THE IDEOLOGICAL DISENGAGEMENT BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST: IMPACTS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ON RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE UKRAINE WAR

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ABSTRACT

THE IDEOLOGICAL DISENGAGEMENT BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST: IMPACTS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ON RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE UKRAINE WAR

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It is vital to comprehend the ideological aspects of the Russian Federation's assertive foreign policy to be able to make sense of developments observed in the post-Soviet geography. Understanding the deeper implications of Russian-Ukrainian War (2014 and 2022) necessitates the knowledge of how the Russian state formulates its national interests. Constituting an important dimension of changing metanarratives following the end of the Cold War, the ideational aspects of the Russian Orthodox Church play a role in the formulation of a post-Soviet Russian state ideology and have resolute implications for present day geopolitics. The prevailing literature presents that the ROC is essentially an entity that functions in cooperation with Russian state interests. The analysis that this study revolves around is centered on the assertion that while the ROC and state have a harmonious relationship, ROC is not merely subordinated and has a function as an ideological component in post-Soviet Russian foreign policy.

Keywords: The Russian Orthodox Church, Ukraine War, Russian foreign policy

ÖZ

RUSYA VE BATI ARASINDAKİ İDEOLOJİK AYRIŞMA: RUS ORTODOKS KİLİSESİNİN RUS DIŞ POLİTİKASI VE UKRAYNA SAVAŞI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİ

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Sovyet sonrası coğrafyada gözlenen gelişmelere anlam verebilmek için Rusya Federasyonu'nun iddialı dış politikasının ideolojik yönlerini kavramak büyük önem taşımaktadır. Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nın (2014 ve 2022) etkilerini özümseyebilmek için, Rus devletinin ulusal çıkarlarını nasıl formüle ettiğinin bilgisine haiz olmak elzemdir. Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesinin ardından değişen üst anlatıların önemli bir boyutunu oluşturan Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'nin (ROK) düşünsel yönleri, Sovyet sonrası bir Rus devlet ideolojisinin formülasyonunda rol oynar ve günümüz jeopolitiği için önemli çıkarımlara sahiptir. Yaygın literatür, ROK'un esas olarak Rus devlet çıkarlarıyla iş birliği içinde çalışan bir varlık olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışmanın etrafında döndüğü analiz, ROK ve devlet uyumlu bir ilişkiye sahipken, ROK'un sadece devlete tabi olmadığı ve Sovyet sonrası Rus dış politikasında ideolojik bir bileşen olarak bir işleve sahip olduğu iddiasına yönelik olarak geliştirilmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi, Ukrayna Savaşı, Rus dış politikası

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) maintains a unique place in the study of Russia-induced geopolitical developments in the Eurasia region and the underlying mechanisms of Russian state ideology. As an agent of Russian political influence, the ROC has been subject to a vast number of discussions that aim to elucidate its precise nature. These discussions are mainly centered on the query of whether the ROC is a typical religious institution or a body with a distinct agenda and ties to the Russian state. (Willems, 2006)

As documented at the onset of the Russian – Ukrainian War in 2014, certain statements and declarations of the ROC brought it to the center of attention in many mediums including Western media and channels of scholarly inquiry. One noteworthy remark put forward by Patriarch Kirill was that "armed units in Ukraine's southern region were not Russian soldiers but self-defense forces fearing for their safety under the new order in Kiev". (Heneghan and Baczynska, 2014) This statement not only mirrored Putin's discourse at the time but also retained a tone purported at deriding the West. Furthermore, Kirill's use of the infamous phrase "little green men" while referring to Russia-backed separatists in the Donbas region is recollected in dominant media outlets as an attempt to downplay the threat of invasion Ukraine faced in 2014. This also brought criticism to the substance and integrity of the discourse of the ROC with regard to issues pertaining to Ukraine.

Making headlines in such instances alongside a long running infamy emanating from the "altar and throne" alliance between ROC and Russian state (Chawryto, 2016), the ROC's discourse on the war in 2014 has widely been referenced by dominant Western media to be pro-Kremlin. Departing from these

establishments, I seek to adopt a more detailed outlook on the ROC so that deeper connotations of its political and ideational profiles could be uncovered with respect to the evolving conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Through the case of the Russian offensive in Ukraine in 2014 and 2022, this thesis aims to assess the role of the ROC as an institution contributing to the political and ideological contentions of the Russian state in its near abroad policies. In other words, this thesis aims to find out whether the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) acts as an ideological component in Russian foreign policy towards the former Soviet republics. If this is the case, to further analyze the key aspects of the meta-narrative driving the relationship between the state and the ROC. In order to do this, I will conduct a critical evaluation of the scholarly literature on the ideological nature of the ROC and its discourse on the Russia - Ukraine war (2014 and 2022). This thesis thus has a dual objective:

The first objective of this thesis is to illustrate the specific properties of the ROC that define its role and position as an ideological component in Russian foreign policy and conceptualize the place of the ROC in state politics. To be able to vividly portray such a distinction, the political history of the ROC will be outlined and the existing accounts of cooperation and conflict between the ROC, state, and other actors will be analyzed. The notion, surrounding the relationship between the ROC and the state, described as the "symphonia" (Anderson, 2007) (Antonov, 2020) (Leuştean, 2011), maintains a significant presence in the literature and will be discussed to further our understanding of the political role of the ROC in the Russian society. Foreign policy is one of the key areas where the aforementioned "symphonia" relation between state and ROC is observed. Therefore, the chapter discussing the dynamics of the relationship between the ROC and Russian foreign policy will follow the chapter on the political history of the ROC.

After establishing a firm understanding of the current and historical account of the political and ideological role of the ROC in the Russian statecraft, the impact and implications of this role will be studied with respect to the Russia – Ukraine war which occurred following the Euromaidan protests (2013 - 2014), followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea. Moving on, the parts of the metanarrative shaping the ongoing struggle, concerning the worldview of the ROC and the Russian state alike, will be documented to further illustrate the elements of the ideology embedded in the activities and discourse of the ROC in the context of the Russian offensive in Ukraine in 2014 and 2022. This chapter will also include an evaluation of the Russian national identity-building process post-1991 and the ROC's place in it as well as the meta-narrative of Great (Holy) Russia in the context of the shared messianic role of the Russian state and ROC. Another question asked by this thesis revolves around how the ROC's worldview and interests can be likened to qualities of a post–Soviet state-centered ideology that explains developments within and outside the Russian Federation.

It can be readily asserted that, to this day, the corpus of works that are related to the subjects of this thesis have mostly been descriptive. (Papkova, 2011) Accordingly, this study bears significance since it seeks to incorporate, in an interdisciplinary fashion, the concept of 'ideology' to examine, synthesize and restructure ongoing discussions centered on the relationship between ROC and the Russian state within the context of the RF-Ukraine war (2014 and 2022). Before progressing to the arguments of this thesis, the definitions of various terms need to be introduced and the assumptions centered on some key concepts need to be elucidated. I will do this in the following part on the conceptual framework.

To pinpoint and illustrate the ideological orientation of the post-Soviet Russian state, it is central to discern the process to which it assigns meaning to phenomena. In order to be able to establish and outline the primary assumptions surrounding this analysis, a constructivist approach to Russian foreign policy,

post-Soviet state ideology, and Russian national identity will be employed. The topic of national identity will be further elaborated on in an interdisciplinary framework incorporating elements from the relevant theory of social psychology as presented by Clunan (2009)'s work on aspirational constructivism.

From this perspective, it can be maintained that the Russian Federation, in a degree of harmony with the ROC, assigns meaning to the idea of the 'Russian World' such that it functions as a historical basis for Russian identity and geographical/transnational influence. From this perspective, it conceptualizes the post-Cold War global power structure as an artifact of historical injustice from a political standpoint and considers Western ideals such as democracy, human rights, rule of law and individualism as malicious elements that are targeted at disintegrating (debilitating) and degrading its own culture which is organically molded by tradition and religion (namely the values of Orthodox Christianity) (Willems, 2006). Furthermore, it distinctions as a part of its national interest, the mission to confront and derail the proliferation of such ideals throughout its territory (both in terms of its sovereignty and historical boundaries). (Suslov, 2014) (Anderson, 2007) (Makrides, 2009)

The main premises of this thesis will be built upon assessments of the main themes and findings of scholarly works centered on the ROC. In the first chapter, I will explore how the post-Soviet Russian state ideology is conceptualized. To be able to make the connection to the ROC, my analysis will be centered on the parallels between ideology as a scholarly concept and the ROC as an influential figure in the post-Soviet Russian political sphere. The approach I will utilize to explain ideology as a scholarly concept will bear references to the distinctions Huntigton (1993) establishes through his works focusing on the relevance of geo-cultural factors in forthcoming dynamics of international power structures. Followingly, I will provide a background on how the ROC is a non-state actor that is relevant in the context of the Russian -Ukrainian War (2014 and 2022).

After establishing the necessary details on the wider-scale splash effects of the protracted crisis in 2022, I will progress to the second chapter where I define and analyze the political history of the ROC itself. The transformations of the body and the types of relations it experiences in the wide timeframe of its existence will be key factors in illustrating its role as an ideological component in post-Soviet Russian foreign policy which will be further examined in the third chapter centered on the role of ideology which is driven by the connections between post-Soviet Russian foreign policy and the Russian-World metanarrative. In this chapter, I will also focus on the process of post-Soviet national identity formation through an interdisciplinary outlook centered on relevant theories from social psychology as outlined by Clunan (2009).

In the fourth chapter, I will shift my attention towards the war itself where I analyze the ROC's discourse in the war alongside the impacts that the instability has on the relationship between the church structures. I will also reflect on the accounts of symphonious cooperation and the ostensible ties between the ROC and Russian state structures as brought forward by the acute and protracted phases of the war.

In the fifth and final chapter, I will synthesize my arguments to bring forward the role of the ROC as an important actor in the ideological metanarrative of the war. My analysis in this chapter will bring together discussions on Russian foreign policy objectives, the impacts of Putin's tenure (as the most significant political actor in post-Soviet Russia), western foreign policy exceptionalism in relation to an assertive Russian civilization ideal, the similarities of approach to Ukraine shared by ROC and Russian state, elements of Russian nationalist discourse, the ROC as the component of a metanarrative centered on viewing Ukraine and Russia as parts of a nation. I will sum up the implications of the aforementioned topics in my conclusion where I will clarify how the ROC emerges from the center of all these questions. As per the primary objective of this thesis, it is vital to establish a background to further the discussions on the ideology of the ROC.

Concurrent with the teachings, practices, and discourse of the ROC, such meanings assigned by the RF to the above-mentioned phenomena could be regarded as components that have a part in the formulation of the post–Soviet Russian state ideology. This description constitutes the main assumption of this paper in problematizing the properties of the concept of “ideology”. To be able to further the discussion on the ideological role of the ROC in Russian foreign policy, I will illustrate the main assumptions of this paper regarding what constitutes an “ideology”.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALIZING THE POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN STATE IDEOLOGY

When studying the concept of ideology, it is often noted as Freeden (2006) explains, that importance is granted to the fact that the study of ideology itself has retained an interpretational conflict between political theorists which has until recently devalued it as an area of scholarly inquiry. Regardless, as the argument continues, the study of ideology has gradually evolved to include elements that deem it to be the effort to understand "the most typical form of political thinking" and "what is at the heart of the political". This perspective attributes a greater significance to the study of the concept.

Departing from this assertion on the value of the term, Fawn (2003) advocates the notion that while ideology by itself couldn't necessarily be regarded as a standalone guiding principle of post-communist foreign policies, its role shouldn't be dismissed altogether and conceptualizes the ideological foreign policy as one that is recognized as "against the status - quo". In certain respects, this definition fits the great power struggle narrative attributed to the ideological overtones of (Orthodox) Christian messianism and the value-based discourse of the ROC. (Sidorov, 2006)

Concurrently, the ideological role of the ROC in the Russia – Ukraine war could be better determined through the facilitation of a multi-dimensional definition of ideology which is attained from a commitment to deciphering the properties of the rivalry or confrontation between Ukraine, which after the cold war, consistently displayed aspirations to the prospect of a pro-Western orientation, and the Russian Federation (RF), which burdens itself with the responsibility to maintain a high level of influence among its periphery to distance itself from

threats to its security, enforce control within and beyond its borders, and sustain stability among its post-Soviet peripheries. (Lepingwell, 1994) The relationship regarding opposition to a 'status quo' is key in this conceptualization.

In essence, this definition aligns the concept of 'ideology' with the post-Cold War geopolitical distinction of 'worldview' and approach to values that are upheld by countries with Western orientation (constituting the status quo for our case) which are, for this thesis, designated and referenced as the USA, UK, NATO as a western-oriented military threat, and EU member-state countries.

Accordingly, the ideologies in question here are conceptualized from a standpoint that intrinsically maintains a binary distinction; the adoption and advocacy of the collectivity of values (that are often affiliated to and championed by the previously clarified Western countries and multilateral bodies) such as democracy, freedom, human rights, and individualism as one ideology or worldview, and their opposition, criticism and/or disqualification and embodiment of a distinct or alternative culture or set of traditions as another.

Noting these preconditions, certain implications and meanings derived from this paper's arguments could be illustrated to provide a sidelining viewpoint to certain parts of Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" discourse as it is based on a narrative of inter – Christian conflict which runs along the lines of Orthodoxy and Orthodox structures in lieu of designating Islam as the sole religious and cultural challenger to Western civilization. (Huntington, 1993) To differentiate itself from the assertions and implications present in Huntington's Clash of Civilizations discourse, this study contemplates the validity of a diversified model which queries the applicability of the teachings of the ROC as an additional tradition-bound cultural challenger element to Western championed values and understanding of civilization.

Correspondingly, this study utilizes a multi-faceted definition of ideology which is employed in context by the clash of interests between Ukraine (in the case of

which the inherent aspirations of the political elite are centered around the growing urge to integrate and synchronize interests with Western structures that constitute the status quo of today's global political-economic order (Lieven, 2011)), and Russia where it is ostensible that national interests are partially formulated based on ideas (co-authored by the ROC) building upon concepts of an alternative worldview bearing various ideational elements. These elements can be listed as the place of tradition in statecraft, the Holy (Great) Rus ideal, the mission to be the protector of Orthodox Slavs, Filofei's conception of "Moscow as the Third Rome" and the national interest derived from the objective to "correct a historical injustice committed to the Russian civilization in the post-Cold War world order" (to which the West refers as "revisionist expansionism and irredentist revanchism") (Engström, 2014).

Building on this conceptualization, this study regards ideology (within the priorly outlined parameters) as a key element in the study of the geopolitical and ideational dynamics of the Russia – Ukraine war and the political activities of the Russian state in a similar vein. Hence the reason why meta-narratives such as the concept of the "Russian World" and larger themes such as great power politics are affiliated to the ideological prowess of the ROC and its impact during the Russia-Ukraine war in 2014 and 2022.

The currently elevated conflict between Ukraine and Russia and its international connotations formulates a prominent portrayal of the relevance of the issue problematized by this paper. Moving on to the next chapters of this thesis requires the pre-conceptualization of the ROC in terms of its role as a dominant actor in the Russia – Ukraine war.

Concomitant to the objectives of this thesis, the Russia-Ukraine War (2014-2022), validly remaining at the center of international attention, was priorly examined and evaluated from the standpoint of 'great power politics' which was a preexisting term utilized to characterize Russian foreign policy as per the works of Mankoff (2012) and Lieven (2015).

It is evident from ongoing discussions about the emerging risks and global uncertainties resulting from the renewed Russian offensive in 2022, that the Russian – Ukrainian conflict is a multidimensional problem that needs to be considered from a variety of perspectives and frameworks that account for the complexity, multitude, and magnitude of the actors involved.

2.1. Non-State Actors and the Fallout of the Russian – Ukrainian War:

Delving deeper into the details of the dynamics shaping the war, it can be asserted that the invasion became the origin of a barrage of intensive ripple effects that contribute to the aggravation of the ongoing lack of international stability that is inherited from the wreckage left by the global coronavirus pandemic. Such ripple effects vary heavily ranging from the grim albeit slim prospect of a full-scale nuclear war to famine. (Behnassi and El Haiba, 2022) The calamity to be faced by the detrimental economic impacts of proposed and applied economic sanctions to the Russian Federation, along with the overbearing fragility of petroleum prices that directly and indirectly result from them, seem to maintain its place on the horizon. (Liadze, Macchiarelli, Mortimer -Lee and Juanino, 2022) In consideration of the growing involvement in the war, of multilateral bodies such as NATO, OSCE, and UN, a new European and Transatlantic safety structure/order is expected to emerge from this environment of growing instability. (Smith, 2022) The points outlined above underscore the extent of the international repercussions that are to emerge from a confrontation between the RF and Ukraine. Owing to this proposition, it is not erroneous to suggest that such a conflict with grave international impacts also ought to retain multidimensional properties concerning the actors involved.

One other reflection of the war between the RF and Ukraine is the extended area of influence of non-state actors. As globalization changed the dynamics between states and other actors (Josselin and Wallace, 2001), the significance and capabilities of non-state institutions that function in an international or transnational framework remain more relevant than ever.

With intentions catering to verify such a proposition, the roles of non-state actors in the Russian-Ukrainian War have also been elaborated on by Mulford (2016) to further illustrate the heterogeneity of the actors having a noteworthy impact on the war. While an analysis as such provides relevant viewpoints for a plurality of different actors, this study is tailored more towards illuminating ideational elements of one specific actor. Accordingly, the focus of this study will be placed on the ROC and its properties with respect to the post-Soviet state ideology of the Russian Federation (RF).

To be able to decipher the political role of the ROC as an ideological component in Russian foreign policy, I will firstly define the term itself and provide a detailed explanation of its historical transformations.

