WEST, EAST AND DISCOURSES OF PEACE AND WAR IN THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATION OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (1943 - LATE 1940S)

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines how the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) produced imaginaries of the East, the West, and itself in the context of the relationship between the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) and two postwar global unity initiatives: the ecumenical World Council of Churches (WCC), officially founded in Geneva in 1948, and the World Peace Council (WPC), organized in Europe by Cominform in 1949-1950. This specific angle has not been precisely elaborated by scholars and represents an account of my research interests. However, scholars have considered the issue of church-state relations in the USSR after the war and the use of the ROC in the public sphere abroad as an instrument of 'religious diplomacy.'

In my thesis, I argue that focusing on the instrumentalization of the church by the state primarily emphasizes institutional aspects and the decision-making process, rather than the production of ideas. This approach prevents us from seeing the mutual interests of the church and the state or the areas where their interests intersected. I draw on the extreme consolidation of clergy representatives and Orthodox thinkers with the state during and after WWII and their patriotic sentiments. I argue that this consolidation enabled them to contribute their experience and knowledge to the production of ideas and discourses represented by the MP in the public context. The analysis of the life trajectories of some of the key figures shows that many of them gained experience and knowledge during the pre-revolutionary period or in the White Emigré intellectual context, which made it easier for them to transmit pre-revolutionary imaginaries and contribute to the continuities in the representations of 'West' and 'East.'

The main sources for this work are the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (JMP), restored in 1943 at almost the same time as the MP, and the correspondence between the ROC and the

WCC from the WCC archives in Geneva. Despite possible censorship of ROC messages, Orthodox clergy, intellectuals, and ideologues expressed their thoughts on contemporary issues of Christian unity, peace and war, and the role and place of the ROC and the Soviet state in the context of these global issues.

I show that the MP's representations of East and West were influenced by the Great Patriotic War, the Cold War context, and postwar global debates on peace. During the Great Patriotic War, a unified imaginary of the 'West' had not yet emerged, with 'enemies of Russia' represented only by Nazis and historical examples from the Russian medieval and imperial periods. However, under the conditions of the Cold War, a unified imaginary of the West as a 'camp of warmongers' was already represented in ROC texts and public speeches, with the intervention of Marxist-socialist language into these representations. In contrast, the 'East' was represented by the MP as a 'peace camp', united by a sense of Christian unity and supported by the socialist USSR and Russian Orthodoxy, both of which supposedly shared common ideas of social justice and 'brotherly love', having sacrificed for the purpose of fighting enemies to achieve 'peace'. I examine these representations and imaginaries in the context of both short-term factors influenced by a flexible historical context and church-state relations in the postwar USSR, as well as long-term continuities with church-state relations and historical imaginaries of Orthodoxy in imperial Russia.

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I dedicate this work to my family members who have supported me throughout this 'journey.' I have felt privileged in the last couple of years because I have had the opportunity to see my husband and child almost every day during this difficult time when many young people have left their homes. I also dedicate this work to my friends, some of whom left their country in the mid-2010s, some took a risk to stay, and some were forced to leave or left recently, and in a few cases are unable to return. I wish us all not to fall into a 'dellusionship' with the hope that "Eto proidet (c)", although, to be honest, I often do, but to look for every possibility to continue our work, especially if it has a social meaning. It may only have a personal meaning for you, but I believe that not giving up your profession, interests and activities that you had in your 'past' and finding a new 'meaning' in a newly opened 'chapter' are both lifesavers.

