'k, Donets'k and Crimea.

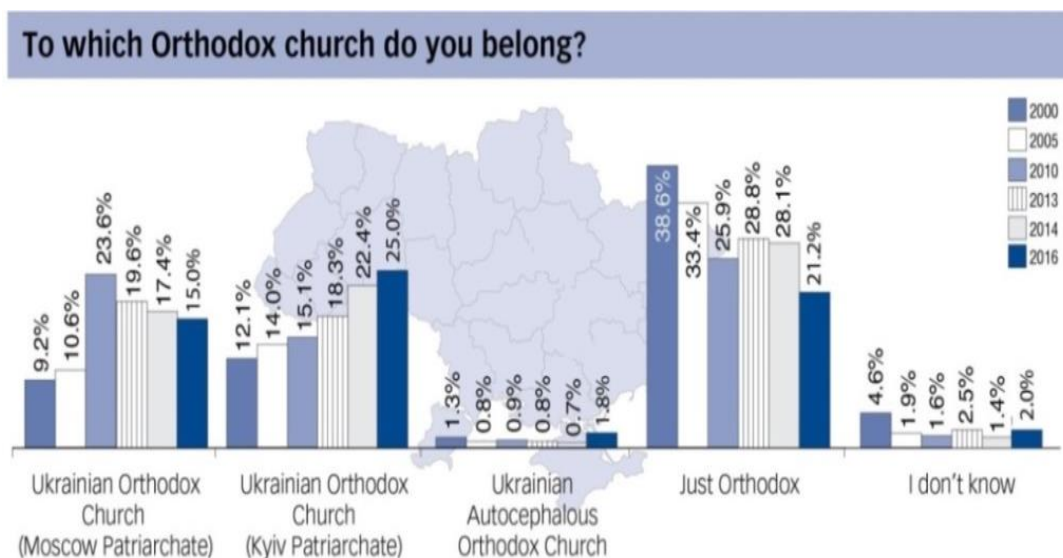
Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q93.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Pew Survey Center

This survey shows a shift towards a dominant pro-European identity, weakening Russia's political influence. Maidan transformed Ukrainians into a crucial element for state “legitimacy,” becoming a priority for state actors (Pishchikova & Ogryzko, 2014, p. 10). The public also increasingly identified with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kiev Patriarchate, switching from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, particularly after the Donbas War. This shift was due to social norms perceived negatively by the public, with some stating their parish switched from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-KP because the former refused to conduct funerals for Euromaidan activists and Ukrainian soldiers killed in the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) zone (Korniichuk, 2016, p. 248). Thus, some parishes viewed this treatment as incompatible with their teachings, reflecting the significant influence of pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian views on their faith and spiritual activities.

Change in Public Trust in the Moscow Patriarchate and the National Church



Source: Kyiv Post

The graph above shows that initially, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate was far more dominant than the other two national churches. In 2010, during Yanukovich's early leadership, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate's membership surged by 23.6%, compared to the Kiev Patriarchate's 15.1%. As explained in the previous section, Yanukovich favored the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, as evidenced by the religious restriction index rising from 26 in 2007 to 44 in 2012, remaining at 4 in 2013 (Cooperman, 2016). However, after the Ukraine-Russia conflict, public membership shifted to pro-Kiev Patriarchate with the

membership of 22.4% of the population, while the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate's membership continued to decline to 17.4% by 2016.

The public's concern about this matter is indeed supported by a survey regarding the decision of autocephaly, which showed dominant support from 58% of Western Ukraine and 10% from the Eastern part, as explained in the previous section. Thus, the three surveys above indicate that the Ukraine-Russia religious issue is significant for the Ukrainian public, and as the majority are Orthodox Christians, this has become the main focus of the society rather than prioritizing relations with Russia.

The conflict of 2013 had an effect on the society that was forced to choose churches that were not considered before 2014. In this context, the public realized that having an autocephalous church was a form of Ukraine's struggle to gain acknowledgment, justice, and respect in the international and Orthodox worlds (Hladio, 2019, p. 37). The decisions and views of the Ukrainian public show that the community element is very important and becomes a legitimacy for the identity of the Ukrainian state. Thus, the percentage change in society, which showed a decline in the Moscow Patriarchate and an increase in the Kiev Patriarchate, proves that the interaction between Ukraine and Russia has changed public opinion, which is part of the process of forming the Ukrainian state identity.