CHAPTER 3

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Russian Orthodox Church (legally known as the Moscow Patriarchate) is one of the autocephalous or ecclesiastically independent Eastern Orthodox Churches globally. Together with its primate (Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus), the ROC ranks fifth in the Eastern Orthodox order of precedence. The origin of the ROC is traced back to the 9th century when Christianity was introduced into the East Slavic state of Kievan Rus by Greek missionaries from Byzantium and the accepted as the state religion in 988 when the prince of Rus Vladimir and his people were baptized by the clergy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in what is known as the Christianization of Kievan Rus'. (Berktay, 2021) Today the ROC claims exclusive jurisdiction over the Eastern Orthodox Christians, regardless of their ethnic background, so long as they reside in the former Soviet space. The only exception is Georgia. As a non-state actor remaining in the center of this analysis, the ROC and its transformations in political and historical context are significant to the study of Russian politics and society.

This analysis revolves around political lines in the context of relations between church and state among other actors. Therefore, a historical overview of its transformations is useful to decipher the implications of the ROC's political evolution.

The Christian community from which the ROC originated is traditionally known to have been founded by the Apostle Andrew who is thought to have visited the Greek colonies along the coast of the Black Sea somewhere around the 1100s and prophesized the proliferation of a city of utmost importance (for Christianity) among the hills of Kiev. The implications of these prophecies

gradually increased and eventually took the form entailing the notion that Apostle Andrew was the founder of the Christian community in Kiev. Maintaining such a historical significance about continuity, this notion presided the belief among the Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox communities that Kiev was as significant as İstanbul in terms of their importance to and role in the spread of Christianity. (Berktay, 2021) In light of findings documented by contemporary historians, this tale can be more accurately considered a legend. Nevertheless, it provides a useful conceptual background for the historical origin and evolution of the church structures.

It could be asserted that political considerations and intentions had an influence on the choice of faith by the elites of the era. The Slavs had a long-standing basis of affairs with the Byzantine Empire. Additionally, the extent of military and cultural power of the Byzantine Empire during the 10th century is an important factor. It is feasible to formulate that Kievan Rus' ideal to integrate with the Byzantine Empire on a religious basis would be a pragmatic course of action.

For the first five centuries, the ROC had amicable extents of independence and was subjugated to the Patriarch of Constantinople who were to choose the Metropolitan, or leader of the ROC from among the Greeks. This condition ceased to exist following Grand Duke Yaroslav's appointment of Hilarion as the first non-Greek Metropolitan of Kievan Rus' in 1051.

Numerous monasteries were established in Russia very soon following Christianity's formal spread. They developed into important centers of ecclesiastical and cultural activity where histories, literature, and icons were produced. Kiev Pechersk Lavra, one of the most well-known monasteries, was established in 1051 and is still a major Orthodox shrine today.

Kiev served as the Metropolitan's home until the 13th century, but due to the city's downfall during the Golden Horde invasion in 1299, the house was moved to Vladimir and then, subsequently, in 1325, to Moscow.

This period is marked by the timeline following the reduction of the political, cultural, and economic significance of Kiev because of the Mongol invasion. The transformations observed during this timeline led to the course of relocations of significant pious figures at the time. Hence the reason the residence of Kiev was first moved to Vladimir in 1299 by Metropolitan Maximus and to Moscow in 1325 by Metropolitan Peter. This could be regarded as another point of initiation where Moscow gained a property that was meaningful under religious considerations.

The Greek Isidor (1436) was the last Metropolitan appointed by Constantinople. He was a supporter of the so-called Union – the union of the Roman and Byzantine churches. However, in the Byzantine Empire, this union was supported only by Patriarch and Emperor. Eventually, the unity of churches did not happen. Moreover, the final split of churches and the establishment of Catholicism and Orthodoxy as different branches of Christianity happened.

The final Metropolitan appointed by Constantinople was the Greek Isidor (1436). He supported the unification of the Byzantine and Roman churches, known as the so-called Union. However, only the Patriarch and Emperor approved this marriage in the Byzantine Empire. In the end, there was no church unification. In addition, the last church split took place, leading to the creation of Catholicism and Orthodoxy as distinct branches of Christianity. Moscow did not back Metropolitan Isidor's ambitions either. Bishop Iona was chosen by Moscow Grand Duke Vladimir in 1448 to lead the Russian Church.

He did not take the Byzantine Empire's acceptance of the nomination into consideration (to recap, Emperor and Byzantine Patriarch supported the Union). As a result, the Russian Church has been de facto independent since December 15, 1448.

The Russian Church was officially recognized as an independent entity by the end of the 16th century, and Metropolitan was elevated to the rank of Patriarch.

Within the Orthodox Church, it is the highest position. Since that time, the leader of the Russian Church has had formal and recognized equality with Greek Patriarchs in terms of rights.

The First Patriarchal Period, which lasted from 1589 until 1700, is recognized in the history of the Russian Church. During that time, the church expanded its authority and the Patriarch began to have a big impact on politics in the nation. Since 1625, the church has also been successful in obtaining the exclusion of many of its holdings from the purview of the government. It essentially turned into a state within a state.

The ensuing developments following the Mongol invasions were of a comparatively less significant nature by the time confrontations between Orthodoxy and the Catholic Church took the stage. One aspect of the historical significance of the ROC is apparent in the events which occurred in the aftermath of the 1439 Florence Council where the primacy of the Pope was recognized by the Eastern church as a result of the union signed between the Roman Church and the camp of Orthodox hierarchs from Byzantium and Metropolitan Isidore (who represented the Russian Church). The importance stems from the fact that Moscow Prince Vasili II rejected the resolution of the Council of Florence and expelled Isidore from his position and Moscow. It can be observed from this account that tensions among religious lines that are to be experienced and observed way into the future all retain historical counterparts and a detailed background.

In December 1448 a Russian bishop Jonas was installed by the Council of Russian bishops in Moscow as Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Russia without the blessing from Constantinople. This process entailed the beginning of an independent church structure in the North-Eastern Russian (Moscow) part of the Russian Church. (Obolensky, 1957) In essence, this occurrence bolstered the structure of the ROC in its initial times of existence and also fueled the development of the theory that regarded Moscow as the Third Rome following

the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire in 1453. This term was coined by Philoteus of Pskov in the 16th century. (Poe, 2001) According to this theory, Moscow is the legitimate successor to Constantinople and the Primate of the Moscow Church is the head of all Russian Church. (Sidorov, 2006) This understanding also instilled a new property or dimension to what is and/or should be under the jurisdiction and influence of the Russian Church. As the "Third Rome", Moscow was to be the sanctuary of all Orthodox Slavs and the ROC was to be its protector. Stemming from a theological basis, this idea proved its lasting power by remaining in Russian ideational discourse and politics throughout history, with certain periods of taking center stage and also blending into the background (as observed during the Soviet timeline). To further elucidate the role and impact of the ROC in the political-ideological sphere, its transformations during the imperial, Soviet, and post–Soviet periods will be examined in the following parts of this paper.

Following the incorporation of eastern regions of the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth into the Tsardom of Russia as a result of the Council of Pereyaslav 1654, the status as the Metropolitan of Kyiv and all of Rus' was transferred to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1686. There was a role of the Ottoman pressure, on the Constantinople Patriarchate to transfer the status from Constantinople to Moscow, as exemplified from developments stemming from the influence of the Russian agent Sophia Alekseyevna (Hughes, 1985). One of the direct consequences of this handover was the widening of the administrative jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus' (which was later translated into the Holy Synod of Russia) to encompass millions of additional believers and half a dozen dioceses. Hence the reason why there was a significant Ukrainian presence in the Russian Church that continued into the 18th century. These developments document the ROC's establishment and growth in terms of influence and sustaining stable and durable ties with the state. While the developments up to this point featured a consistent and harmonious coextistence of the ROC and Russian Tsardom's rulers, the reign of Peter the Great brought a change.

The reign of Peter the Great between the years 1682 and 1725 could be characterized as an era of modernization of the Russian government, army, and society. (Gale, 2005) During this period Russia's power and influence in its region also increased. One noteworthy development that occurred in these years was the control and restrictions that were placed on ROC. As Peter the Great was not religious and had low regard for the Church, he placed it under tight governmental control by means of replacing the Patriarch with a Holy Synod which he controlled. He did this following the death of Patriarch Adrian in 1700 by preventing a successor from being named and formally establishing the Holy and Supreme Synod in 1721 by following the advice of Theophan Prokopovich, the Archbishop of Pskov. This is an interesting example of cooperation between a Tsar and religious figure that lets a political figure prevail over religious order and in this order, Archbishop Stephen Yavorsky with the Holy Snod was to govern the Church instead of a single primate. This decentralized form of church governance made it easier to be controlled by the Tsar and this organizational scheme of the ROC prevailed until the Russian revolution of 1917. Shortly after the revolution, the patriarchate was restored by the decision of the Local Council Tikhon was named the new patriarch.

3.1. The Russian Revolution and the Civil War:

During the years leading up to the Russian Revolution, there were 55,173 Russian Orthodox Churches and 29,593 chapels, 112,629 priests and deacons, 550 monasteries, and 475 convents with a total of 95,259 monks and nuns in Russia. (Shevzov, 2003) The year 1917 marked a significant turning point in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church as it was the year the Russian empire began to disintegrate following the abdication of the Czar. In this sense, the government's direct control of the Church was over.

Shortly after the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government in Petrograd on 25 October 1918, the Local Council of the ROC restored the Patriarchate. The

following months witnessed the appointment of Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow as the first Russian Patriarch following 200 years of Synodal rule.

The Bolshevik-controlled government of Soviet Russia enacted a decree which separated the church from state and school in early February 1918. The decree which was centered on and targeted at the motivation to foster the freedom to "profess any religion or profess none" was also designed to deprive religious organizations of the right to ownership of property and legal status. (Corley, 1996) This attitude of Bolshevik officials also marked the inception of resentment between ROC clergy and state officials as exemplified by the unrest in Petrograd's Alexander Nevsky Lavra between the Bolsheviks trying to take control of the monastery's premises and the believers, on 1 February. (Anderson, 1994) This unrest resulted in Patriarch Tikhon's issuing of a proclamation that anathematized the perpetrators. (Palmieri, 1917)

During the Russian Civil War that began in 1918, the ROC leadership and clergy displayed an inclination and resolve to remain politically neutral. Nevertheless, the Soviet authorities recognized them as a "counter-revolutionary" force and acted to suppress them until their eventual liquidation. The fact that 28 bishops and 1,200 priests were executed in the first five years following the Bolshevik revolution conveys the degree of this aggressive stance.

3.2. The Soviet Period:

The Soviet Union, officially established in December 1922, was the main state to have the disposal of religion as an ideological goal embraced by the ruling Communist Party. Toward that end, the state system seized church property, disparaged religion, ridiculed devotees, and engendered realism and skepticism in schools. State interests were the main determinant of stances towards religions. In that vein, most organized religions remained within the boundaries set by law yet Orthodox clergy and devotees were treated by the Soviet policing apparatus as hostile to revolutionary ideals and were constantly exposed to

formal prosecutions on political charges, arrests, exiles, imprisonment in camps, and later incarceration in mental hospitals.

Accordingly, the years between 1917 and 1935 saw the detainment of 130,000 Eastern Orthodox priests. Of these, 95,000 received the death penalty an in 1925, shortly after the death of Patriarch Tikhon, the Soviet authorities ruled out the Patriarchal election, arguably leading to a forced change in the Church's attitude towards the state. (Pospielovsky, 1988)

This change was reflected by the declaration legitimizing Soviet dominance issued by acting Patriarch Metropolitan Sergius in 1927. (Grabbe, 1971) This declaration pledged the church's cooperation with the government and was disowned by a considerable portion of the church's parishes. By this declaration, Sergius allowed himself the authority that he, being a delegate of detained Metropolitan Peter and acting despite his desire to the contrary, reserved no right to assume as indicated by the XXXIV Apostolic canon, which prompted a split with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia abroad and the Russian True Orthodox Church (Russian Catacomb Church) inside the Soviet Union, as they purportedly stayed devoted to the Canons of the Apostles, proclaiming the piece of the congregation led by Metropolitan Sergius schism, coined as Sergianism. (Kenworthy, 2020) (Berktay, 2021) Due to this canonical disagreement, the question of which church has been the legitimate successor of the Russian Orthodox Church that had existed before 1925 has been up to debate.

In the 1929 elections, the Orthodox Church endeavored to position itself as a full-scale opposition group to the Communist Party and attempted to run its candidates against them. Article 124 of the 1936 Soviet Constitution officially conserved the freedom of religion inside the Soviet Union, and alongside initial proclamations of it being a multi-candidate political election, the Church again attempted to run its religious candidates in 1937 elections. (Geren, 1961) The sole existence of this article alone poses questions regarding the extent of impact

the ROC can have on the Russian state in terms of projecting power. (Willems, 2006)

Nevertheless, the support for multicandidate elections was retracted several months before the elections were held and no candidate of the ROC was elected in neither 1929 nor 1937.

Although the first half of the twentieth century constituted difficult times for the ROC in terms of oppression imposed by the Communist Party, the onset of the second world war partially changed this dynamic. Following Nazi Germany's attack against the Soviet Union in 1941, Joseph Stalin revived the ROC to foster patriotic sentiments for support during the war. While this period displayed the reemergence of the dialogue between the ROC and the state, its pragmatic nature kept it from taking the form of an actual legitimate reconciliation.

Hence the reason after the war, new and inescapable mistreatment of the church was instituted under the authority of Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev. The second round of oppression, harassment, and church terminations occurred somewhere in the range of 1959 and 1964 when Nikita Khrushchev was in office. Accordingly, the number of Orthodox churches fell from around 22,000 in 1959 to around 8,000 in 1965 (Davis, 1991); priests, monks, and devotees were killed or imprisoned, and the number of functional monasteries was reduced to less than twenty.

After Khrushchev's overthrow, the Church and the Communist Party stayed in antagonistic conditions until 1988. Practically, the focus of this contention was that openly religious individuals couldn't join the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which implied that they couldn't hold any political office. This constituted an incompatibility, however, as, among the general population, large numbers remained religious. (Chumachenko, 2015)

Some Orthodox devotees and even ministers partook in protest movements and became prisoners of faith. The Orthodox ministers Gleb Yakunin, Sergiy Zheludkov, and others went through years in Soviet jails and exile for their endeavors in protecting freedom of worship. (Waller, 2015) It is especially meaningful to the document the experiences of Gleb Yakunin in terms of explaining the oppressive conjecture that was inherent in the Soviet treatment of the ROC. Gleb Yakunin, a priest who opposed the Soviet government's restrictions on religious freedom, criticized his Russian Orthodox Church's authorities for failing to uphold those freedoms and spent a large portion of the 1980s in a prison camp and exile.

The first document is Father Yakunin's (co-written) lengthy letter to Patriarch Alexy I, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church at the time, in which they detailed the persecution of Christians by the government under Nikita S. Khrushchev and criticized the church leadership for failing to oppose the regime. The church suspended the two priests from their positions in 1966 until they made amends. Despite the fact that other bishops agreed with the letter's main points, Father Yakunin's appeal was viewed as going against Orthodox tradition.

Yakunin was one of the founders of the 1976-founded Christian Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers in the USSR, which was established to track religious believers' repression. Due to this, he was detained in 1979 and sentenced to five years in jail on anti-Soviet activity accusations. He served this time at the Lefortovo Prison in Moscow and subsequently in Perm, after which he was exiled to the Yakutsk region, close to the Arctic Circle. He was reinstated to the priesthood in 1987 following his release under Mikhail S. Gorbachev's amnesty.

Yakunin was also one of the activists who contributed to the 1989 revival of the Moscow Helsinki Group. From 1990 to 1995, he was a member of parliament, first in the Supreme Soviet of Russia and then in the State Duma. He co-wrote

legislation safeguarding religious freedom after the fall of the Soviet Union, which made it possible for places of worship to reopen.

As a member of a parliamentary committee looking into the overthrow of Mr. Gorbachev in August 1991, he was given access to K.G.B. archives after the Soviet Union fell. By releasing documents that he claimed demonstrated that Patriarch Alexy II, who was elected in 1990, and other senior bishops were K.G.B. operatives, Father Yakunin infuriated the church. He was defrocked by the church in 1993 as a result of his refusal to give up politics. Nevertheless, he was elected to the Duma, the first post-Soviet legislature. In 1997, he was declared excommunicated due to "anti-church acts."

Father Yakunin was also denounced for his affiliation with the Kiev Patriarchate, a split Ukrainian church, and for later founding the Apostolic Orthodox Church, another split Ukrainian church. He advocated on behalf of Pussy Riot in 2012 after the female punk group was imprisoned for offending religious believers following their performance of a "punk prayer" against Russian President Vladimir V. Putin at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral. By 1987 the number of functioning churches in the Soviet Union had tumbled to 6,893 and the number of monasteries reduced to only 18. (Pospielovsky, 1998)

Another drastic turn of events occurred during the rule of Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s. Many church buildings were returned to the church as a result of new political and social freedoms granted by the reforms. Eventually, the government-supported celebrations of the millennial anniversary of the Christianization of Kievan Rus' which took place throughout Moscow and other cities in 1988 marked a pivotal point in the history of the ROC and were succeeded by the reopening of many older churches and monasteries.

3.3. The Post-Soviet Recovery:

After 70 years of repression, Orthodox Christianity made its partial return to Russian society through Leningrad Metropolitan Alexy's ascension to the patriarchal throne in 1990. This process morphed the ROC into a structure that somewhat resembled its pre-Soviet form. (Fajfer and Rimestad, 2010) In this incarnation, there existed around 15,000 churches that were re-opened or newly built up until the end of Patriarch Alexy's tenure. This process outlining the rebirth of the ROC also continued after Patriarch Krill succeeded Alexy.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the ROC maintained a more stable place in the Russian society and political ecosystem. As a perk of this deeper-rooted position, the ROC was able to reflect a more assertive political image as illustrated by its adoption of Basis of the Social Concept in August 2000 (Clover, 2008) and Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights in 2008.