Many people I know were born in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan and other countries from so called 'post-soviet' space. A portion of my friends are from there, my ancestors and relatives also come from or live in some of these countries. I am deeply saddened and ashamed to see all the difficulties and grief you are facing, and I realize the responsibility of my community for that. Nevertheless, as an optimist, I hope that this 'long XX century' one day will come to an end and that you will enjoy a peaceful and stable future.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CROCA – Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Affairs

DECR – Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate

GARF – The state Archive of Russian Federation [Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii]

JMP – Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate

MP – Moscow Patriarchate

MTA – Moscow Theological academy

ROC – Russian Orthodox Church

ROCOR – Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

WCC – World Council of Churches

WCPP – World Congress of Peace Partisans

WPC – World Peace Council

WWII – Second World War

INTRODUCTION

Context and Statement of Purpose

The restoration of the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) in September 1943 marked the beginning of a new 'concordat'[1] between church and state. Despite years of repression against clergy and believers, the revived Orthodox institutions supported Stalin's regime and actively participated in political debates about building a peaceful world order, both in the USSR and abroad.[2] While the apparent reason for this rapprochement could be security concerns or the recruitment of some key figures by the NKVD,[3] a closer look at the imaginaries produced by Orthodox thinkers allows one to suppose that there was a multifaceted causality and some longue durée factors in their service and commitment to the post-war USSR. For example, a critical examination of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (JMP) alongside public statements made by the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) after 1943 reveals that certain ideas and discourses can be seen as reflecting Slavophile, late imperial Russian religious philosophy or the legacy of White Émigrés.

[1] By this term, I mean a specific type of church-state relationship that emerged after 1943 and was an informal agreement between the church and state, based on their shared responsibility and cooperation in the public sphere. However, despite its informal nature, 'concordat' was characterized by the state's administrative and bureaucratic control over the church. E.g., Felix Corley, who introduced the 1943 church-state 'concordat' as such a mode when *"The mass persecution was put aside in favor of a system of administrative control"* (Felix Corley, *Religion in the Soviet Union: An archival reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 131). Another researcher, Roland Boer, also stresses its informal character: *"...a historic informal concordat between the Soviet government and church"* (see Roland Boer, "Sergei and the "Divinely Appointed" Stalin: Theology and Ecclesiology in Church-State Relations in the Soviet Union in the Lead-up to the Cold War," *Social Sciences* 7, no. 4 (2018): 1).

[2] On rapprochement of the ROC with the Soviet state after war see, e.g., Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "Belief and Disbelief in the Soviet Union," in *Extending the Borders of Russian History: Essays in Honor of Alfred J. Rieber*, ed. Alfred J. Rieber, Marsha Siefert (Central European University Press, 2003), 407-25; Irina Papkova, *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7; Zoe Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Russia after communism* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 49-51; Felix Corley, *Religion in the Soviet Union*, 10; Dmitrii Konstantinov, *The Crown of Thorns: Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR, 1917-1967* (London: Zarya, 1978), 5-6; Tatyana Chumachenko, *Church and State in Soviet Russia: Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Khrushchev Years* (London: Routledge, 2002), 4-5.

[3] E.g., Steven Merrit Miner supposes that both 1940s patriarchs, Sergius and Alexy I, could be recruited. See: Steven Merrit Miner, *Stalin's Holy War: religion, nationalism, and alliance politics, 1941-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 48.

The long-term influence of Russian Orthodoxy, with its persistent ideas of messianism, exceptionalism and a specific vision of Russia's role in Christian eschatology, in the context of the Great Patriotic War and the Cold War, became in some ways compatible with the Soviet vision of its political mission in the post-war reality. Similarly, both clergy and statesmen experienced 'mutual influence' from an 'alternative' context. For example, some political or military figures during and after the war were at least able to understand and advocate the need for a revival of religiosity.[4] Under the dramatic conditions and consequences of the war, some religious actors also aligned themselves with the state. As I show in the thesis, the victor's sentiments, and the changing position of the USSR in the post-war order had an impact even on those clergy and orthodox thinkers who had previously opposed the state or the MP.

