

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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UKRAINE : Controversy about property of Kyiv-Pechersk & Pochaiv Lavras

Controversy about the bill on property transfer of Kyiv-Pechersk & Pochaiv Lavras

By Willy Fautré, director of *Human Rights Without Frontiers*

HRWF (12.09.2022) – On 8 September 2022, a draft resolution proposing the transfer of the Pochaiv Dormition Lavra and the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church/ Moscow Patriarchate (UOC) to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) was

registered.

People's deputy from the "Servant of the People" faction Andriy Bohdanets registered draft resolution No. 8012 on the appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

If the bill is adopted, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine must inform the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine about the implementation of this resolution within three months.

The Legal Department of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church/ Moscow Patriarchate stated that the OCU has no right to claim the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. It argued that the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra is under the legal ownership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church/ Moscow Patriarchate and since 1988, their monks have restored the ancient Ukrainian traditions of the Lavra life and also a large number of churches and cells.

The Pochaiv Dormition Lavra and the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra

Orthodox Christianity was introduced in the current territory of Ukraine by Vladimir the Great or Volodymyr the Great, Prince of Novgorod, Grand Prince of Kyiv and ruler of Kyivan Rus from 980 to 1015. Originally a follower of Slavic paganism, he converted to Christianity in 988 and christianized his people. He is thus also known as Saint Vladimir.

The Holy Dormition Kiev-Caves ("Kiev-Pechersk") Lavra is the first and the most ancient monastery on the territory of contemporary Ukraine. The monastery was founded in 1051 while the existence of Moscow was only first documented in 1147 (*). Today, it is the center of Orthodoxy, one of the most important monasteries of the Christian world.

Since its foundation as the cave monastery in 1051, the Lavra has been a preeminent center of Eastern Orthodox Christianity in Eastern Europe. Together with the Saint Sophia

Cathedral, it is inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The monastery complex is considered a separate national historic-cultural preserve (sanctuary), the national status to which was granted on 13 March 1996.

Currently, the jurisdiction over the site is divided between the state museum, National Kyiv-Pechersk Historic-Cultural Preserve, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) as the site of the chief monastery of that Church and the residence of its leader, Onufrius, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine.

According to the Primary Chronicle, in the early 11th century, Anthony, a Christian monk from Esphigmenon monastery on Mount Athos, originally from Liubech of the Principality of Chernigov (in the current territory of northern Ukraine), returned to Kyivan Rus and settled in the city of Kyiv as a missionary of monastic tradition. He chose a cave at the Berestov Mount that overlooked the Dnieper River and a community of disciples soon grew. Prince Iziaslav I of Kyiv (1024 – 1078) ceded the whole mount to the Anthonite monks who founded a monastery built by architects from Constantinople.

(*) 1147 – 2022: This weekend (10-11 September), Moscow celebrated the 875th anniversary of its foundation. This confirms that Russia does not deny Moscow did not exist before the baptism of the people of Kyivan Rus.

Photo : The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Photo: kurs.com.ua

[Further reading about FORB in Ukraine on HRWF website](#)

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