Patriarch Alexy's reign was characterized by a resurgence of the ROC's influence and reprisal for the persecution it experienced and hence reflected a high drive for the restoration and reopening of tarnished churches and monasteries alongside the construction of new ones. (Bogumil and Voronina, 2020) Aleksey's speech in the consecration of the Sanctuary of Russian New Martyrs and Confessors in Butovo where he stated "Throughout the history of Christianity, there were no mass persecutions in the world as terrible as those suffered by the Russian Church in the twentieth century. [. . .] But the martyrs who suffered for Christ strengthened it with their prayers at the Throne of the Lord. [. . .] And now, the triumph associated with the restored unity of the Russian Orthodox Church has emerged as a testimony to the inexhaustible power of God's grace, healing human infirmities and compensating for our shortcomings." reflects this drive for reprisal. (Payne, 2010)

On 5 December 2008, Patriarch Alexy died and was succeeded by Metropolitan Krill of Smolensk who took on the mantle of Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus′ after being elected by the ROC Local Council by 508 votes out of a total of 700. He was enthroned on 1 February 2009.

During the reign of Patriarch Krill, the ROC maintained close cooperation with the Kremlin in line with Vladimir Putin's intent to mobilize Russian Orthodoxy within Russia and abroad. The nature of the affiliation between ROC and Putin is documented by Patriarch Krill's endorsement of Putin's election in 2012 and his reference to Putin's initial tenure as "God's miracle". (Bryanski, 2012) Their relationship beared significance as Kirill regarded Putin's tenure as a space where the "Third Rome" doctrine was revived in terms of Russia's distancing itself from the Liberal West after the invasion of Crimea in 2014 and expressing its uniqueness in global affairs. (Amarasinghe, 2020).

With regard to he most recent transformations of the Russian Orthodox Church, there is a shift in the understanding of importance of the Church both before and during the Soviet era. The current Russian Orthodox Church has inherited from pre-revolutionary Russia the "tight connectivity of religious and ethnic identities, which regarded religion a powerful force of cultural tradition and an inherent part of ethnic tradition." "Religion was kept as a custom of rites and rituals, and hence, a part of ethnic culture—not as a private matter, but a part of general, cultural, historical, and ethnic traditions," according to the secularized Soviet Union.

The preceding two decades were divided into three periods, during which the theological doctrine changed to reflect the shifting values of the Russian populace, it is questioned how these changes affected the recent history of the Russian Orthodox Church. A new Russian society saw significant changes in daily living in the early 1990s. One of the prominent changes was more religious diversity. At the time, religious legislation and the populace's openness to new

ideas both supported religious pluralism. Adopted in 1990, the Law on Freedom of Beliefs promoted "a personal choice of religion, on the idea that religion is a person's private matter."

The statute treated all religious groups equally, which facilitated the entry of numerous religious organizations into Russia. In addition to highlighting the problem of proselytism among these various religious organizations in Russia, it is emphasized how this perception of equality encouraged a sense of competitiveness among religious groups.

The ROC's response was to become defensive and take an isolationist stance, which involved highlighting the Church's cultural and ethnic roots in relation to the history of the Russian people and considering Russian territory to be historically canonical territory. This initiative gained more support by the late 1990s as the general public's attitudes shifted from an enthusiastic acceptance of Western ideas to more traditional and nationalistic ones and as the historical relationship between religion and ethnicity was increasingly acknowledged. The ROC itself started to perceive other religious groups "through the lens of ethnicity," which improved relations with Russia's non-Christian religions—the religions of our neighbors.

Proselytizing was no longer a major priority by the middle of the 2000s, and the Russian Orthodox Church worked to strengthen its bonds with other Christian faiths while "maintaining Christian morals and values." The Church began to "strengthen its position in the country and in society," exerting a tremendous amount of power, and even started to spread to other countries, including those with a non-dominantly Orthodox population.

The ROC's opinions on religious plurality and diversity throughout the past two decades have been formed by its own position an sense of security or uneasiness. The Russian Orthodox Church was able to survive the changes in Russian

society and the influx of new religious ideals as well as strengthen its position as an essential component of Russian culture by focusing on the “long-existing tradition of inter-correlation between religion and ethnicity” and adapting to the idea of religion as a personal matter.

CHAPTER 4

IDEOLOGY IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The main properties of the modern-day Russian state, in contrast with that of its imperial and Soviet heritage, bear much less emphasis on ideology. Nevertheless, the argument that Russia's doctrines are devoid of an ideology and will continue to be so as long as Russian objectives to develop a European identity are fulfilled, as put forward by Light (2003), seems to have only partially stood the test of time as the converse seems to be more applicable to the situation today in considering the developments observed in Crimea in 2014 and the ongoing war in 2022 alongside other accounts of aggressive Russian foreign policy in her periphery such as its invasion of Georgia in 2008 and intervention in the Syrian civil war.

From a broader perspective, Russian foreign policy doctrines could be viably regarded as being in a stage of ideological and theoretical uncertainty stemming from questions of national identity, as Tsygankov and Tsygankov (2004) note, and the aim to illuminate the said complexity necessitates a deeper understanding of the ongoing trends and motifs related a variety of factors. Russia's drift apart from Europe, rising Eurasianism, and involvement of the ROC in fields outside religion.

On a different note, the ideological aspects of Russian foreign policy could more openly be observed in Engström (2014)'s exploration of the connection between the 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (RF) and Christian messianism inherent in the conservative of end contemporary Russian intellectual thought, drawing a pathway towards a synthesis between the ROC and foreign policy.

4.1. Russian World Metanarrative:

The concept of the “Russian World” or more descriptively, the term illustrating deeper properties of Russian Civilization, could be elaborated on by referring to it as an ideology proclaiming the existence of an imagined transnational community of people living primarily in the post-Soviet area and identifying themselves with Russia in various ways. Essentially, the “Russian World" is an idea that distinguishes Russian civilization and history from other civilizations and is not only used by the Russian leadership but also by various communities in the post-Soviet bloc as an internal and external legitimation strategy. (Kosienskowski, 2021) In this strategy, the primordial ties between Orthodox Christianity and the Slavic people maintain a central place.

With reference to this ideology’s impact on Russia’s assertive foreign policy, it could be stated that such a narrative extending to conceptualize a transnational Russian society is a convenient basis for the RF to justify the annexation of Crimea as proposed by Biersack and O’Lear (2014) who regard Crimea’s annexation as an eastward shift on Russia’s part. Such narratives that are utilized could be deemed as bearing significant ideological qualities as the Russian government’s geopolitical and historical imaginations of Crimea, examined through elements inherent in the teachings of Orthodox messianism, bestows the spirit of the Russian state system a role and mission similar to the one priorly found in the Tsarist past.

In a different realm, Suslov’s (2014) utilization of Michel Foucault’s concept of “heterotopia” to conversely name Patriarch Krill’s imagination of “Holy Rus” a “homotopic”, underscoring a unified and integrated (yet heterogeneous in nature) space that denotes a “transnational society that goes beyond the “nation-state” and offers new ways to give meaning to identity in the post-Soviet space”. This form of an absolutist religious conception could be considered to have a geopolitical aspect as well as an ideological one.

In locating the concept of the Russian World in the geopolitical discourse after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, one can iterate that there are certain elements of continuality and change. Nuances observed in the usage of the term by Vladimir Putin in official texts, including his essay on the matter of Ukrainian identity, encapsulate the assumption that there had been no such thing as a separate Ukrainian nation. O'Loughlin, and Kolosov (2016). This approach which sweeps aside differences in language, history, and culture — especially political culture — between Russians and Ukrainians, is mainly regarded as a denial of the Ukrainian's right to statehood. Its main idea which originated in the mid-19th century and is deeply rooted not only in Putin's discourse but also in the history of Russian political thought, is that the Russians and Ukrainians constitute one people as per the nature of the tripartite Russian nation consisting of the Great Russians (today's Russians), Little Russians, or Ukrainians, and the White Russians, or Belarusians. There are perspectives that regard this conception to be an attempt to suppress the rising Ukrainian national movement as witnessed in the imperial authorities' prohibition of Ukrainian-language publications in the empire and enforcing crackdown upon Ukrainian political and cultural movements. (Feklyunina, 2015) (Lutsevych, 2016) As per these discussions, the Great Russia concept is often regarded as a controversial concept that outside Russia is attributed closer to Russian foreign policy orientations.

An influential advocate of this school of thought is Vladimir Volkov who suggested in 1992 that the Foreign Ministry . . . doesn't know the Slavic world. . .. I think we just go on squandering our historical legacy. . .. [There are a lot] of opportunities of using the Slavic diaspora and the Russian diaspora in our foreign policy interests."

It is resourceful to take note of the fact that ideas such as Volkov's were proliferating in the years witnessing the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the formation of the post-Soviet Russian state. As such times entailed significant changes for the state and people, it is not erroneous to suggest that it was a

phenomenal moment for the reinitialization of more ancient narratives and conceptions of Russia's might reaching back to the imperial days.

The implications of this metanarrative on Russian statecraft are most visible in the realm of interstate relations, which are based on material power and cultural factors or in other words, geocultural realpolitik tinged with Great Russian chauvinism. (Clunan, 2009) The restoration of Russia's great power role was initiated with a return to its historical policy of creating a buffer of docile states on the periphery or its "neighborhood". While there are many examples of this aggressive foreign policy stance of Putin, his actions and interventions in Belarus, Moldova, Transnistria, Georgia, the 2020 Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, Kazakhstan, and, most intensely, Ukraine are the most referenceable.

4.2. National Identity Formation

The evolving discussions of the Russian state's ideological dimension also impact the dynamics of internal Russian politics as Teper (2016) highlights the shift in official identity discourse and refers to it as "from state to nation". It is in this instant that the role of ideology in national identity becomes central to illustrating the properties of a state ideology.

From an interdisciplinary standpoint, interesting parallels between a nation's identity and state ideology could be observed from elements of aspirational constructivism, which draws on insights from social psychology to investigate how self-esteem and historical memories of a state's past create aspirations for its future. In this view: "History does not only serve to generate aspirations based on a state's past. History directly enters into the creation of national interest, influencing how political elites define the situation their state faces in ways the situational approaches outlined above cannot explain. National identities and national interests are therefore historically contingent, as human agents continuously produce and modify them through the public debate over their legitimacy". (Clunan, 2009) By this assessment, it can be formulated that the

post-Soviet Russian national identity formation is contingent on the feeling of grandiose associated with the imperial and Soviet past. An identification as such not only serves to foster the development of nationalistic sentiments that borderline tendencies of “exceptionalism” (Skladanowski, 2019) but also bear messianic elements. (Engström, 2014) Prevailing discussions centered on Russia’s revanchist nature could be tied to this historical reality. Although parts of the post-Soviet Russian political elite did showcase more of a moderate stance which tried to suppress aspirations pertaining to Russia’s historical great power status, they failed to distance such ideals from becoming a central part of post-Soviet Russian national identity. (Clunan, 2009)

As the driving figure behind the utilization of concepts from social psychology to understand post-Soviet Russian national identity, Clunan challenges “the notion that national identities are “primordial” and amount to unchanging cultural, social, or cognitive structures buried in the mists of time or neurobiology” and asserts that the past self can serve as the key identity standard, particularly in times of change where in which the self attempts to verify its present identity.It is implied here that the process of identity formulation is rather selective and in some respects manifests resolutely in times of change. This notion could be synthesized with Tajfel and Forgas (2000) conception of the term, which emphasizes that social identity creation is much more than the purely cognitive classification of groups into ingroups and outgroups in light of the present situation; instead, it is an effective process shaped by one’s past.

Referring back to elements of social psychology, Clunan further elaborates on elements of in-group and out-group dynamics to corroborate the validity of her account of Russian identity formation and while these ideational qualities are associated with a large portion of the Russian political elite perhaps the most influential figure who is to reflect them through their policies is Vladimir Putin.
Despite Putin's comparably Western-friendly orientation and wide utilization of pragmatism in international relations (Morozova, 2009), his "belief in the

greatness of Russia" formed the cornerstone of his "idea" of what Russia really was. As explained by the dynamics outlined by Clunan (2009) Putin's emphasis on Russia's greatness and historical might was predominantly meeting the psychological need to suggest that Russia is different from other smaller European countries. Concepts such as "patriotism", "belief in the greatness of Russia", "statism" and "social solidarity" formed the "base[s] for the unity of Russian society" and the past and was a key factor and accepted "universal". He argued that "the new Russian idea will emerge as a blend of organic amalgamation of universal general human values with traditional Russian values that have stood the test of time, including the test of the turbulent 20th century." The accounts on the mercantilist economic model that is to guard first and foremost, Russian interests are also noteworthy when looking at economic realities today. (Hill and Capelli, 2013)

Although past ideological messianism and efforts to lead an ideologically driven world order were negatively perceived in the initial phase of the rebirth of the modern Russian state from the ashes of it's Soviet heritage, the strong bonds of history and tradition upheld the primordial urge to keep some form of messianism in the center of the state ideology. Referring back to Clunan's assertion, "Despite the rejection of the ideologically driven past, the elite shared common memories of Russia's past as a separate civilization that was not only rooted in ideology but also emerged from Russia's history as a multicultural authoritarian empire as well as its cultural traditions", a larger conclusion could be made in referring back to a key historical observation. At the time of the initial reconstruction of the post-Soviet Russian state ideology immediately following the disintegration of the USSR, parts of the Russian political elite referred to as the "Westernizers" advocated establishing stronger relations with the European countries and predominant free-market structures. (Zimmerman, 2005) Nevertheless, modern Russia's tsarist and Soviet past posed an obstacle to full "emulation of Europe". This was caused by the fact that European civilization was essentially considered distinct from Russian civilization and born the property of an "out-group". The result was apparent in arguably the

most critical point in the post-Soviet Russian breakthrough. In the spring of 1993, forty-five percent of the political elite generally agreed that Russia should follow a "special Russian path" rather than copying "the experiences and achievements of Western civilization". (Kane, 2009)

This observation demonstrates the strength of the patriotic links and bonds that cement the Russian nation. Nationalists, communists, and great power "patriots" alike referred to Russia's glorious history as “a culturally unique civilization destined to differ from the West” and the belief that Russia had a mission composed a significant portion of this notion. This conception of a mission or duty is what reintroduces the idea of messianism in Russian state ideology after erroneous attempts such as Marxism/Leninism. In this viewpoint, aspirations to imitate the West were merely indulgences of “betrayal” to “their pioneering history” and it is in this instant Russia's mission becomes centered on “leading the Slavic or East Slavic world to revive and preserve its cultural autonomy in the face of the Western secular world and the non-Christian world.

The previous examples suggest that the “Russian-World” ideal occupies a significant space in post-Soviet Russian national identity and is explained by differing components of the Russian political elite. The recurring theme remains to be that the boundaries of the “Russian World” has been and will be transcending the boundaries modern day Russian state. In essence the Russian identity is merged with a territory that is transnational under current realities. In this framework, the ROC is an actor that arguably maintains the deepest rooted impact and does not oppose or reject the transnational Russian society conception. In fact, as per the ROC’s area of jurisdiction, a case could be made which suggetss ROC’s embracing of such an ideal. Essentially the Russian national identity adopts the transnational conception of the “Russian World”.

Tying in with the transnational and “expansive” side of this meta-narrative, Goble (2016) elaborates on the fragmentation of Russian national identity and contrasts it to the comparatively sturdier Ukrainian national identity relating it to

Putin's misconception that Ukrainians are not a "real" nation and, indirectly, underscores the effort which was made to advance the idea of "the Russian World". Historical references to the ancient Kiev Prince are a partial foundation for this supposition. The remaining part is entailed in the understanding of a basis for restoring an old identity of Russia as an antithesis to the West (ideological other) and a cohesive element for the reintegration of the post–Soviet space under religious (Orthodox) lines. Lomagin (2012)

Essentially it is presented that the ROC has a dual role in foreign policy and this role in contemporary Russia has been subject to a considerable transformation when compared to the Soviet era and the identity discourse employed by Russia's ruling elite during the Crimean crisis was also considered mainly national or imperial in character. (Teper, 2016)

CHAPTER 5

THE RUSSIA – UKRAINE WAR (2014 AND 2022)

The 2014 Russo – Ukrainian crisis escalated following the wave of Euromaidan demonstrations which began on 21 November 2013 with public protests in Independence Square in Kyiv. The aggravation of the public backlash was caused by the Ukrainian government's decision to suspend the signing of an association agreement with the European Union and take a more pro – Russian stance. The main driving force behind the public outrage against Yanukovych was the perception of "abuse of power", "widespread government corruption" and "violation of human rights in Ukraine". The growing intensity of the protests eventually led to calls for the resignation of President Victor Yanukovych and his government. (Ambrosio, 2017)

Following the signing of the "Agreement on settlement of the political crisis in Ukraine" on 21 February 2014 by Yanukovych and leaders of the parliamentary opposition (with the mediation of RF and EU), the parliament removed Yanukovych from office and replaced the government with Oleksandr Turchynov. Even though Yanukovych was ousted from office and a new government (which was keener on the adoption of the political provisions of the Ukraine – EU Association Agreement) was in action, the enduring nature of the protests reflected the sustained pressure on the government to reject Russian influence in Ukraine. These protests also marked a milestone in the creation of a counter movement that rejects the notion that there is no Ukrainian national identity is nonexistent. In fact, the protests that are the subject of this discussion were one of the first manifestation of Ukrainian national identity which was becoming consolidated. The Russian response to this initiation of the Ukrainian national identity consolidation process was to increase pressure and expand in

territory. These stances all translated into the religious sphere and had implications in terms of the ROC's approach to Ukraine.