In this research, I look at the relationship of the MP to two global 'peace and unity' initiatives, and at the political and historical discourses that emerged in this context, to find out how post-war issues of war and peace interacted with traditional 'imperial imaginaries' of Russian Orthodoxy. How did Russian Orthodox ideologues and intellectuals represent the mission of the ROC and the role of 'East' and 'West' in the post-war world? What was their agency in producing such discourses? Why did they think that the ROC should engage in the international political context? Could they see their political task of defending Soviet interests on the world 'stage' as a 'mission' consistent with the traditional Russian Orthodox perspective? At the same time, I do not hesitate to consider their personal experience of political engagement, or individual motives, as well as the general context of Soviet religious policy and the changing church-state relations, as short-term factors in the production of post-

[4] It is interesting, how Lucian N. Leustean problematizes this, stating that it is unclear whether political leaders of different anti-religious political regimes were really 'anti-religious': Lucian N. Leustean, "Eastern Christianity and the Cold War: An Overview," in *Eastern Christianity and the Cold War: 1945-91*, ed. Lucian N. Leustean (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), 7-8.

war imperial imaginaries. Such a complex perspective helps to understand why, despite the many ruptures, the ROC still participated in state politics of the USSR, not only from the surface perspective of state domination or 'religious diplomacy,' but also from a deeper perspective of the need to transmit those ideas and imaginaries, which were perceived by some orthodox ideologues as intrinsic to Russian Orthodoxy, but also belonged to themselves as representatives of old imperial Russian legacy.

Based on my research, I argue that the self-representation of the MP in the postwar global context, as well as its perceptions of 'West' and 'East' and the various political and historical discourses that emerged in that period, were shaped by both the post-war situation and the Cold War. At the same time, they reflected the long-term 'exceptionalism' and messianic vision of Russian Orthodoxy and 'customary' Orthodox mode of church-state relations. And those key-figures, who cooperated with the Stalinist regime under the new postwar 'concordat' between the church and the state, due to their prerevolutionary background, were able to become effective transmitters of that heritage. Meanwhile, the history of the XX century in Russia and Europe — wars, revolutions, and efforts to build a sustainable peace and world order — gave their efforts a distinct political character.

The personal life trajectories of some of the key contributors to the JMP are particularly representative in terms of the shift from the status of formerly 'precarious' White Emigrés, or formerly untrustworthy clergymen, to the status of Soviet patriots and advocates of Soviet interests abroad. It is noteworthy that some of these people did not even live in the USSR after the revolution but sided with the Soviet state on the outcome of WWII. Among the key figures who contributed to the production of the ROC's historical and political imaginary, I highlighted Metropolitan Nikolai, who edited the JMP and headed the Department for External Church Relations (DECR), the former renovationist archpriest Hermogen (Kozhin),

and a returned White Émigré, who was a member of Berdyaev's 'The Way' intellectual circles – the theologian and expert in Orthodox canon Sergei Troitsky. Despite differences in their biographies, their life trajectories had certain commonalities. They all had grown up and been educated in the late 19th or early 20th century, belonged to the 'old' late-imperial generation of Russian Orthodox monarchists, and in some cases Slavophiles, and had experience in political engagement. I argue that this background enabled them to transmit the late-imperial Orthodox and Russian nationalist heritage from the interwar to the postwar era and to adapt it to the 'concordat' with Stalin's regime.

The post-war church-state 'concordat' is a controversial topic, and I reflect on some perspectives in the literature review and in the first research chapter. The starting point for debates on this issue is that after 1943 the ROC was institutionally controlled by a specially created council, the Council for Russian Orthodox Church Affairs (CROCA), headed by Georgy Karpov, a high-ranking state security officer.[5] Because of this connection, some researchers tend to deprive the clergy of agency and see the post-war church-state relationship as a mode of power and domination of the state over the church.[6] However, I argue that, at least in the early post-war period, this relationship was more a mode of mutually beneficial cooperation that allowed those whom the state trusted to use their expertise and knowledge to serve the interests of the state. Depending on the changing historical context, this mode was also flexible, as was the position, motivations and personal beliefs of the individuals who played the role of mediator or key decision-maker.