Petition Submission by Church Leaders to Constantinople

The role of church leaders is crucial in the formation of Ukrainian identity. Church leaders have been actively working to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate since the establishment of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, which was further strengthened by the annexation of Crimea and the Donbas War. These events encouraged church leaders to declare the establishment of an independent church in the midst of the conflict with Russia due to the norms practiced by Russia that were not aligned with the church leaders. Therefore, in November 2014, the seriousness of the church was reaffirmed with the declaration of the establishment of an autocephalous church by church leaders, including the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-MP (IECS, 2016, p. 10). This event truly convinced church leaders that the national Ukrainian church must be legitimate and recognized by the Orthodox world, becoming a strong unity for the Ukrainian people.

Another impact of this event was the unification of churches in Ukraine, including some bishops from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, who created a document for the unification of churches from 2013 to 2015. Although this

document was ultimately not signed by the leaders of each church, it marked the beginning of a clear unification between national church leaders and the Moscow Patriarchate on a shared idea (Korniichuk, 2016, p. 248). On this occasion, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church agreed to merge with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-KP, stating that there were no differences between them, so there was no harm in integrating.

Ukrainian church leaders agreed to apply the principle of "one church, one nation," which underscores Ukraine's right to have an independent church (Liik, 2019). With Constantinople's condition for establishing autocephaly requiring unity among the Orthodox churches in Ukraine, church leaders fulfilled this condition by the decision of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church to merge with the Kiev Patriarchate during the Donbas War. This was strengthened by the fact that the values provided by the Moscow Patriarchate no longer aligned with the national Ukrainian church, leading to the perception that this church was used by Russia to assert control over Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk, based on the "Russian world" ideology, which had resulted in the deaths of several church leaders and the destruction of religious facilities. This event culminated in Constantinople's statement that the petition from church leaders and some bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate had been accepted. The support from Moscow Patriarchate bishops further encouraged the Ukrainian church leaders, leading to the conclusion that the efforts of the church before the fall of the Soviet Union and at the end of the Donbas War had shaped a reflected identity through their actions. Many statements from church leaders supporting an independent church indicated that this was the identity they desired (A. Arifianto, personal communication, August 31, 2020). This was further strengthened by the declaration and opposition to Russian regulations by church leaders.

Pro-Ukrainian Leaders' Diplomacy with Constantinople

Although the idea of church separation had existed for a long time, it was difficult to realize, especially during the Ukrainian crisis in 2013 caused by President Yanukovich. President Yanukovich was the only Ukrainian president who did not support autocephaly out of the five presidents who served in Ukraine (Kuzio, 2019). His lack of support for church separation highlighted the presence of both pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian cultural influences even among the country's leaders. Public perception of leaders as pro-Ukrainian or pro-Russian was shaped by their association with specific churches at various events, indicating the seriousness of leaders in reflecting Ukrainian national identity in their political agendas.

However, after the change in presidency, the policies issued by Ukrainian leaders became the ultimate weapon for the decision to separate Ukraine from Russian influence, particularly in matters affecting public perception. A country cannot reflect its identity if its leaders do not enact policies to manifest it. The Maidan Revolution made public opinion a legitimate basis for policy and a priority for Ukrainian political elites. Thus, the change in leadership to President Poroshenko became a key factor in supporting the establishment of an independent church, as he observed the shifting public opinion and the bold actions of society in voicing pro-European sentiments.