5.1. ROC's Discourse in the War:

Following the ousting of Yanukovych came Russia's annexation of Crimea and the Russia-backed separatist revolts in the Donbas region encompassing Donetsk and Luhansk. During these turbulent developments the discourse of the ROC was suspiciously mild. Albeit the fact that the priests and communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church joined the West oriented revolts against Yanukovych, patriarch Krill showed attention not to alienate any of the sides. It was with these considerations that he avoided making any bold statements during the first four months of revolts. (Berktay, 2021) and only broke this trend on the 21st of February when he made a rather diplomatic statement encouraging both sides to cease the bloodshed. (Jarzynska, 2014)

Unlike the Russian state, he refrained from labeling the Ukrainian forces as a "fascist regime" and abstained from outright vocal support of the annexation while priests of Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate (UOCMP) more directly supported Russia by supporting the separatists and advised believers not to send their sons to the battle in Donbas which was "bloodshed of brothers". (Berktay, 2021) Nevertheless, the stance of ROC MP and Krill changed following Bartholomeos' (İstanbul Patriarchate) announcement of autocephaly for Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kiev Patriarchate (UOCKP). It was at this instant that both church structures made it obvious they were contesting for influence and didn't necessarily, except in the nominal sense and through surface level discourse, remain external to politics between Russia and Ukraine.

From these accounts of internal and external discourse affiliated with the ROCMP and UOCKP, it can be inferred that the ROC tried to maintain an image that appealed to the general public consisting of believers and laymen. The base of this inclination transformed, however, when the matter transformed into a

dimension that concerns the transnational impact area of both the church and state structures in question. The autocephaly that was granted to UOCKP essentially signaled that Ukraine was on its way to becoming a state that is not only independent to Russia in official terms and with regard to its sovereignty, it also brought about the prospect of Ukraine's cultural and/or ideational autonomy and further drift apart from Russia's influence and into the arms of the West.

In terms of contestation for power and influence among believers, it can be discerned that both the ROCMP UOCKP and Ecumenical Patriarchate (EP) display similar patterns. Not only to these patterns assign their discourse and initiatives a tone that is ideological in nature, but they also explain the intricacies of the subject matter of the next chapter which targets specifically the attestations between the ROC and other church structures as a parallel to real-world geostrategic power struggles between states.

5.2. Problems with other Churches

When affairs between churches are examined one theme seems to be recurring. This theme is the often-witnessed struggle for territorial influence and attempts to proselytize believers of other sects. It can be observed from prior attempts of the EP to embrace the nationalist communities in Ukraine, beginning in the year 2000 by the meetings between Bartholomeos and Ukrainian Vice President Julinski. This marks the origin point of the Ukrainians demand for autocephaly which for them constituted a deeper meaning associated with breaking the dominion of Russia. It is known that the EP opposes ROC (MP)'s claims that it is the "Third Rome "as witnessed in the clash of opinion in the 2004 World Russian People Congress. (Berktay, 2021) (Clunan, 2009)

During Patriarch Aleksey's reign, difficulties were experienced in the relationship between the ROC and the Vatican in terms of contesting for territory and influence. Such issues were aggravated following Pope John Paul II's creation of the Catholic diocesan structure for Russian territory in 2002. Leaders

of the ROC saw this as aggressive behavior and a continuation of prior attempts by the Vatican to proselytize the Russian Orthodox faithful to become Roman Catholic. Such perceptions emanated from the stance of the Russian Orthodox Church (and the Eastern Orthodox Church) that the Church of Rome is in schism, after breaking off from the Orthodox Church. (Ponomariov, 2019)

The Roman Catholic church, despite concurring that the ROC retains its primacy in Russia, insisted that the small Catholic Roman minority in Russia which was prevailing since the 18th century be served by a fully developed church hierarchy in Russia akin to the structure of the ROC in other countries. The desire to expand in the jurisdiction of the other, displayed by both churches, suggests that they were arguably seeking to influence believers of other sects.

The result of this situation emerged as the frequent surfacing of conflicts between the ROC MP and the EP. An example of such conflicts was the issue occurring over the Orthodox Church in Estonia in the mid-1990s that ended in the unilateral suspension of the eucharistic relationship between the churches by the ROC. (Berktay, 2021)

The tensions ensued and were also ostensible further into the future at the 2007 meeting in Ravenna for the Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue where the ROC MP's representative, Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev, abandoned the meeting after noticing the presence of representatives from the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church which is in the EP's jurisdiction. In the aftermath of their departure, the remaining delegates and the Ecumenical Patriarchate's representative in Ravenna stated that "Hilarion's position should be seen as an expression of authoritarianism whose goal is to exhibit the influence of the Moscow Church. But like last year in Belgrade, all Moscow achieved was to isolate itself once more since no other Orthodox Church followed its lead, remaining instead faithful to Constantinople". From the nature of this disagreement and the expressions of both the ROC MP and the EP, there could be speculated to be a competition for influence that extends beyond the normal affairs of the churches.

In this realm, one can arrive at the finding that matters strictly related to ecclesiastical actors tend to retain political undertones based on maintaining power with territorial parameters and influence factors. The language of the EP's remark in relating the stance of the ROC MP to "Moscow's authoritarianism" is almost an allegory to the nature of the political relationships and ruptures between the political elite of the RF and the West, of which the discourse of the EP is more akin to a representation of.

The events occurring in the future serve to bolster this assertion as the contestation between ROC and the EP gained a new dimension after the traditional rivalry between them escalated to the point that the ROC ceased its attendances to the Holy Great Council that had been prepared by all the Orthodox Churches for decades. (Berktay, 2021) Furthermore, their relations reached a breaking point when the Patriarchate of Constantinople made a move that effectively ended the Moscow Patriarchate's jurisdiction over Ukraine and promised autocephaly to Ukraine, disregarding the ROC's and the Kremlin's resolute opposition.

In retaliation, The Holy Synod of the ROC severed full communion with the EP in 2018. The disagreement between the ROC and the EP ensued as the EP finalized the establishment of an autocephalous church in Ukraine on 5 January 2019 while the ROC effectively maintained its denial of its legitimacy and claimed that the only legitimate Orthodox jurisdiction in Ukraine was its branch, the "Ukrainian Orthodox Church". The ROC unilaterally severed communion with the Church of Greece following its recognition of the Ukrainian autocephaly in October 2019.

It is interesting to note that the name of the UOC was changed by a law adopted at the end of 2018. (Shestopalets, 2019) The basis for this law was that it was necessary to make apparent the connections between the UOC and the RF, an aggressor state. In this framework, the UOC was renamed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) by the Supreme Court

of Ukraine. The name change in question here could be related to the priorly mentioned objective held by both states of RF and Ukraine to form the connection between their national identities and the faithful. By making clear the affiliation of UOC – MP to the RF, which is the aggressor state in the minds of the Ukrainian people and the state, the Ukrainian nation was in certain ways consolidated.

The fallout of the schism ensued in the aftermath of the severing of ties between the two churches and was observed in various accounts where Patriarch Krill abstained from commemorating the Primate of the Church of Greece Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens, during a liturgy in Moscow. There were also bans, imposed by the ROC, on various dioceses in Greece and churches in Turkey. (Andreescu, 2013)

The heights of the impact of the schism extended as far as the cessation of Patriarch Krill's commemoration of the Patriarch of Alexandria and all of Africa after the latter and his Church recognized the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU). This was documented in the official statement of the Moscow Patriarchate.

5.3. Ties Between ROC and Russian State: Church-State Symphonia

The symphonious relationship between ROC and the Russian state has often maintained its corner as a hot topic of contention among relevant parties, influential newspapers, and information outlets. It is proclaimed that the crux of this relationship first emerged in the Eastern Roman empire as Patriarch and Basileus worked together to accomplish God's purpose on earth. References Roman Emperor Justinian's *Sixth Novella* (484 – 565) to mark that their "respective spheres of competence might overlap but remain distinct". (Petro, 2018) Put concisely, Orthodoxy's perspective on proper church-state relations derives from Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire. The deep-rooted historical

nature of this relationship provides relevance to the concept and countenances the validity of its study in newer contexts.

In today's conjecture, however, the Russia - Ukraine war is a good example of how the ROC helps to shape and condition Russia's long-term foreign policy agenda. ROC promoted the idea that Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus constitute a distinct community – Holy Rus or Russian World (Kyiv Prince) with a common spiritual destiny. Assisted the state by promoting an enduring, historically rooted sense of values. (Tsygankov, 2012) The "Russian World" idea and its propagation as such is conveyed to be a part of ROC's response to the fragmentation of its pastoral community after the collapse of the USSR. (Petro, 2018) As a transnational body, it retains influence over post-Soviet space in parallel to state foreign policy doctrines Spiritual unity precedes divisions created by national borders. In emphasizing the symphonious relationship between the church and state, it is viable to note that religious priorities have become part of the foreign policy agenda and while there are occasional rifts between the church's eschatological agenda and the state's decisions, a sense of overall unity in direction or political disposition could be observed. To elaborate on the different dimensions of this relationship, it is necessary to examine some presiding factors such as the dynamics of the relationship itself.

5.4. Domination of the State:

A consensus on the relation between these two entities, however, could most likely be based on the conception of the state as the more but not completely dominant party in this relationship. In this regard, Canon Michael Boudreaux, former president of the Keston İnstitute, elaborates on this relationship in an even more concrete framework. Discernable from his contribution in January 2009, which reads: "the Moscow Patriarchate acts as though it heads a state church, while the few Orthodox clergies who oppose the church-state symbiosis face severe criticism, even loss of livelihood, is that the ROC retains inseparable ties to the state and therefore plays a role in society which is nothing short of

political. (Boudreaux, 2008) Supporting the notion that ROC is "utilized" by the state and often in a coercive manner, this account of church-state relations conceptualizes the ROC as a rather passive tool of the state that concurs with its demands due to fear of being targeted by the state. In this regard, the main characterization attributed to the relationship between ROC and the state as a partnership rather than subordination by Tsygankov (2018), contrasts with assertions of scholars such as Fagan (2013), Knox (2004), Mitrofanova (2005), Papkova (2011), Blitt (2011) who contend that ROC is a tool of the state and in slight similarity to Marsh 2004, Curanovic 2012, Richters 2012, Payne 2010, who illustrate the relationship as being dominated by the state where ROC has some degree of autonomy which is severely constrained and functions within the parameters set by the state institutions.

To be able to vividly portray the impact state interventions had on the ROC throughout history, it could be denoted that the ROC had more than 55.000 churches and 66.000 priests on the eve of the Russian revolution, but the numbers dropped to only about 300 churches and priests in 1939. This shows "the Bolshevik interpretation of Marx's indictment of religion as an all-out attack on the church". (Thatcher, 2006)

Today there is a drastically different picture as in the surveys showing that between 1991 and 2008 the share of Russian adults who identified as orthodox grew from 31% to 72% while the share not considering themselves religious dropped from 61% to 18% (Shevzov, 2003). This shows the resurrection of the ROC's influence and place in society. It is essential to maintain a fundamental distinction, however. This distinction is centered on the fact that although there is low church attendance among the people of Russia today, the idea has morphed into a cultural realm and ROC is still an influencer albeit in a more "generalized" sense. (Knox, 2005) This can be a sense of legitimacy of the symphonious relationship between ROC and state in certain respects and while Tsygankov (2012) concedes the state is in the "driver's seat" when forming foreign policy objectives, the impact of the ROC is more effective in the long-

term strategies as culturally embedded ideals play a deeply rooted role in such processes and are considered the “traditional supreme arbiter of morality in Russian society” and the “largest and most authoritative social institution in contemporary Russia” (Petro, 2018)

5.4.1. ROC in Military Structures:

On a different note, it is in place to reference the development of the division of ROC in the military, namely the Department for Relations with the Armed Forces and Law – Enforcement Agencies (DRAFLEA) which was established in 1995. (Richters, 2012) While maintaining sturdy ties in the military, ROC lacks presence in economic space hence the reason its influence is not as stark as the energy or security lobby. (Wolosky, 2000) (Goldman, 2008). In this vein, it should be recalled that the ROC is by its nature external to the state in form and occasionally displays characteristics of an independent institution. Nevertheless, the ideational cement between the two bodies is as effective or functional as the aforementioned lobbies if not more given the fact that the ROC, in line with the ‘Great Russia’ conception, supports the notion that Russia is destined to be a significant factor in its region, and beyond which is a stance parallel to the “assertive” foreign policy of post-Soviet Russia. This is especially observable in the context of discussions regarding Ukraine and prevails as a coherent manifestation of the effect of myths and messianism in Russian foreign policy (Engström, 2014).

Keeping in mind the conservatives of the Russian state, the statement posed in the issue of the Financial Times printed on the day of Patriarch Alexey’s death; "While the church had been a force for liberal reform under the Soviet Union, it soon became a center of strength for conservatives and nationalists in the post-communist era. Alexei's death could well result in an even more conservative church", (Clover, 2008) bears ample meaning pertaining to the dynamics of the relationship between the ROC and the modern Russian state under Putin and his emphasis on tradition. It is also significant to note ROC’s unique sense of

independence from the state despite their relation retaining a harmonious quality. In certain respects, this can be regarded as a relationship that gives the state a sense of breathing room as the ROC may correct certain erroneous moves of the state (Lomagin, 2012) as in the partaking of a mediator role.

Backing up this perception are other actors that observe Russian political life. Clifford J. Levy of The New York Times wrote in April 2008: "Just as the government has tightened control over political life, so, too, has it intruded in matters of faith. The Kremlin's surrogates in many areas have turned the Russian Orthodox Church into a de facto official religion, warding off other Christian denominations that seem to offer the most significant competition for worshipers." (Levy, 2008) Levy's illustration of the "choreography", which is described as "working in symphony and constituting the defining characteristic of Putin's tenure" in the follow-up to his arguments, adds another dimension to his conceptualization of the close alliance between the government and the ROC. In this sense, there is a new or updated understanding of church-state harmony under Putin's parameters. (Blitt, 2011)

This modernized understanding is showcased by the resolution A/HRS/16/L.6 entitled 'Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through a better understanding of traditional values of humankind, which was passed by the UN Human Rights Council on 24 March 2011 at its sixteenth session. The approval of this resolution was a continuation of the Council's work on traditional values that began on 18 March 2008 with Patriarch Kirill's address (who was at the time the head of the Department for External Church Relations) at the UN HRC's seminar on International Dialogue on Human rights. The objective of this proposal was to change the international community's approach towards human rights (i.e., different worldviews). The United States and the EU refused to support this resolution (displaying the inherent differences of ideology and worldview in their conceptualization of human rights and the place of traditions in it) – discrimination against women and homosexuals – similar lines in further discussion.

Though it remains a contested topic, the ROC's critical role during the Georgia conflict in 2008 has certain implications underscoring the hunch that it is not completely dominated by the state but has its own respectable stance in their harmonious relationship although this is debated in the literature. (Lomagin, 2012)

In fact, such a respectable or "firm" stance reflects the salience of the ROC as it is also asserted by Curanovic (2007), that the autocephalous ROC is an entity that fulfills the three conditions of being a transnational subject as defined by Brian Hocking and Michael Smith which are constituted by the representation of a certain social group, having a degree of autonomy of action, and international impact (Hocking and Smith, 1990).

In line with this definition, the place of the ROC relative to the members of the other 13 members of the Orthodox community bears significance in illuminating the political-ideological state function of the ROC. As the canonical territory of the Moscow Patriarchates extends beyond the territory of the state, it performs the function of a transnational parasite institution. (Curanovic, 2007). Similarly, the autonomy enjoyed by Orthodox churches binds them closer to the state authorities and establishes the ground for a symphonious behavior along lines of common interests and the "internalization of Orthodoxy" which manifests as the synthesis of national myths, patriotic sentiments, and ethnicity. Such characteristics of ROC (in similarity with other autocephalous Orthodox Churches) play a vital role in the establishment of the notion in Orthodox societies that an autocephalous Orthodox church is a feature of a sovereign state. (Curanovic, 2007)

It is not adventurous to say that the relations between the ROC and the state under Putin's rule are of a mutually reinforcing nature. When compared to church-state relations during the Soviet rule this relationship stands out as it is more akin to the relationship that existed in imperial Russia.

5.4.2. Cooperation with Intelligence Objectives:

In examining the ties between the ROC and state, the nature of dynamics the ROC maintains with intelligence bodies are significant as it is an example to deeper cooperation functions with regard to symphonious relationship. In this regard the main premises of the association of the ROC with intelligence units are established by their intertwined nature in terms of their form. To quote Konstantin Kharchev, the former chairman of the Soviet Council on Religious Affairs, "Not a single candidate for the office of bishop or any other high-ranking office, much less a member of Holy Synod, went through without confirmation by the Central Committee of the CPSU and the KGB" (Albats and Fitzpatrick, 1994) The relationship in question, despite unofficial, displayed the extent of control the Soviet state imposed on the ROC. The possibility that this relationship also retained a cooperative rather than coercive dimension also shouldn't be overlooked.

In this manner, an example of ROC's arguably more voluntary role in intelligence affairs is the indictment of George Trofimoff, who was the highest-ranking- US military officer ever charged for espionage by the United States. It is known that Troimoff, who was sentenced to life imprisonment on 27 September 2001, was recruited to the mission of the KGB by Igor Susemihl, a bishop in the ROC. This showcases the reality that the ROC wasn't only under the strict control of the state but also served to be of use to the implementation of state objectives in its own way.

In line with this assertion, the description attributed to the Moscow Patriarchate by Gleb Yakunin, one of its main critics, read along lines suggesting that it was practically a "subsidiary of the KGB". This assertion was based on Yakunin's brief access to KGB archive documents in the early 1990s. It was a popular opinion among critics such as Yakunin that the archives showcased the extent of top ROC hierarch's participation in KGB efforts overseas. (Knight, 1993)

From a different perspective, certain authors such as Professor Nathaniel Davis asserts that the collaboration between ROC officials and the state leaned more heavily on terms of mutual benefit and was of a more compulsory nature. He claims*: "*If the bishops wished to defend their people and survive in office, they had to collaborate to some degree with the KGB, with the commissioners of the Council for Religious Affairs, and with other party and governmental authorities". Supporting this explanation was Patriarch Alexy (II)'s disclosure that certain compromises were made between the bishops of the MP and the Soviet government. His stance towards such behavior was repugnant.