[5] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*, 172; Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 16.

[6] E.g., Stephen C. Headley stated that *"Church life was controlled from all sides by the local person responsible for the CROCA"* (see Stephen Headley, *Christ after Communism: Spiritual authority and its transmission in Moscow today* (Rollinsford, New Hampshire: Orthodox Research Institute, 2010), 174). Tatyana Chumachenko concluded that the agency in taking decisions was given by the Stalin not to the MP clergy, or to the Supreme Soviet, as was proposed by G. Karpov, but *"to the Sovnarkom and governmental authorities"* (see Chumachenko, *Church and State, 15).*

WWII changed not only the internal Soviet but also the global political context. The post-war search for a new peaceful world order brought the ROC and its new ideologues into relations with several global organizations. One was the global Christian 'fellowship' organized by Protestants and based in Geneva, called the World Council of Churches (WCC). A key-representative of the WCC, responsible for the communication with Moscow in late 1940s, a Dutch theologian Visser't Hooft, considered Christian unity impossible without the inclusion of the ROC.[7] However, despite the WCC's best efforts, in late 1946-1947 the MP formally 'postponed' contacts with the WCC and in 1948 published the official resolution condemning the ecumenical initiative of Geneva as politicized and not 'truly' Christian, also announcing that other Orthodox churches which apparently participated in a Moscow Pan-Orthodox Assembly had to break with the ecumenical movement.[8]

Moscow's own 'ecumenical' (pan-Orthodox) Assembly was organized in July 1948 but failed to achieve the full representation of all Eastern Orthodox dioceses, including Constantinople.[9] Although the Russian clergy rejected the political ambitions of 'Third Rome' at the Moscow conference,[10] at least some state officials still aimed to use it as a political project.[11] It is noteworthy that the project of Orthodox unity under the leadership of Moscow and preparatory work for the event started much earlier than 1948. Since at least 1946 CROCA was already prepared to organize *"a common platform for the fight against the Vatican and*

[7] Visser 't Hooft had considered Eastern Orthodoxy an indispensable part of the universal church and was personally passionate about the portrayal of Russian Orthodoxy in classical literature and White émigré thought. See Jurjen A. Zeilstra, "The Cold War, the Unity of the Church and Eastern Orthodoxy, 1948-1966," in *Visser't Hooft, 1900-1985: Living for the Unity of the Church* (Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 361–400.

[8] Resolutsiia po ekumenisticheskomu voprosu [The resolution on the ecumenical question], 1948, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4 Russia – Russian Orthodox Church, 1.

[9] M.V. Mongush. "Vsepravoslavnoe soveshhanie 1948 goda: novye dokumenty k istorii ego podgotovki [Pan-Orthodox meeting of 1948: new documents on the history of its preparation]," *Vostochnyj Arkhiv*, no. 2 (2021): 94-102; Daniela Kalkandjieva "The Moscow Pan-Orthodox council (8-18 July 1948)," accessed April 14, 2024, https://www.academia.edu/37111772/THE_MOSCOW_PAN_ORTHODOX_COUNCIL_8_18_July_1948.

[10] E.g., archpriest G. Razumovsky in his report stated that Moscow's appeal is "*not to Rome, but to the heavenly Jerusalem,"* (see Kalkandjieva Daniela, "The Moscow Pan-Orthodox council," 18).