Poroshenko saw that the unity among churches in Ukraine prompted his support for the idea of separating the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate, which he viewed as a crucial identity to be carried out and reflected in his policies. Therefore, in 2015-2016, Poroshenko supported the church leaders' petition and held various meetings with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to consider establishing an independent church, using the support and societal changes as a basis, with 58% support for autocephaly from the western region and 10% from the eastern region (Wilson, 2018). Poroshenko deemed this sufficient to include the issue of separating from Russian control in his political agenda. President Poroshenko stated that his advocacy for an independent church was part of the "national identity" of Ukraine (Kamenev, 2018). This determination drove him to pursue an identity for Ukraine without Russian influence in religious matters. His campaign across Ukraine aimed to inspire the movement towards a second independence for the national Ukrainian church. Poroshenko also sought support from the Turkish and US presidents, who also believed in the importance of establishing an independent church for the freedom of the Ukrainian people.

The president expressed his views on the establishment of an independent church as a discursive issue, emphasizing Constantinople's consideration and urging the Orthodox world to understand that granting this power was not something Constantinople should have done. In a TV channel event, he stated: "I'd like to emphasize – there was no Russian Orthodox Church at that time. If the Constantinople Church is the Mother Church for Ukraine, then the Ukrainian Church is the Mother Church for Russia. Because it originated here, not vice versa. And the mother cannot ask for independence from the daughter. In terms of historical, spiritual, and state justice, Ukraine deserved the right to have an independent Ukrainian church," (Unian Information Agency, 2018). This statement was made to emphasize to Russia that

Ukraine preferred to be under the authority of Constantinople to be equal with other countries, rather than under Russian control. He clarified that an independent church was not wrong but rather Ukraine's right.

President Poroshenko met with the leader of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church in Istanbul, Turkey, Patriarch Bartholomew, in November 2018 (Kamenev, 2018). Diplomatic efforts with Constantinople began to show promise when Constantinople stated that it would grant autocephaly to Ukraine, explaining that the rights previously given to Russia in 1686 were merely rights for consecration (Archbishop Job of Telmessos, 2019, p. 49). Consequently, President Poroshenko's efforts were seen by the Ukrainian Public and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople as a struggle to restore peace and religious freedom previously intervened by Russia.

Poroshenko's diplomacy and efforts were eventually approved by Constantinople with the issuance of the decree on January 6, 2019 (Metreveli, 2020). President Poroshenko announced this as a victory from the shackles on Ukraine's religious life, which also affected geopolitical security (Rohtmets, 2019). This was officially documented by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople with a written document, Tomos, signifying that the autocephaly status had unified the two national churches of Ukraine into the legitimate Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Thus, with the Tomos, the Moscow Patriarchate was no longer considered legitimate and had no right to control the national Ukrainian church (Martyniuk, 2018). All members of the global Orthodox community must recognize that Ukraine is no longer part of the Moscow Patriarchate.

This success demonstrated that Poroshenko's actions were aligned with the Ukrainian identity, as seen in his diplomacy with Constantinople and his speeches. It can thus be concluded that Poroshenko's role was very influential in the separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate, based on the statement from the Patriarchate of Constantinople that: the establishment of this independent church became very strong due to the petition from Poroshenko as President of Ukraine (Liik, 2019). In this issue, the interests of church leaders and the state were the same, with the church and state walking together because they had a common enemy, Russia, thus strengthening and increasing this identity during the 2014 conflict (A. Arifianto, personal communication, August 31, 2020). This proves that the coordinated actions of the church and the state brought Ukraine to a unified identity, eventually convincing Constantinople to grant the autocephaly status to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, especially with some bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate also helping in this process by personally sending petitions to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of

Constantinople. Additionally, it is important for a country's leader, elected by the people, to be able to reflect the country's identity by considering public opinion and other important elements.

Conclusion

This article concludes that based on the basic constructivist theory of identity that generates interests and actions, the separation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Moscow Patriarchate is a reflection of the Ukrainian state identity formed through prolonged interaction between Ukraine and Russia, from the Soviet Union era to the end of the Donbas War. In this case, inter-state interaction is the most influential indicator in the process of forming the Ukrainian state identity itself, as this interaction between Russia and Ukraine influences public opinion on the autocephaly status, encourages church actions in making declarations, and the submission of petitions also serves as an experience for President Poroshenko to bring this identity into his political agenda. It is clear that Ukraine desires a country free from Russian influence and control in terms of politics, economy, society, and religion, leading to the establishment of the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church as its identity.

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