A recently showcased account of the intelligence activities of the ROC is the Ukraine Security Service's de-classification of top-secret documents revealing NKVD (USSR)'s involvement in the candidate selection process for the 1945 Local Council. (Fitzpatrick, 2015) This revelation illustrated the involvement of intelligence units in evaluating figures from the clergy and laity, who have religious authority, for candidature based on their history of civic or patriotic work.

CHAPTER 6

ROC IN THE IDEOLOGICAL METANARRATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN – UKRAINIAN WAR

6.1. The ROC as an Ideological Component:

To establish the ideological role of the ROC in Russian foreign policy its essence as an ideological component needs to be elaborated on. To do so the meta-narrative that is adopted in its discourse need to be conceptualized as it is a prevailing notion that the Church's aims and opinions should be considered by international actors when dealing with Russia. (Evans, 2002) Through this lens, it can first and foremost be clarified that the worldview of the ROC is intrinsically anti-Western from a moral standpoint. (Makrides, 2009) The partial explanation to this assertion stems from the evaluation that in retrospect, the ROC sought to fill the ideological vacuum left after the disintegration of the SU and arguably prevailed as a separate branch of power". (Kramer, 1999) Essentially, the intricacies of the anti-western orientation that is championed by ROC, and present in the post–Soviet Russian state policy, rhetoric, and discourse are constituents of the post–Soviet Russian state ideology. Hence the reason it is better not to overlook the role the ROC plays in the conception of such an ideology.

It is often argued that Russian authorities are more rational than ideologic in their assessments and that ROC is not necessarily a tool controlled by the Russian government but is more akin to a body of electoral potential. (Mitrokhin and Nuritova, 2009) The occasional divergence of interests between ROC and Russian authorities such as the Russian-Georgian war in 2008 is an example that corroborates this assessment and from another standpoint, Aleksandr

Verkhovskii'reasons that the Moscow Patriarchate can be considered a political party owing to its discernable program and institutionalized ties to the government in the form of the World Council of Russian People. (Richters, 2012)

The influence of Russian Orthodoxy is portrayed as holistic and organic in the formation of the predominant worldview in Russian culture. (Richters, 2012) While certain schools of thought affiliate ROC's alternative civilization ideal with Russian revisionism, (Pisciotta, 2020) irredentism (Ambrosio, 2017), and even as a coping mechanism to a historically rooted and sustained feeling of inferiority to the West (Neumann, 2016), its traditionalistic, messianic, and nationalistic aspects add a much larger dimension to it enlarging it to acquire a property of an ideology as conceptualized for this thesis.

The implications of the connection that is established between the propagation of patriotic values and the ROC highlight its participation in the patriotic education programs organized by the state and clarify the feasibility of how religion nurtures patriotic sentiment. (Rouselet, 2015) By relating religion and patriotism, another dimension of the ideological and political prowess of the ROC is uncovered. With regard to the place of patriotic sentiment in the political discourse that dominates post-Soviet Russian politics, the developments of Putin's tenure could be a valid point of discussion.

To illustrate the compatibility of Putin's tenure with the ROC's functions the 32 of the 169 letters sent by patriarch Alexey II to Putin, concerning Orthodox unity with Ukraine and reunification of the ROC with ROC abroad, can be regarded as concrete examples. (Lomagin, 2012) When considering eight years of Yeltsin's tenure was a scene of the correspondence of only 41 business letters while Putin's first term has witnessed about 169, a correlation between the ROC and Putin in terms of good relations can be observed. What can be deciphered from this observation is that the head of the Russian state (the most authoritative and plenipotential figure in the post-Soviet timeline) is at a degree of ideational

concurrence with the head of the ROC and the fact that the matter encapsulates the Ukraine issue is noteworthy in the sense of Great Russia metanarrative. Putin's 2013 speech to the Valdai Club also emphasized the importance of traditional religious values to human dignity and asserted that the abandonment of traditional Christian values has led the West to a moral crisis. (Tsygankov, 2016) It is in this stance that Russian FP, accordingly, intends to counter this trend of moral degradation by defending Christian moral principles at home and abroad. While Putin is the leader of a secular country, his political discourse and foreign policy initiatives in cooperation with ROC structures feature a consistent demonstration of elements of religion-based politics.

6.2. Cooperation in Foreign Policy Orientations Regarding Ukraine:

In the context of religion's permeation into Russian foreign policy, the symbiotic and symphonic relationship between the ROC and the state impacts the ideology propagated by the ROC in the sense that it can be orchestrated only to a certain extent. Hence the reason it is only partially included in real-world state mechanisms and foreign policy actions. This is the reasoning that the ROC is essentially a basis of ideational matters for the Russian state, most notably in the realm of foreign policy. The distinction that is crucial to bear in mind here is that the relationship here is not of a kind that could be purely described by some form of control, subordination or ideational dominance. The religious elements that are shaping ROC's discourse share commonalities with the Russian – state interest rhetoric that more or less cause them to converge as discourse originators.

The implications of this meta-narrative confrontation are ostensible in the ideational outputs of institutional cooperation between ROC and state and observable in the collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of External Relations of the ROC as exemplified by Lavrov's past remark that the ROC is an essential partner in coping with global challenges in his statement "Ongoing financial and economic crises revealed the malaise of

liberalism. Self-restraint and responsibility are two moral principles that are in need today. Just and harmonic system of international relations should be based upon the highest moral law above all"

In terms of the modern-day ideational impact of the ROC in the realm of foreign policy, the ROC seeks to heighten the role of religion in diplomacy and to assist in the realization of the endeavor to construct a multipolar world that respects diverse religious-cultural and/or ideational worldviews. (Petro, 2018) A quest for multipolarity in this case can be read as a drive to facilitate the transcendence of the civilizational potential of Orthodoxy and Orthodox civilization. Corroborating this assertion is Patriarch Krill's quote: "*In each nation of the globe, the Church's task is to make that particular nation a carrier of Orthodox civilization*" (Stoeckl, 2012) Examples of the initiatives to achieve this aim could be the standing committees the ROC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had set up over the years to coordinate their activities.

In the case of Russia's incursion into Georgia in 2008, the ROC opposed the claims of the Russian state and denied the legitimacy of territorial, religious and cultural autonomy of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia, which the state had in mind. Going against the state, the ROC also deferred to the wishes of the Georgian Patriarchate and continued to recognize its jurisdiction in disputed regions. These developments represent a considerable instance of the symphonia (rather than subordination) type of relationship between the state and ROC as the ROC was able to maintain its own "character" and remain in a respectable position about the state. Noting the fact that an eventual reconciliation between the ROC and state was imminent, this instance of a clash of opinion could also be regarded as an attempt on the church's part to paint a picture featuring it as a legitimate entity external to the state in all respects. Clearly, retaining validity and legitimacy as a spiritual entity is an existential requirement for the ROC. Nevertheless, none of the differences of opinion between the ROC and state in the post-Soviet context featured an ardent opposition between the two said bodies.

Moving on to further evaluations on the relationship between the ROC and the state, the significance attributed to the importance of religion in the Russo - Ukrainian crisis could be referenced by the representations of the military conflict in East Ukraine as expressed by the most vocal religious leaders and official reports of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) in addition to the religious practices of the post - Euromaidan political regime which undermined the positions of UOC-MP (Shestopalets, 2019) Such an observation is valuable on the grounds that the so-called "repression" the Russian authorities claim is being felt by Russians in Ukraine, which is a relevant part of the discourse of Putin's administration in explaining the protracted conflict since 2014, could be related to the undermining of the UOC-MP. The exacerbation of the conflict is partially a result of the gradual build-up of tensions that are ostensible on various fronts and the dysfunctional relationship between the post-Euromaidan political regime in Ukraine and the MP is one of them. The growing urge of secession from the ROC MP, which was instilled through western liaison by the UOC KP, was essentially a step that places the rejection of Russia'n mega ideals at the center stage. Undoubtedly, the messianic and imperialistic "Great Russia" or "Holy Rus" conception was what is being steadfastly rejected.

The restorationist self-identification of the Russian state (Clunan, 2009) is another basis behind the notion that the borders of Greater Russia should include Ukraine. During the 2014 annexation of Crimea, the ROC discourse was consistent with this theme. (Suslov, 2016) Similarly, the annexation of the Crimean Kremlin to Russia is labeled as "irredentist" by the West (Teper, 2016), and this conceptualization can be further extended and associated with the idea of the "Russian World" in the sense of reunification. It is not far-reaching to assert that ideals such as Orthodox Unity are a bolstering component of such a notion.

The ROC's resentment of protestant groups based in the USA bear elements of partial anti–Western sentiments (in ideational terms) that are also mildly

reflected in the 1993 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) which maintained that Russia's external relations were supposed to be based on pragmatism so long as cooperation with NATO is established on key matters. Routine talks between Russia and NATO on certain occasions and multilateral efforts were conducive to the maintenance of pragmatic relations but remained lackluster nevertheless, in hiding the foundational ideologic disagreements and their concrete manifestations in the future.

In a similar vein, the example posed by the 2008 FPC aims to question Western superiority and uphold Russia's choice in favor of an alternative civilization. (Lomagin, 2012). The FPC sheds light on the civilizational dimension of global competition and the growing place of a religious factor in shaping the system of contemporary international relations concerning its moral foundation. Falling back on tradition and values as the main route to the absolution of the current defunct order and establishment of a working order was a part of this process. The FPC also characterizes Western continued policy of 'containing' Russia as a reaction to the prospect of losing their monopoly over global processes and accuses the West of a selective approach to history for those purposes - interpretation of World War II and post – War period. This stance can also be read as a holistic upheaval against a unipolar post-Cold War world order that also has a religious dimension. In this regard the post-Cold war ideational space is bound to retain a Russian foreign policy that houses a partial religious and tradition based cultural domain.

This stance evolved in due time and the 2016 FPC essentially took the form of accusing the transatlantic power bodies such as NATO and also the EU of expansionism and the employment of policies that are to the detriment of the establishment of a common European security framework. (Godzimirski, 2019) Russia not being fond of a European security structure that tries to limit its influence is not necessarily difficult to comprehend. Nevertheless, its aggressive stance against Ukraine could be regarded as a main course of action in giving a response. This was a change from the previous (1993 FPC) stance of post-Soviet

Russian foreign policy which contrasted with the centuries-long tradition of messianism in Russian foreign policy rooted in conceptualizing the notion of Russia as the protector of Third Rome, essentially obtaining the meaning that it was the guard of a central place for Christianity bearing insurmountable importance. Recalling the idea that after the Ottoman Empire's conquest of Istanbul in the fifteenth century, Moscow was believed to be the Third Rome (Sidorov, 2006) it could be stated that the enduring religious underpinnings remain firm in political metanarratives propagated by the Russian state, especially in foreign policy topics concerning its periphery and the ancient territory outlining "Great Russia". Where the transatlantic tensions and fragilities between the West and Russia were reintroduced as a result of NATO expansion, the Russian response was essentially the implementation of an assertive foreign policy and discourse which is justified not only through geostrategic considerations but also a rendition of an ideational approach that also encapsulates the flurry of tradition and religion in accommodating Russia's territorial incursion into Ukraine. In certain respects, the current dynamics of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy share properties of a harbinger to the return of state messianism.

On a different note, an insight that the mission and narratives of the ROC which are touching on the idea of "exceptionality of a nation" as elaborated on by Curanovic's (2019) could also be referred to as a "combination of concepts of messianism and missions "in which such a narrative entails a sense of special destiny and purpose. This assertion also retains the understanding that such a narrative represents a specific component of a state's identity. The contents of this ideology range from a desire to counter the foreign policy exceptionalism of the Western countries such as the USA and member states of EU and NATO (Sidorov, 2006) while providing an alternative to the ideals supported by Western countries, to a nationalistic conception to unite Slavic people among religious lines on the historical borders of the fatherland (Russian world), which contests with the current realistic power balance. This is a meaningful motif behind Russia's great power ambitions today coined as irredentism (after the end

of the Cold War). A shared understanding of historical injustice is apparent and evaluations of discussions regarding this phenomenon often arrive at the finding that this needs to be understood from the underlying reasons behind ROC's derision and rejection of Western ideals. Essentially, maintaining an ideational point of reference to legitimize a pragmatic opposition to the rule-based international order that serves the West emerges as a key part of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy and the Ukrainian crisis is a case that renders this condition visible.

To reinstate the significance of these findings, it is fundamental to evaluate the remark that Russia views Ukraine as its organic part and ardently opposes its Westernization due to geopolitical considerations among other ideational factors. The spiritual and ideological aspect of the anti-Western stance must also be considered here as the prevalent discourse provides ample examples of such affiliations. The crux of the entitled approach Putin displays when it comes to Ukraine's sovereignty may be tied to the fact that Russia can't stand the growing influence of a so-called defunct civilization perspective near its borders (Putin has on many occasions asserted that countries need to preserve their own identities and values in the face of the moral degradation of the West. There is a rejection of American or Western exceptionalism or their designation as "imperial", which is a part of the country's self-image and national identity. It is in this instant that the ROC conveniently serves as a broader sense of ideational basis for Russia in the grand scheme of ideological struggle with an alternative moral framework. In this narrative adopted by the Russian political elites, Ukraine (as a part of the historical Kievan Rus) is an organic part of Greater Russia and they are considered one people but its Western drift or change of orientation is also unacceptable as a part of the Russian World Orthodox civilization cannot be part of a defunct moral framework which is the West. The entailments of this argument borderline the concepts that are pluricultural as Petro (2018) contributes, and this is a valuable perspective due to the fact that it places the clash between Russia and the West in a framework that poses an alternative to mere geo-strategic debates that fuel the conclusions based on

NATO expansion being the trigger of aggressive Russian behavior. This alternative framework, in a realm like Huntington's portrayal, places this contestation in a scheme that includes culture, history, religion tradition and all in all, ideology as key themes or concepts. In this regard, the ROC plays a role as a framework-building actor. Therefore, it is an ideological component of Russian foreign policy and an agent that plays a due role in state mechanisms.

6.3. Narratives Shared with the Russian Nationalist Discourse:

Leading figures in Russian nationalist discourse such as Alexander Dugin, who is arguably the most prominent, share ideocratic visions of contemporary Russia based on the conception of a "Eurasian empire" ideal. (Shlapentokh, 2017) This ideal merges the messianic side of the Bolshevik Revolution with their urge to eventually accept Russian nationalism and the pursue the quest for an ideal society. In this vein, Dugin further emphasized that this messianic dream, could be materialized only in the context of the Russian national tradition. Shlapentokh (2017) also presented the basis of Dugin's notions as he mentions the "contributor to *Elementy* – Dugin's publication, who praised Nikolai Ustrialov (1890–1937), a leading National Bolshevik, who saw in the regime the force that made Russia strong, and those who implicitly reinvented Russia's historical mission" (Karagodin 1996) and the account on *Evraziiskii Vestnik* which noted that "Lenin had undergone an important evolution. Before the revolution, he was an enemy of the Russian state and a cosmopolitan Russian intellectual. After taking power, he became actually a Russian nationalist".

Slavophiles also value Russian unity (sobornost), religion and culture as superior to Western individualism, secularism and materialism. Russian culture is not only the source of Russia's power and uniqueness but also determines Russia's role as a defender of Slavic Orthodox Christians.

In parallel to narratives of Russia's geopolitical future that originate in Neo-Eurasianist ideology, these narratives also identify Russia's special civilisational

destiny as a land-based power that is distinct from Western sea powers. Maintaining salience since the beginning of their circulation among Russian right-wing intelligentsia during the late 1980s, these narratives were partly embraced by the Kremlin ideologists. (Mondry and Pavlov, 2019) Hence the reason they resemble constituents of a state ideology that conjoins rootes with the ROC in the ideational realm.

Departing from the ROC's standing in relation to the nationalist discourse in the context of the political elite's messianic tendencies, its international function is also explained through its relations with universal Orthodoxy. (Curanovic, 2007) In this regard, the 2006 World Council of Russian People - Orthodox Declaration of Human Rights, presenting an antagonistic stance towards liberal values and alienated individuals, can be regarded as the crux of anti-Western attitudes that are affiliated with the ideational dynamics of the Russian state when contemplated in retrospect. Certain elements in official discourse place the Russian state and governance under Vladimir Putin at odds with dominant Western value-based perceptions. One singular example of such contestation is the pressure on LGBT activists. The crackdown against Pussy Riot's protests in 2012 and the detainment and arrest of the band members, alongside the backlash it caused in international and western media is an example of this clash of perceptions. (Gabowitsch, 2016) (Tsygankov, 2019) It is especially when media affairs are incorporated into the discussion, the more "social" or "cultural" side of the narrative battle between the Kremlin and the "West" is observed. (Smyth and Soboleva, 2014) Maintaining recourse to Huntington's distinction, these contrasts in a worldview based on the upholding of Orthodox Christianity, as promoted by the ROC, can be located as the parameters in which the main goals of Russian foreign policy clash with Western structures alongside the ROC.

It is also important to note that besides religious factors, the Russian political elite and plenipotentiaries have consistently utilized or conveyed metanarratives that are diverse in the sense of bearing ethnic lines such as Pan Slavism (Laruelle, 2004), or purely economic ideations as in Dugin's (2012) conception

of World Communism-based worldview of the USSR, as forms and manifestations of messianism itself. This can be explained as an ideology or intent to pioneer and bears resemblances to exceptionalist tendencies or behavior as such. It can be said that in similarity to the Tsarist state, the Russian state also shares a deep-rooted belief in its special role in world history. (Lomagin, 2012) These notions are shared by Russian leaders and especially Putin whose support of Patriarch's initiatives such as International Christmas hearings, the activity of the International Foundation for Advancement of Slavic unity, sessions of the Global Russian people's Council, and conferences against HIV/AIDS, and so on.