[11] Mongush, "Vsepravoslavnoe soveshhanie," 94.

the ecumenical movement."[12] Thus, the first divorce from the ecumenical movement could obviously have been a planned action aimed at publicly discrediting the initiative in the eyes of other Orthodox churches, especially if we consider that the resolution of the MP also in a way 'forced' them to break away.[13]

After the Pan-Orthodox event in Moscow the ROC came to a 'bizarre' agreement with the communist World Peace Council (WPC), organized in Europe by Cominform in 1949-1950. One of the key figures of the MP, Metropolitan Nikolai, became the only representative of the Soviet clergy in the Standing Committee of the First World Congress of Peace Partisans (WCPP).[14] Simultaneously, the ROC was engaged in the Cold War debates, criticizing the 'West' not only for the 'corrupted' ecumenical initiative, but also on social, political and economic grounds. Such secular or 'semi-secular' political and historical discourses of the West-East dichotomy were represented in the JMP, particularly in its regular "In Defense of Peace" section, which I introduce below in a paragraph on sources. Representatives of the MP have also given speeches at various international events, reflecting on nuclear disarmament, equality, liberation of the oppressed, decolonization, women's freedom, etc. Reflecting on the differences between the 'East' as the 'Self' and the 'West' as the 'Other,' they created a generalized image of the Western world that included both a criticism of ecumenical initiatives of western Christians and an anti-capitalist 'socialist' secular stance.

In the 1960s the MP's attitude to the ecumenical WCC changed. In 1961, the ROC joined the WCC, and its rhetoric towards the 'West' as a political entity also transformed. The state's

[12] Kalkandjieva, "The Moscow Pan-Orthodox council," 5.
[13] Resolutsiia po ekumenisticheskomu voprosu, WCC archives.
[14] The WCPP was the first event under the framework of future WPC, organized in April 1949 in Paris and Prague. See the list of Soviet representatives in *JMP*, May 1949, 31.

agency could be even more significant in this process than in the 1940s.[15] However, some materials from the WCC archives show that in the early 1960s the ROC representatives were also motivated to seek closer interaction with the WCC. The personal story of Metropolitan Nikolai, which opens and closes the thesis, highlights the differences between the postwar revival of the church with its many patriotic aspirations and the disappointing early 1960s, when the ROC was more focused on survival. Although the period of the 1960s is beyond the scope of this study, the shifts that occurred in the postwar period reveal a multifaceted causal relationship between church-state relations, the ROC's perception of its role in them, its vision of the Christian church, and its attitude toward 'the West.'

Conceptual Framework

The division of the Christian world into 'East' and 'West' has been natural for Russian Orthodoxy and other Christian denominations at least since the Great Schism of 1054. Ages of political, theological and cultural debates and conflicts have shaped the framework of the East-West dichotomy, in which, despite many internal contradictions between 'domestic' churches, both 'Roman' and 'Eastern' ('Greek') Christian traditions were perceived by each other with a certain degree of rivalry and conflict. Differences in the theological canon as well as in visions of Christian life and history,[16] made this dichotomy one of the factors that shaped both their cultural and civilizational specificity and ideas about each other.

[15] Nadezhda Belyakova and Nikita Pivovarov, "Religioznaia diplomatiia na sluzhbe sovetskogo gosudarstva v gody kholodnoi voiny (v period N.S. Khrushcheva i L.I. Brezhneva) [Religious Diplomacy of the Soviet Union during the Cold War (the Time of N.S. Khrushchev and L.I. Brezhnev)]," *Outlines of global transformations: politics, economics, law, Center for Crisis Society Studies*, no. 4 (2018): 135-36.

[16] E.g., there is a view that Eastern Orthodoxy focuses on the whole group, whereas Western Orthodoxy prioritizes the individual agency. See Donald Fairbairn, *Eastern Orthodoxy through western eyes* (Lousville, London: Webminster John Knox Press, 2002), 6-7. Another observation by Alexander Schmemann, relevant to the context of the research, is that for Orthodoxy, the past is *"the essential channel and carrier of tradition,"* establishing the identity of the church in time and space. See Alexander Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission: Reflections on Orthodoxy in the West* (New York: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 1979), 14-15.