Another factor underlining the shared metanarrative is the eschatological agenda of the ROC in addition to the preservation of the interests of the Russian foreign policy establishment on the defense of Orthodox communities around the world (which coincides with Russia's national interests as inferred from the similar standing between ROC and state with regards to discourse on the Ukraine war) which is centered on pushing Christian moral values in general. Shirin (2016) argues that the common interests of the state and church derive from their orientation and opposing stance towards the three main features of Western culture – consumerism, individualism, and secularism and the fact that they are not embraced by Russians. The argument continues along the lines of Western moral deterioration and Russia as an alternative civilization that is devoid of moral deterioration as it is an Orthodox civilization with the purpose of solidifying the historical legacy of Great Russia and being the protector of "Third Rome". (Engström, 2014)

A scheme Tsygankov involves the linkage of Russia's sense of honor is also present (reason of existence and basis for long-term national interests) and three constraints listed as sovereignty (spiritual freedom), strong state defending the conception of sovereignty, cultural loyalty to those who share Russia's sense of honor wherever they may be (Orthodoxy abroad). These three constraints involve the defense of Orthodox Christianity, ROC, and Orthodox Christians around the world and form the foundation of the commonality between the

interests of ROC and the state. (Stoeckl, 2016) While like the "Third Rome" ideal, this notion is also a central theme in the Russian nationalist discourse. The base of the matter is that there are ontological factors deciphered by tradition and culture that are shaping both the political discourse of the ROC and Russian nationalist thinkers. The commonalities between the discourse of these two camps are arguably a manifestation of an identity which is a contravention or opposition to the West.

6.4. Foreign Policy Exceptionalism and Western Uniqueness:

To maintain a broader perspective on religion in state affairs and the ideological connotations affiliated with this relationship, the concept of "foreign policy exceptionalism" needs to be examined in detail. A meaningful evaluation could be made by focusing on the USA as the most prominent anti-thesis to the post-Soviet Russian state.

The ideological overtones of arguments over exceptionalism centered on the United States' foreign policy along the lines of its "divinely ordained mission to lead the rest of the world" as identified by Steven Walt. This remark alone has parallels to the contemporary state messianism and the "Third Rome" ideal present in the discourse of ROC and some extent the Russian state. Meta narratives such as Holy Rus and Russia's role as the protector of Orthodox civilization also fit this parameter. The formulation of this argument is focused on the religious underpinnings of America's global role (there are clear religious underpinnings to Russia's global role as well and from here we can infer that Russian foreign policy exceptionalism can also be read from the standpoint of counter – Western attitude just as in Orthodoxy's criticism of Western morality as such) and the Puritan roots of this role as associated with historic mainline Protestantism, contemporary evangelicalism or linked to generic Judeo – Christian tradition. Exceptionalism is a dominating ideal among traditionalists (like Russia's case with traditions and morality being linked) and 19th and 20th-

century evangelical incarnations of white Protestants as carriers of exceptionalism. (Guth, 2012).

Religious particularism assertion of the superiority of their faith or moralists' insistence on the existence of clear set universal standards of morality are more inclined to see a special role for the USA. Guth's (2012)'s findings corroborate the claim that American exceptionalism attitudes are rooted in part in religious affiliation, beliefs, and identities. Ideology is also an influence here. These findings suggest a significant role of basic religious understanding in producing exceptionalism. This is a valid example of the converse entity to the religious and tradition-based ideological metanarrative of the Russian World shared by the Russian state, political elites, pioneering nationalist thinkers, and clergy/constituents of the ROC

From the assumption that exceptionalism is a stance endorsing an active American role in the world, the differing view on Israel is analyzed (i.e. Republican America) based on the role of religion in their ideological belonging and endorsement of foreign-policy exceptionalism. It is useful to take note of historians' remark that over the years exceptionalism has evolved to entail an aggressive/unilateral foreign policy stance rather than isolationism. In contrast to Russia, this idea of an exception status is subject to change while Russia has a historically stable status (longing for past through Holy Rus and Third Rome ideals). Nevertheless, the view of American exceptionalism on Israel bears resemblances to the conception of Ukraine in the "Great Russia" in the sense that the former has the responsibility to keep the latter in check from a civilizational standpoint. (Verkhovsky, 2002) Though by no means a piece-by-piece analogy, this comparison presents the basis that the two foreign policy orientations are resembling each other.

Another point of similarity is the mutual urge to display aggressive foreign policy behavior. Exceptionalism strain in national ideology influences what Eugene WittKopf (1990) labeled "militant internationalism" of America's

foreign policy as observed in from interventions in the Middle East such as the invasion of Iraq and defense of Israel. For the Russian case there are also examples of invasion and annexation as documented in 2008, 2014 and 2022 through the offensives against Georgia and Ukraine respectively. It should be explained here that in geographical terms the interventionism displayed by the USA and Russia have different implications. While Russia invaded territories that are surrounding its borders, the USA's incursions were far off their borders. This provides the foundation of the distinction that that assertive Russian foreign policy is essentially stated to be for a defensive purpose. This defensive purpose is to halt NATO expansion.

Besides instances of aggressive foreign policy stances and external interventions, the implications of messianic or "exceptionality" tendencies to the ROC itself are based more on a spiritual concept epitomizing the legacy of the "baptism of Rus and God's consecration of the Russian people into building Holy Rus. While different perspectives of the idea remain, the symphonic relation between state and ROC lead to the concept mainly serving as a moral framework for Russian foreign policy. (Stoeckl, 2016) In this regard, a second front of the contestation between the ROC and the "West" in on an axis of "morality and values".

Comparatively, it can be formulated that the relationship between ideology and exceptionalism may also be a symbiotic one as the religious and belief-oriented roots of exceptionalism grant it a universal quality fit to characterize an ideology or a deep-rooted worldview. In this regard, religious influences tend to have a relationship with ideology and the symbiotic nature of this relationship makes it possible that certain exceptionalism behaviors stemming from religious roots are ideological.

Employing a multi-dimensional approach to contemplate what the "Russian World" means to different parties, one can arrive at the finding that for the Russian state this concept carries properties of a tool that forms a significant part of the expansionist and messianic Russian foreign policy and is a driver of

Russian political and cultural influence. (Petro, 2018) In addition, this concept also serves as a memory which is a benchmark to Russian national interests and aspirations. Therefore, it is also a part of Russian national identity with most grand implications being present and ostensible in the post-Soviet context.

Referring to the assertion centered based on Russian values as testing the simple antithesis to the West, an example is the concept of Democracy, which Clunan (2009) illustrates "has an important state role in the economy, is championed as a way to ameliorate the immoral individualism of Western liberalism (state democracy)". Similarly, Zoe Knox (2005) illustrates the fact that the Moscow Patriarchate does little to contribute to the formation of Russian civil society and its leadership's opposition to democratic norms, (Clunan, 2009) on the other hand, formulates this argument: "Its defenders condemn "Western morality," but support the use of modern technology and institutions. The main proponents of the various incarnations of this self-image are Aksiuchits, Moscow Mayor Iurii Luzhkov, and academic Vladimir Volkov. Russian political elites agree that Russia's international status is the main source of its national self-esteem. They shared Russia's desire to preserve its historical status as a great world power and to avoid an ideologically motivated national mission."

Another key driver of the metanarrative in question is brought to attention by Tsygankov's discussions through reflecting on the notion of honor which is the long-term national interest of Russia. Keeping in mind the priorly mentioned three key national interests, Putin's remark about Russia as an Orthodox power should be considered in detail. His remarks during his visit to Mount Athos in 2016 have greater implications in confirming this supposition and mark a turn of events that was also a prelude to the assertiveness that developed in Russian foreign policy following remarks at the 2007 Munich Security Conference.

Until the 2013 Valdai club speech where the values Russia stood for were more openly stated, Putin's discourse increasingly featured elements of countering US unilateralism and the dangers of American exceptionalism. These remarks again

bring into question Huntington's approach to differentiating the SU and RF. In his formulation, the Soviet Union was a superpower with global interests, and Russia is a major power with regional and civilizational interests. Bearing validity from a realistic perspective this argument needs to be elaborated in terms of what "civilizational interests" entail. RF's drive to pioneer as a civilization could, to a certain degree, place its aspirations on an ostensibly global scale. This aspect of a "civilization" is mainly centered around Orthodoxy and retains a regional quality alongside an anti-Western orientation. Essentially, a molding of Russia's conception as an Orthodox power and doctrines on the security of Russia could be observed when the timeline between 2007 and 2022 is studied in retrospect.

It is essential to note the simultaneity between the collapse of communism and the rise of Western universalism and quote Huntington "What is universalism to the West is imperialism to the rest". Referring to Huntington's portrayal of Islam and China as the "challenger civilizations" and placement of Russia in a category in between them, which involves both elements of cooperation and conflict together, it can be viable to reassess the roles considering current conditions. As the way things stand, and with the current Russian perception of the West, it may not be erroneous to suppose that Russian violations of the rule-based international order are akin to being a part of the behavior of the "challenger civilization" in Huntington's terms. Essentially the term "bandit nation" is much too narrow of a description to illustrate the complete picture of Russian dissatisfaction with the current status quo that defines the post-Cold War geopolitical conditions. As argued by the main premises of this study, assertive Russian foreign policy does not constrain itself to remain purely within parameters of realistic geopolitical considerations. In other words, a pragmatic approach to great power politics is not the only explanation for Russia's invasion of its neighbors. This is because the Russian political elite's ideational rhetoric and discourse, of which the ROC is a part, retains cultural and even religious dimensions disguised as "preserving tradition". Therefore, an approach to the

current conflict that recounts Russia as the admirer of a “challenger civilization” would not be flawed.

From the observations and implications of evaluations presented up to this point, it may be feasible to judge the fitness of the Russian/Orthodox civilization about how well it fits Huntington’s description of a “challenger” civilization. The premise behind this judgment is the fact that the “Great Russia”, like the main subjects of Huntington’s challenger civilization Islam, is entrenched in an ardently anti–Western metanarrative. The ROC and the Russian state alike are figures that at least play a role in the propagation of elements of this meta-narrative.

On the topic of Ukraine, Huntington asserts it is a cleft country with two distinct cultures. The civilizational fault line between the West and Orthodoxy runs through its heart and has done so for centuries. (Huntington, 1993 p. 165) Huntington did not necessarily foresee conflict between Ukraine and Russia as “these are two Slavic, primarily Orthodox peoples who have had close relationships for centuries and between whom intermarriage is common”. Perhaps it is vital to requestion the importance this civilizational dimension retains in Putin’s agenda itself. Although the issue at hand in Ukraine is a regional matter for Russia, its implications are quite global concerning the involvement of Western countries.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The overall progression of this thesis brought together assessments of the main themes and findings of scholarly works centered on the ROC in order to answer the question of whether the ROC acts as an ideological component in Russian foreign policy towards the former Soviet republics, namely Ukraine. In this pursuit, the post-Soviet Russian state ideology was conceptualized from a wider perspective encapsulating approaches centered on great power politics and geo-cultural distinctions set out by Huntington (1993). Such an approach was key in bringing out the cultural dimension of Russian contestations with the current international system and the West in general. Moreover, this cultural dimension later had to be related in an interdisciplinary fashion to the field of Russian politics, social psychology and identity theories, and foreign policy in specific. As a point of analysis, the ROC's background as a non-state actor was shown to be relevant in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian War (2014 and 2022) and the details on the wider scale splash effects of the protracted crisis in 2022 were taken into consideration in addition to maintaining recourse to the political history of the ROC itself which contains instances of transformations demonstrating the deep-rooted impact of the Church on Russian socio-political psyche.

The role of ideology in the Russian state, as observed to be formulated by the connections between post-Soviet Russian foreign policy and the Russian-World metanarrative, was found to retain sturdy ties to the process of post-Soviet national identity formation. In deciphering such matters, the interdisciplinary framework incorporating the aspirational constructivist approach to the development of Russian national interests and bearing parallels to the ROC's discourse in the war, the accounts of symphonious cooperation presented in the

study so far, and deeper connections between the ROC and Russian state structures played a central role. Alongside concrete manifestations of organic ties between ROC and the Russian state, more abstract ideational profiles of the struggle between ROC and the West were labeled in order to be able to conceptualize the international and cultural dynamics of the War in Ukraine. In this context, a revisiting of the "challenger civilization" concept proved viable in deconstructing the meanings propagated by post-Soviet Russian ideology and foreign policy.

Through these means, the mission of the ROC and its role as an important factor in the ideological metanarrative of the war was observed to be more aptly understood in the context of Russian foreign policy objectives and the impacts of Putin's tenure as the originator of the war itself. Figureheads of Russian nationalist discourse alongside historical manifestations of accounts of political theology in Russian state and Church affairs facilitated the establishment of this widened perspective. Material connections and documentation outlining the history of entanglement and ruptures between the ROC and state ate also essential in describing the relationship being problematized. The physical institutional developments of the ROC and its discourse throughout the three main segments of the historical timeline contributed to the establishment of its durable nature within and throughout the Russian political culture and ideational elements in governance. To further illustrate the deepened ideational outlook the findings of this paper bring to the main question of this thesis pondering the precise nature of the ROC as an ideological component of Russian foreign policy, I will build on the upcoming assertions.

To uncover the ideological standpoints of the ROC, it was feasible to conduct a critical overview of the ensuing academic discussions. From the evaluation of the relevant and critical literature, it could be inferred that a sizable proportion of existing views do not just conceptualize the ROC as a mere religious institution but as a political agent that has an active role in the power struggle prominent in Russia's periphery and close affiliation to the Kremlin alongside ties and

connections in partnership and propagation, to other metanarratives and metanarratives centered on a transnational Russian society or the "Russian World". Essential parts of such narratives build on a functional and harmonious relationship between the ROC and the Russian state.

In a constructivist outlook, the meanings of such metanarratives and relationships can be extended to have more global impacts repercussions, and reflections relating to modern-day international relations. Arguably the most prominent reflections of the so-called global impacts are the accounts and portrayal of both the ROC and Russian political elite and leadership in the discourse of Western media outlets. It is a viable note that discourse breeds ideology and ideology is recreating discourse. (Jager, 2001) The fact that discourse and ideology shape each other and create identities leads to the conclusion that the ideational drift between Russia and the West can rightly be coined as an instance of a clash of discourse and hence a clash of ideology. Media is a fundamental pillar of the West's hegemonic power structure and therefore it can't be separated from the ideological realm either. Through these considerations, it is apt to concur to the relevance of the ideological metanarrative clash between Russia on all fronts including the media and leader-based discourse accounts.

The narrative of great power politics alongside questions of national identity was found to be relevant because they retained ideological undertones that often recurred in the political discourse of the Russian state and its main figurehead, Vladimir Putin. The explanations of Putin's Russian great power ideals were mainly based on parameters of pragmatism by the extant literature analyses. While pragmatism and a realist approach to the situation clearly maintain relevance, a constructivist outlook on the meanings behind the actions of arguably one of the most unpredictable leaders is no doubt of value. Furthermore, theoretical discussions regarding the general role of ideology in post-Soviet affairs could be extended to have a more up-to-date application about the study of this paper's field of inquiry, as social trends often change and

transform, and so concrete geopolitical realities may not be the only indicators of subjects of change in modern-day international relations. Hence the reason why meanings of the discourse propagated by ideationally complex parties such as the ROC retain relevance on a global scale. While this paper problematized essentially accounts of the ROC – state relations, its findings in the light of the Ukraine war (2014 and 2022) are central to explaining trends of international relations on a much grander scheme.

Decisively, the properties of artifacts excavated from the impacts of this relationship can be put forward as the foci of this thesis' findings. The worldview of ROC shares fundamental commonalities with the interests of the Russian state, leadership, and political elite, making it a viable and observable ideological component within the political discourse. Shaped by the discourse are essentially the perceptions of identity and aspirations in post-Soviet Russia itself. Determinants of national identity are also strictly entangled in what is propagated by such discourse. Hence the reason why the ROC's contributions to the Russian political discourse alone are elevating it to a place in society that affiliates it with the state. It is noteworthy however that the mass Russian public remains in a state where Orthodox Christianity exists as a cultural idea and that the ROC's main point and stances in leveraging its contributions to the political discourse remain tied sturdily to foreign policy.

In essence foreign policy is an area where the impacts of ROC as an ideological component are mostly ostensible. While Russian foreign policy is too discursive to be extensively described by the Ukrainian crisis alone, the Ukrainian crisis features a significant dimension in explaining the larger and wider tensions between Russia and the West also manifesting in Russia's behavior as a rogue state opposing the rule-based international system. Historical facts suggest that Russian foreign policy towards its periphery has prevailingly born assertive undertones. Transformations in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution in 1991, other than the dissolution itself, do not contradict this reality. Hence the reason why Russian foreign policy could be characterized by elements of

continuity of which the ROC is a part. While assertiveness is not essentially a trade of the ROC, its nature as a beholder of soft power that legitimizes invasive Russian behavior in many different levels and respects makes it a part of the expansionism being observed.

From an overarching analysis of the ROC's functions in terms of its historical and current relations with Russian state mechanisms and connections with the foreign policy objectives of post-Soviet Russia in terms of supporting and upholding a value-based (traditional and anti-Western) messianic discourse, (resolutely in matters pertaining to Ukraine) a conclusion could be made that the notion entailing a symphonious behavior is intact. The aggravation of the Russia-Ukraine War in 2022 has reintroduced discussions left unresolved in 2014 and the observations to be made from both accounts are in support of the finding outlined above. In this regard the significance of this matter resurfaced. Accordingly, further emphasis on ROC's place in affairs of post-Soviet Russian state mechanisms grants a different property when the term is examined through considerations of geopolitical function and ideational communication in a global arena.

Conveniently, the prevailing literature also suggests that the ROC can be regarded as a component of post-Soviet Russian society that bears an ideological quality in connection with guarding the interests of the nation-state. It accomplishes this through maintaining a basis of a historical metanarrative that has a transnational border conception which plays a considerable role in the nation-building process through utilizing the metanarrative of recollections from a glorious past that is destined to lead to a victorious future as a basis of self-identification. In this vein, a perception of an "other" as an adversary for one to define themselves by, which is namely the West, is key for the ROC to retain relevance and push its ideals to the political sphere. In an interdisciplinary fashion, this phenomenon was elaborated on through the framework of identities and aspirations and important findings pertaining to the post-Soviet Russian self-identity, national interests, and coping mechanisms in times of change. It is

conceptualized that the messianic metanarrative that surrounds the post-Soviet Russian state ideology and is partly formulated in similarity with the ROC's discourse is a functional and stable part of post-Soviet Russian national identity. In revealing the strong parallels between discourse and identity in shaping each other, this interdisciplinary outlook proved to be valuable for this paper.

The post-Soviet conception of ideology, on the other hand, is another broad subject that couldn't be separated from history and rather ancient church discourse. The understanding of ideology emanating from historical myths and metanarratives fostered in exceptionalism, messianic tendencies and convictions among the Russian political elite and leadership which glorify the donning of the role of being the protector of Orthodox Slavs and guarding interests of the Third Rome (Moscow), fit adeptly in this categorization. This understanding of ideology could also be related to the Russian right-wing conception of 'Russia as a Katechon" of which connections are made to the 2013 FPC. (Engström, 2014). Subjecting the Russian state as indispensable to the defense of all that is holy and fundamental to Orthodoxy in a cultural and religious sense, connections to the FPC essentially legitimize in the shadow of the state the messianic discourse of the ROC, shaping in itself, the state's messianism. Furthermore, it is discerned from this analysis that the interests of the ROC and the state are in so much in tune for the most part that the autocephaly of the ROC itself is a feature of state sovereignty and therefore the place of the ROC in the post-Soviet Russian state is proposed to be enduring. It is not essentially flawed or even risky to state that the current state of affairs between the ROC and the Russian state pose grave differences between relations between the two aforementioned bodies in the Soviet case. Unsurprisingly, the leader that characterizes the post-Soviet Russian statehood for the most part has an active role in this.

The lasting tenure and powerful standing of Vladimir Putin who is a figure that emphasizes the readoption of traditions and supports the activities of the ROC in its anti-Western battle of upholding civilizations is another artifact of the deep-rooted support the ROC has in the Russian state. Putin's nature as a powerful

figure with a long tenure and sturdy ties to the intelligence body has granted him the leverage to consolidate his place in Russian politics. Having such a stable position, his choice to maintain a discourse in certain extents of continuity with the ROC is a testament to not only the ROC's relevance in the political sphere but also the validity of its discourse which manifests in compatibility with the contemporary Russian state messianism. As a leader that retains a holistic embracement of all segments of Russian history, Putin is not necessarily a figure that rules by or through religion. It is therefore especially interesting that somehow the discourse of the ROC, though not exclusively within the theological realm, penetrates Russian political discourse including examples that emanate from Putin himself.

Nevertheless, one can assert that contemporary Russian state messianism extends far beyond the encapsulation of ROC's ideals and includes elements of Eurasianism as well as ethnic distinctions. While such points of discussion may bear validity in a general sense, it is difficult in the first place, to separate the ROC from such concepts altogether. Retaining cultural dimensions in opposing the West, there are sides to the ROC's discourse that share commonalities with Eurasianism. It is viable to question once again, Huntington's distinction between civilizations and pursue an approach accommodating one that includes the Russian or even Eurasian subgroup.

Based on the more ecclesiastical or even theological spheres of the ROC's inclusion into Russian politics, there are also aspects of the "Third Rome" ideal in the sense that it poses a framework for Slavic integration, that may be said to bear ethnic qualities and considerations. One main theme that could be realized to be stemming from such queries is that the ROC essentially leverages the deep historical roots which developed in parallel to the Russian state itself and such parallels create a structure that is entangled as explained by the Symphonia relationship. While church-state cooperation has the main objective of protecting the Orthodox-Slav identity, geopolitical imaginations also take center space

through observation of the "Russian World" metanarratives' propagation in part of ROC, state, and elite discourse.

From these considerations, one can refer to the ROC as a part of or a "component" of the Russian state's political discourse extending to international relations, which performs functions through historical civilizational relevance. In a society that holds on to Orthodoxy at the least in a cultural sense, the ROC is not only relevant as an institution and agent of soft power but also a fundamental part of the basis of Russian cultural identity and national interests. As the ideations behind this figure are transcending current Russian borders in terms of influence, this component of the Russian state is especially relevant in realms of foreign policy as implicated by the prominence, of the discussions and narratives exhibited in this thesis, in the Russian – Ukrainian War (2014 and 2022).

7.1. Limitations:

Certain limitations which could be attributed to this study could include the lack of primary source analysis in addition to concerns regarding the subjective and interpretive nature of the qualitative analysis. In addition, one could note that understanding on the theocratic elements characterizing Orthodoxy and Christianity, in general, could also be a viable inclusion to further establish different dimensions of the metanarratives discussed in this paper. There is also the impact of constraints associated with the fact that the focus of this paper is a war that is ongoing and up-to-date information is constantly subject to change. As the case study is centered on the developments observed in the war that occurred in 2014, the yet to be seen long term yet-to-be-seen long-term impacts of the struggle that is ensuing today in 2022 are not dealt with by the principal analysis of this paper. A follow-up study to evaluate the lasting future impacts of the current situation may be essential.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi (ROK), Avrasya bölgesindeki Rusya kaynaklı jeopolitik gelişmelerin ve Rus devlet ideolojisinin altında yatan mekanizmaların incelenmesinde benzersiz bir yere sahiptir. Rus siyasi etkisinin bir ajanı olarak ROK, kesin yapısını aydınlatmayı amaçlayan çok sayıda tartışmaya konu olmuştur. Bu tartışmalar ağırlıklı olarak ROK'un tipik bir dini kurum mu yoksa farklı bir gündemi ve Rus devletiyle bağları olan bir kurum mu olduğu sorusuna odaklanıyor.

2014 yılında Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nın başlangıcında belgelendiği üzere, ROK'un bazı açıklamaları ve açıklamaları, onu Batı medyası ve bilimsel araştırma kanalları da dahil olmak üzere birçok mecrada ilgi odağı haline getirdi. Patrik Kirill'in öne sürdüğü kayda değer bir açıklama, "Ukrayna'nın güney bölgesindeki silahlı birliklerin Rus askerleri değil, Kiev'deki yeni düzende güvenliklerinden korkan öz savunma güçleri olduğuydu.

Bu açıklama sadece Putin'in o zamanki söylemini yansıtmakla kalmadı, aynı zamanda Batı'yı alaya alan bir tonu da korudu. Ayrıca Kirill'in Donbas bölgesindeki Rusya destekli ayrılıkçılara atıfta bulunurken kötü şöhretli "küçük yeşil adamlar" ifadesini kullanması, baskın medya organlarında Ukrayna'nın 2014'te karşı karşıya kaldığı işgal tehdidini küçümseme girişimi olarak hatırlanıyor.

Bu tez, 2014 ve 2022 yıllarında Ukrayna'daki Rus taarruzu örneği üzerinden, ROK'un Rus devletinin yakın yurtdışı politikalarında siyasi ve ideolojik çekişmelerine katkıda bulunan bir kurum olarak rolünü değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, bu tez Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'nin (Moskova

Patrikhanesi) Rus dış politikasında eski Sovyet cumhuriyetlerine yönelik ideolojik bir bileşen olarak hareket edip etmediğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Durum buysa, devlet ve ROK arasındaki ilişkiyi yönlendiren meta-anlatıdaki kilit noktaları daha fazla analiz etmek ve bu minvalde yerleşik tartışmaları derinleştirmek de bu çalışmaların amaçları arasındadır. Bunu yapabilmek için, ROK'un ideolojik doğası ve Rusya-Ukrayna savaşı (2014 ve 2022) hakkındaki söylemine ilişkin akademik literatürün eleştirel bir değerlendirmesini yapacağım. Dolayısıyla bu tezin ikili bir amacı vardır:

Bu tezin ilk amacı, ROK'un Rus dış politikasındaki ideolojik bir bileşen olarak rolünü ve konumunu tanımlayan ve ROK'un devlet siyasetindeki yerini kavramsallaştıran belirli özelliklerini göstermektir. Böyle bir ayrımı canlı bir şekilde tasvir edebilmek için ROK'un siyasi tarihinin ana hatları çizilecek ve ROK devlet ve diğer aktörler arasındaki mevcut işbirliği ve çatışma hesapları analiz edilecektir. "Senfoni" olarak tanımlanan ROK ve devlet arasındaki ilişkiyi çevreleyen kavram, literatürde önemli bir varlığını sürdürmektedir ve anlayışımızı ilerletmek için tartışılacaktır. ROK'un Rus toplumundaki siyasi rolü. Dış politika, devlet ve ROK arasındaki söz konusu "senfoni" ilişkisinin gözlemlendiği kilit alanlardan biridir. Bu nedenle, ROK ile Rus dış politikası arasındaki ilişkinin dinamiklerini tartışan bölüm, ROK'un siyasi tarihine ilişkin bölümü takip edecektir.

Günümüze kadar bu tezin konularıyla ilgili eserlerin külliyatının çoğunlukla betimsel nitelikte olduğu rahatlıkla söylenebilir. Buna göre, bu çalışma, ROK ile Rus devleti arasındaki ilişki merkezli devam eden tartışmaları, Rusya devleti bağlamında, 'ideoloji' kavramını disiplinler arası bir şekilde birleştirmeyi amaçladığı için önem taşımaktadır. RF-Ukrayna savaşı (2014 ve 2022). Bu tezin argümanlarına geçmeden önce, çeşitli terimlerin tanımlarının tanıtılması ve bazı anahtar kavramlara odaklanan varsayımların açıklığa kavuşturulması gerekmektedir. Bunu aşağıdaki bölümde kavramsal çerçeve üzerinde yapacağım.

Sovyet sonrası Rus devletinin ideolojik yönelimini saptamak ve örneklemek için, fenomenlere anlam yüklediği süreci ayırt etmek çok önemlidir. Bu analizi çevreleyen temel varsayımları oluşturabilmek ve ana hatlarını çizebilmek için Rus dış politikasına, Sovyet sonrası devlet ideolojisine ve Rus ulusal kimliğine yönelik yapılandırmacı bir yaklaşım kullanılacaktır. Ulusal kimlik konusu, Clunan'ın (2009) aspirasyonel yapılandırmacılık üzerine çalışması tarafından sunulan ilgili sosyal psikoloji teorisinden unsurları içeren disiplinler arası bir çerçevede daha fazla detaylandırılacaktır.

Bu açıdan bakıldığında, Rusya Federasyonu'nun, ROK ile bir dereceye kadar uyum içinde, Rus kimliği ve coğrafi/ulusötesi etkisi için tarihsel bir temel işlevi görecek şekilde 'Rus Dünyası' fikrine anlam yüklediği ileri sürülebilir. Bu perspektiften, Soğuk Savaş sonrası küresel güç yapısını siyasi açıdan tarihsel adaletsizliğin bir eseri olarak kavramsallaştırır ve demokrasi, insan hakları, hukukun üstünlüğü ve bireycilik gibi Batılı idealleri parçalamayı (zayıflamayı) hedefleyen kötü niyetli unsurlar olarak değerlendirir.) ve gelenek ve din tarafından organik olarak şekillendirilen kendi kültürünü (yani Ortodoks Hristiyanlığın değerleri) aşağılamak. Ayrıca, kendi topraklarında (hem egemenliği hem de tarihi sınırları açısından) bu tür ideallerin çoğalmasına karşı koyma ve raydan çıkarma misyonunu ulusal çıkarlarının bir parçası olarak ayırmaktadır.

Bu tezin temel dayanakları, ROK merkezli bilimsel çalışmaların ana temalarının ve bulgularının değerlendirilmesi üzerine inşa edilmiştir. İlk bölümde, Sovyet sonrası Rus devlet ideolojisinin nasıl kavramsallaştırıldığını keşfetmek üzere analizlerde bulundum. ROK ile bağlantı kurabilmek için analizim, bilimsel bir kavram olarak ideoloji ile Sovyet sonrası Rus siyasi alanında etkili bir figür olarak ROK arasındaki paralellikler üzerinde odaklanmaktadır. İdeolojiyi bilimsel bir kavram olarak açıklamak için kullandığım yaklaşım, Huntigton'un (1993) jeo-kültürel faktörlerin uluslararası güç yapılarının gelecekteki dinamikleriyle ilişkisine odaklanan çalışmaları aracılığıyla oluşturduğu ayrımlara göndermeler yapıyor. Bunun peşi sıra, ROK'un Rus-Ukrayna Savaşı (2014 ve

2022) bağlamında nasıl bir devlet dışı aktör olduğuna dair bir arka plan sunarak devam ettim.

2022'de uzayan krizin daha geniş çaplı sıçrama etkileri hakkında gerekli detayları belirledikten sonra, ROK'un siyasi tarihini tanımlayıp analiz ettiğim ikinci bölüme geçiş yaptım. ROK'un dönüşümleri ve varolduğu geniş zaman diliminde yaşadığı ilişkilerin türleri ve nitelikleri, Sovyet sonrası Rus dış politikasında ideolojik bir bileşen olarak rolünün gösterilmesinde kilit faktörler olarak öne çıkmıştır. Sovyet sonrası Rus dış politikası ile Rus-Dünya üst anlatısı arasındaki bağlantıların yönlendirdiği ideolojinin rolü. Bu bölümde ayrıca, Clunan (2009) tarafından özetlendiği gibi sosyal psikolojiden ilgili teorilere odaklanan disiplinler arası bir bakış açısıyla Sovyet sonrası ulusal kimlik oluşum sürecine de odaklandım.

Dördüncü bölümde, istikrarsızlığın kilise yapıları arasındaki ilişki üzerindeki etkilerinin yanı sıra ROK'un savaştaki söylemini analiz ettiğimde dikkatimi savaşın kendisine kaydırdım. Aynı zamanda, savaşın akut ve uzayan evrelerinin öne çıkardığı gibi, ROK ve Rus devlet yapıları arasındaki senfonik işbirliği ve görünürdeki bağlar üzerine de düşüncelerimi ifade ettim.

Beşinci ve son bölümde, ROK'un savaşın ideolojik üst anlatısında önemli bir aktör olarak rolünü öne çıkarmak için argümanlarımı sentezledim. Bu bölümdeki analizim, Rus dış politika hedefleri, Putin'in (Sovyet sonrası Rusya'da en önemli siyasi aktör olarak) görev süresinin etkileri, iddialı bir Rus uygarlığı idealiyle ilgili olarak batı dış politika istisnacılığı, Rus medeniyetinin benzerlikleri üzerine tartışmaları bir araya getirdi. ROK ve Rus devleti tarafından paylaşılan Ukrayna yaklaşımı, Rus milliyetçi söyleminin unsurları, ROK, Ukrayna ve Rusya'yı bir ulusun parçaları olarak görmeye odaklanan bir üst anlatının bileşeni olarak öne çıktı. ROK'un tüm bu soruların merkezinden nasıl ortaya çıktığını açıklığa kavuşturduğum sonuç bölümünde yukarıda belirtilen konuların etkilerini özetledim. Bu tezin temel amacına göre, ROK'un ideolojisi üzerine yapılan tartışmaları ilerletmek için bir arka plan oluşturmak hayati önem taşımaktadır.

ROK'un öğretileri, uygulamaları ve söylemiyle eş zamanlı olarak, RF tarafından yukarıda bahsedilen fenomenlere verilen bu tür anlamlar, Sovyet sonrası Rus devlet ideolojisinin formülasyonunda rol oynayan bileşenler olarak kabul edilebilir. Bu betimleme, "ideoloji" kavramının özelliklerini sorunsallaştırmada bu makalenin temel varsayımını oluşturmaktadır. ROK'un Rus dış politikasındaki ideolojik rolü hakkındaki tartışmayı ilerletebilmek için, bu makalenin "ideoloji" yi neyin oluşturduğuna ilişkin temel varsayımlarını sunmak gerekti ve o yönde ilerlendi.

Bu tezin genel seyri, ROK'un Rusya'nın eski Sovyet cumhuriyetlerine, yani Ukrayna'ya yönelik dış politikasında ideolojik bir bileşen olarak hareket edip etmediği sorusunu yanıtlamak için ROK merkezli bilimsel çalışmaların ana temalarının ve bulgularının değerlendirmelerini bir araya getirdi. Bu arayışta, Sovyet sonrası Rus devlet ideolojisi, Huntington (1993) tarafından ortaya konan büyük güç politikalarına ve jeo-kültürel ayrımlara odaklanan yaklaşımları içine alan daha geniş bir perspektiften kavramsallaştırıldı. Böyle bir yaklaşım, Rusların mevcut uluslararası sistem ve genel olarak Batı ile olan çekişmelerinin kültürel boyutunu ortaya çıkarmada kilit rol oynadı. Dahası, bu kültürel boyut daha sonra disiplinlerarası bir tarzda Rus siyaseti, sosyal psikoloji ve kimlik teorileri ve özel olarak dış politika alanıyla ilişkilendirilmek zorunda kaldı. Bir analiz noktası olarak, ROK'un devlet dışı bir aktör olarak arka planının, Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı (2014 ve 2022) bağlamında alakalı olduğu gösterildi ve 2022'de uzayan krizin daha geniş ölçekli sıçrama etkilerine ilişkin ayrıntılar verildi. Kilisenin Rus sosyo-politik ruhu üzerindeki köklü etkisini gösteren dönüşüm örneklerini içeren ROK'un siyasi tarihine başvurmanın yanı sıra dikkate alınır.

Sovyet sonrası Rus dış politikası ile Rus-Dünya üst anlatısı arasındaki bağlantılarla formüle edildiği üzere, Rus devletindeki ideolojinin rolünün, Sovyet sonrası ulusal kimlik oluşumu süreciyle sağlam bağları koruduğu bulundu. Bu tür konuların deşifre edilmesinde, Rus ulusal çıkarlarının geliştirilmesine yönelik hevesli yapılandırmacı yaklaşımı içeren ve ROK'un savaştaki söylemiyle paralellikler taşıyan disiplinler arası çerçeve, şimdiye kadar

çalışmada sunulan senfonik işbirliğinin hesapları ve ROK ile daha derin bağlantılar arasındaki daha derin bağlantılar. Rus devlet yapıları merkezi bir rol oynadı. ROK ve Rus devleti arasındaki organik bağların somut tezahürlerinin yanı sıra, Ukrayna Savaşı'nın uluslararası ve kültürel dinamiklerini kavramsallaştırabilmek için ROK ile Batı arasındaki mücadelenin daha soyut düşünce profilleri etiketlendi. Bu bağlamda, "meydan okuyan medeniyet" kavramının yeniden gözden geçirilmesi, Sovyet sonrası Rus ideolojisi ve dış politikası tarafından yayılan anlamların yapıbozuma uğratılmasında uygulanabilir olduğunu kanıtladı.

Bu yollarla, ROK'un misyonu ve savaşın ideolojik üst anlatısında önemli bir faktör olarak rolünün, Rus dış politika hedefleri ve Putin'in savaşın yaratıcısı olarak görev süresinin etkileri bağlamında daha uygun bir şekilde anlaşıldığı gözlemlendi. kendisi. Rus devleti ve Kilise meselelerindeki siyasi teoloji açıklamalarının tarihsel tezahürlerinin yanı sıra Rus milliyetçi söyleminin figürleri, bu geniş perspektifin kurulmasını kolaylaştırdı. ROK ile devlet arasındaki karışıklık ve kopuşların tarihini özetleyen maddi bağlantılar ve belgeler de sorunsallaştırılan ilişkinin tanımlanmasında önemliydi. ROK'un fiziksel kurumsal gelişmeleri ve tarihsel zaman çizelgesinin üç ana bölümü boyunca söylemi, Rus siyasi kültürü ve yönetişimdeki fikir unsurları içinde ve genelinde dayanıklı doğasının kurulmasına katkıda bulundu. Bu makalenin bulgularının, Rus dış politikasının ideolojik bir bileşeni olarak ROK'un kesin doğası üzerine kafa yoran bu tezin ana sorusuna getirdiği derinleştirilmiş fikirsel bakış açısını daha fazla göstermek için, gelecek iddialar üzerine inşa edeceğim.

ROK'un ideolojik bakış açılarını ortaya çıkarmak için, takip eden akademik tartışmalara eleştirel bir bakış yapmak mümkündü. İlgili ve eleştirel literatürün değerlendirilmesinden, mevcut görüşlerin önemli bir bölümünün ROK'u sadece dini bir kurum olarak değil, aynı zamanda Rusya'nın çevresinde öne çıkan güç mücadelesinde aktif rol oynayan siyasi bir ajan olarak kavramsallaştırdığı çıkarılabilir. ve ortaklık ve yayılmadaki bağlar ve bağlantıların yanı sıra Kremlin ile yakın ilişki, ulusötesi bir Rus toplumu veya "Rus Dünyası" merkezli diğer üst

anlatılar ve üst anlatılarla. Bu tür anlatıların temel kısımları, ROK ve Rus devleti arasında işlevsel ve uyumlu bir ilişki üzerine kuruludur.

Yapılandırmacı bir bakış açısında, bu tür üst anlatıların ve ilişkilerin anlamları, daha fazla küresel etkiye sahip olacak şekilde genişletilebilir. Muhtemelen sözde küresel etkilerin en belirgin yansımaları, hem ROK hem de Rus siyasi elitinin açıklamaları ve tasviri ve Batı medya kuruluşlarının söylemindeki liderliğidir. Söylemin ideolojiyi doğurduğu ve ideolojinin söylemi yeniden yarattığı geçerli bir nottur.

Söylem ve ideolojinin birbirini şekillendirdiği ve kimlikler yarattığı gerçeği, Rusya ile Batı arasındaki düşünsel sürüklenmenin haklı olarak bir söylem çatışması ve dolayısıyla bir ideoloji çatışması olarak adlandırılabileceği sonucuna götürür. Medya, Batı'nın hegemonik güç yapısının temel direğidir ve bu nedenle ideolojik alandan da ayrılamaz. Bu düşünceler aracılığıyla, medya ve lider temelli söylem hesapları da dahil olmak üzere tüm cephelerde Rusya arasındaki ideolojik üst anlatı çatışmasının uygunluğu konusunda hemfikirdir.

Ulusal kimlik sorularının yanı sıra büyük güç siyasetinin anlatısı, Rus devletinin ve onun ana figürü Vladimir Putin'in siyasi söyleminde sıklıkla tekrarlanan ideolojik tınıları korudukları için alakalı bulundu. Putin'in Rus büyük güç ideallerinin açıklamaları, mevcut literatür analizleriyle esas olarak pragmatizm parametrelerine dayanıyordu. Pragmatizm ve duruma gerçekçi bir yaklaşım açık bir şekilde alaka düzeyini korurken, tartışmasız en öngörülemeyen liderlerden birinin eylemlerinin arkasındaki anlamlara ilişkin yapılandırmacı bir bakış açısının kesinlikle değeri vardır.

Ayrıca, ideolojinin Sovyet sonrası ilişkilerdeki genel rolüne ilişkin teorik tartışmalar, sosyal eğilimler sıklıkla değişip dönüştüğü ve dolayısıyla somut jeopolitik olarak bu makalenin araştırma alanının incelenmesi hakkında daha güncel bir uygulamaya sahip olacak şekilde genişletilebilir. gerçekler, günümüz uluslararası ilişkilerinde değişim konularının tek göstergesi olmayabilir. ROK

gibi düşünsel olarak karmaşık partiler tarafından yayılan söylemin anlamlarının küresel ölçekte geçerliliğini korumasının nedeni budur. Bu makale esasen ROK-devlet ilişkilerinin açıklamalarını sorunsallaştırırken, Ukrayna savaşı (2014 ve 2022) ışığında elde ettiği bulgular, uluslararası ilişkilerin eğilimlerini çok daha kapsamlı bir şemada açıklamak için merkezi öneme sahiptir.

Kesin olarak, bu ilişkinin etkilerinden çıkarılan eserlerin özellikleri, bu tezin bulgularının odak noktası olarak öne sürülebilir. ROK'un dünya görüşü, Rus devleti, liderliği ve siyasi seçkinlerinin çıkarlarıyla temel ortak noktaları paylaşıyor ve bu da onu siyasi söylem içinde uygulanabilir ve gözlemlenebilir bir ideolojik bileşen haline getiriyor. Söylem tarafından şekillendirilen esasen Sovyet sonrası Rusya'nın kendisinde kimlik algıları ve özlemlerdir. Ulusal kimliğin belirleyicileri de bu tür söylemlerin yaydığı şeylere sıkı sıkıya bağlıdır. ROK'un tek başına Rus siyasi söylemine yaptığı katkıların, onu toplumda devlete bağlı bir yere yükseltmesinin nedeni budur. Bununla birlikte, Rus kitlesinin, Ortodoks Hıristiyanlığın kültürel bir fikir olarak var olduğu bir durumda kalması ve ROK'un siyasi söyleme katkılarından yararlanmadaki ana noktası ve duruşlarının sağlam bir şekilde dış politikaya bağlı kalması dikkat çekicidir.

Özünde dış politika, ROK'un ideolojik bir bileşen olarak etkilerinin çoğunlukla görünür olduğu bir alandır. Rus dış politikası, yalnızca Ukrayna kriziyle kapsamlı bir şekilde tanımlanamayacak kadar söylemsel olsa da, Ukrayna krizi, Rusya ile Batı arasındaki daha büyük ve daha geniş gerilimleri açıklamada önemli bir boyuta sahiptir ve aynı zamanda Rusya'nın kurallara dayalı bir haydut devlet olarak davranışında da kendini gösterir. uluslararası sistem. Tarihsel gerçekler, Rusya'nın çevresine yönelik dış politikasının baskın bir şekilde iddialı imalar doğurduğunu gösteriyor. Sovyetler Birliği'nin 1991'de dağılmasının ardından yaşanan dönüşümler, dağılmanın kendisi dışında bu gerçekle çelişmemektedir. Rus dış politikasının, ROK'un de bir parçası olduğu süreklilik unsurlarıyla karakterize edilebilmesinin nedeni budur. Atılganlık esasen ROK'un bir ticareti olmasa da, istilacı Rus davranışını birçok farklı düzeyde ve açıdan

meşrulaştıran yumuşak gücün bir sahibi olarak doğası, onu gözlemlenen yayılmacılığın bir parçası haline getiriyor.

Rus devlet mekanizmalarıyla tarihsel ve güncel ilişkileri ve değer temelli (geleneksel ve Batı karşıtı) bir mesihçiliği desteklemek ve sürdürmek açısından Sovyet sonrası Rusya'nın dış politika hedefleriyle bağlantıları açısından ROK'un işlevlerinin kapsamlı bir analizinden. (Ukrayna ile ilgili konularda kararlılıkla) bir senfonik davranış gerektiren kavramın bozulmamış olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. 2022'de Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nın ağırlaşması, 2014'te çözümsüz kalan tartışmaları yeniden gündeme getirmiş ve her iki anlatımdan da yapılacak gözlemler, yukarıda özetlenen bulguyu destekler niteliktedir. Bu bağlamda konunun önemi yeniden ortaya çıktı. Buna göre, ROK'un Sovyet sonrası Rus devlet mekanizmalarındaki yerinin daha fazla vurgulanması, terime küresel arenada jeopolitik işlev ve düşünsel iletişim açısından bakıldığında farklı bir nitelik kazandırmaktadır.

Uygun bir şekilde, hakim literatür, ROK'un, ulus-devletin çıkarlarını korumakla bağlantılı olarak ideolojik bir nitelik taşıyan Sovyet sonrası Rus toplumunun bir bileşeni olarak görülebileceğini öne sürüyor. Bunu, ulus inşası sürecinde önemli bir rol oynayan ulusötesi bir sınır anlayışına sahip bir tarihsel üst anlatının temelini koruyarak, muzaffer bir geleceğe yol açmaya muktedir görkemli bir geçmişten hatıraların üst anlatısını temel alarak başarır. kendini tanımlama. Bu bağlamda, bir "öteki" nin, kendisini tanımlayacağı bir düşman, yani Batı olarak algılanması, ROK'un alaka düzeyini koruması ve ideallerini siyasi alana itmesi için anahtardır. Disiplinlerarası bir tarzda, bu fenomen, Sovyet sonrası Rus öz kimliğine, ulusal çıkarlara ve değişim zamanlarında başa çıkma mekanizmalarına ilişkin kimlikler ve özlemler ve önemli bulgular çerçevesinde detaylandırıldı ve esasen hakim literatürde de derinlemesine araştırıldığı gözlemlendi. Sovyet sonrası Rus devlet ideolojisini çevreleyen ve kısmen ROK'un söylemiyle benzer şekilde formüle edilen mesihsel üst anlatının, Sovyet sonrası Rus ulusal kimliğinin işlevsel ve istikrarlı bir parçası olduğu bu saiklerle ortaya

konmaktadır. Bu disiplinler arası bakış açısı, söylem ve kimlik arasındaki güçlü paralellikleri ortaya çıkarmada bu makale için değerli olduğunu kanıtladı.

Sovyet sonrası ideoloji anlayışı ise tarihten ve daha ziyade eski kilise söyleminden ayrılamayan bir başka geniş konudur. Ortodoks Slavların koruyucusu ve Üçüncü Roma'nın (Moskova) çıkarlarını koruyan rolünü yücelten Rus siyasi seçkinleri ve liderliği arasındaki istisnailik, mesihçi eğilimler ve inançlardan beslenen tarihsel mitlerden ve üst anlatılardan kaynaklanan ideoloji anlayışı, bu kategorizasyona tam olarak uyuyor. Bu ideoloji anlayışı, 2013 Stratejik Konsepti (SK) ile bağlantıları kurulan Rus sağcı 'Katechon olarak Rusya' anlayışıyla da ilgili olabilir. (Engström, 2014). Rus devletini, kültürel ve dini anlamda Ortodoksluk için kutsal ve temel olan her şeyin savunulması için vazgeçilmez olarak tabi kılan SK ile bağlantılar, esasen devletin gölgesinde, ROK'un mesih söylemini meşrulaştırıyor, kendi içinde, devletin varlığını şekillendiriyor. mesihçilik. Ayrıca, bu analizden, ROK ve devletin çıkarlarının, çoğunlukla, ROK'un otosefalisinin devlet egemenliğinin bir özelliği ve dolayısıyla ROK'un görevdeki yeri olduğu için çok uyumlu olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. -Sovyet Rus devletinin kalıcı olması önerilmektedir. ROK ile Rus devleti arasındaki mevcut durumun, Sovyet örneğinde yukarıda belirtilen iki kurum arasındaki ilişkiler arasında ciddi farklılıklar oluşturduğunu söylemek esasen kusurlu veya hatta riskli değildir. Şaşırtıcı olmayan bir şekilde, Sovyet sonrası Rus devletini büyük ölçüde karakterize eden liderin bunda aktif bir rolü var.

Geleneklerin yeniden benimsenmesini vurgulayan ve ROK'un Batı karşıtı medeniyetleri ayakta tutma savaşındaki faaliyetlerini destekleyen bir figür olan Vladimir Putin'in kalıcı görev süresi ve güçlü duruşu, ROK'un Rusya'daki köklü desteğinin bir başka eseridir. durum. Putin'in uzun bir görev süresi ve istihbarat teşkilatıyla sağlam bağları olan güçlü bir figür olarak doğası, ona Rus siyasetindeki yerini sağlamlaştırması için kaldıraç sağladı. Böylesine istikrarlı bir konuma sahip olan ROK ile belirli bir süreklilik derecesinde bir söylemi sürdürme tercihi, ROK'un sadece siyasi alanla ilişkisinin değil, aynı zamanda

çağdaş Rus devlet mesihçiliği ile uyum içinde tezahür eden söyleminin geçerliliğinin bir kanıtıdır. Putin, Rus tarihinin tüm kesimlerini bütüncül bir şekilde kucaklayan bir lider olarak, ille de din tarafından veya din aracılığıyla yönetilen bir figür değildir. Bu nedenle, ROK'un söyleminin, yalnızca teolojik alanda olmasa da, Putin'in kendisinden kaynaklanan örnekler de dahil olmak üzere Rus siyasi söylemine bir şekilde nüfuz etmesi özellikle ilginçtir.

Bununla birlikte, çağdaş Rus devlet mesihçiliğinin, ROK'un ideallerinin kapsüllenmesinin çok ötesine uzandığı ve Avrasyacılık unsurlarının yanı sıra etnik ayrımları içerdiği iddia edilebilir. Bu tür tartışma noktaları genel anlamda geçerlilik taşısa da, ilk etapta ROK'u bu tür kavramlardan tamamen ayırmak zordur. Batı'ya karşı çıkmada kültürel boyutları koruyan ROK'un söyleminin Avrasyacılıkla ortak yanları var ve bu temeller üzerinden daha çok kültürel boyutavurgu yapmak suretiyle Huntington'un medeniyetler ayrımını bir kez daha sorgulamak ve Rus ve hatta Avrasya alt grubunu içine alan bir yaklaşımı benimsemek mümkündür.

ROK'un Rus siyasetine dahil edilmesinin daha dini ve hatta teolojik alanlarına dayanarak, Slav entegrasyonu için bir çerçeve oluşturması anlamında "Üçüncü Roma" idealinin, etnik nitelikler ve düşünceler taşıdığı söylenebilecek yönleri de vardır. Bu tür sorgulamalardan kaynaklandığı anlaşılabilecek bir ana tema, ROK'un esasen Rus devletinin kendisine paralel olarak gelişen derin tarihsel köklerden yararlandığı ve bu paralellerin Senfoni ilişkisiyle açıklandığı gibi birbirine dolanmış bir yapı oluşturduğudur. Kilise-devlet işbirliğinin temel amacı Ortodoks-Slav kimliğini korumak olsa da, jeopolitik tasavvurlar, ROK, devlet ve elit söyleminin bir parçası olarak "Rus Dünyası" üst anlatılarının yayılmasının gözlemlenmesi yoluyla merkezde yer alır. Esasen daha soyut veya teolojik tartışmalar bir şekilde jeopolitik eksende veya realpolitik bağlamda bir karşılık oluşturmaktadır. Bu karşılık ise mevcut tartışmalara daha gerçekçi ve gözlemlenebilir bir boyut atfetmekle kalmıyor, aynı zamanda konunun mevcut gelişmeler ışığında artan önemini de gözler önüne seriyor.

Bu düşüncelerden hareketle, ROK'dan, Rus devletinin tarihsel uygarlık ilişkisi üzerinden işlev gören uluslararası ilişkilere uzanan siyasi söyleminin bir parçası veya bir "bileşeni" olarak bahsedilebilir. Böyle bir bileşen olma rolünü sürdürmesi ise bir anlamda Rusya ve Batı arasındaki kopuşu daha da derinleştiren unsurlar arasındadır. En azından kültürel anlamda Ortodoksluğa tutunan bir toplumda, ROK sadece yumuşak gücün bir kurumu ve aracısı olarak değil, aynı zamanda Rus kültürel kimliğinin ve ulusal çıkarlarının temelinin müteşekkil bir parçası olarak da önem taşımaktadır. Bu figürün arkasındaki fikirler, etki açısından mevcut Rus sınırlarını aştığından, Rus devletinin bu bileşeni, bu tezde sergilenen tartışmaların ve anlatıların Rusça - Ukrayna Savaşı (2014 ve 2022) bağlamında anlaşılabileceğini göstermektedir.

B. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

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