In this research, I also draw on Saidian perspectives of imagined geographies, which in the context of the topic are connected to the 'naturalized' Christian West-East dichotomy. Orthodox thinkers, similar to their Western counterparts, produced representations of self and other in the context of the West-East ecclesial division. What is important for my lens is Edward Said's ideas that the East was always represented by the 'West' as 'the other' and that, despite some flexibility, the 'West' tended to have a permanent political interest in the region.[17] However, I use his ideas in reverse to show that the MP, in its collaboration with the state during the Cold War, represented the 'West' as 'the Other' and tended to assert a certain Soviet political interest and positional superiority in global 'seeking for peace' context. Similarly, just as Orientalism was influenced by colonial and post-colonial relations, the Christian vision of 'East' and 'West' was influenced by the changing global context of the XX century. Although it may still have represented the long-standing "*relationship of the two modes of power,*"[18] the two world wars, the Russian Revolution and Bolshevik 'eschatology' as well as other European revolutions and the context of the Cold War sharpened the political dimension of the West-East dichotomy.

Russian Orthodox thought in the interwar period was influenced by the 'sharpening' of the political dimension of the West-East dichotomy both in the USSR and abroad. Thus, Antoine Arjakovsky, in his book on the intellectual life of White Emigrés who published their works in the journal "The Way" in 1920s and 1930s,[19] noted that one million Orthodox Russians after the revolution *"contributed to overturning the traditional structural poles of East and*

[17] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 9-12, 20.
[18] Harald Wydra, *Politics and sacred* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 77.
[19] Established in 1909 in Moscow by Nikolai Berdyaev, "The Way" emerged in 1920s-1930s as one of the primary periodicals for White Emigrés in Europe. See Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way: religious thinkers of the Russian emigration in Paris and their journal, 1925-1940* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 17-21.

West" in Europe,[20] but at the same time they reflected on the need for Christian unity and perceived the symbolic frontiers of Christianity as the frontiers of European civilization.[21] In this way, Arjakovsky's vision of Russian religious thought is consistent with the framework of continuity of imperial imaginaries created by Orthodox thinkers in their attempts to define the Russian Orthodox self, but at the same time to be understood and accepted by the 'West.'[22]

Such a perspective is particularly curious when one considers that Orthodox intellectuals and clergy simultaneously feared modernization but at the same time adopted some of its methods, e.g. practices of theological education, and could not completely 'escape' the 'West.'[23] Although, the relationship between Russian Orthodoxy and modernity was not such a contradictory as it is sometimes represented, especially in XX century. As Kristina Stoeckl argued, Orthodoxy *"is often understood as not belonging to modernity,"*[24] but among the Orthodox philosophers of the XX century there were some thinkers who could position themselves in relation to modernity, both in institutional and ontological terms. To some extent such a perspective correlates to the idea of 'symphonia' (acting together with the state in harmony), analyzed below in the literature review. To live in the modern age, the church needed somehow to adapt to its discourse, in a way like the way it adapted to the state. Another author, Laura Engelstein, stated that the reason why the ROC was influenced by secular trends and *"struggled to adjust to the changing political context,"*[25] was partly in the

[20] Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 138.
[21] Here, according to Arjakovsky, Russian religious thinkers and philosophers relied on the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol of faith, which proclaimed that there is only 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.' See Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 139.
[22] Or *"to find a common ground of Russian culture and that of the West"* (Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 22).
[23] George Demacopoulos, ""Traditional Orthodoxy" as a Postcolonial Movement," *The Journal of Religion* 97, no. 4 (2017): 481. https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/693164.
[24] Kristina Stoeckl, "Modernity and its Critique in 20th century Russian Orthodox Thought," *Studies in East European Thought* 58, no. 4 (2006): 243. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11212-006-9009-0.
[25] Laura Engelstein, *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's Illiberal Path* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 104.

incorporation of the church into the bureaucratic apparatus,[26] which lasted since period of Peter the Great. In the post-war period, long-term West-East religious dichotomies were also closely linked to Cold War issues of military and nuclear threat, security issues and real concerns about peace in a fragile post-war reality. An interesting example of the links between these issues has been presented by Roman Krakovsky in his study of Czech imaginaries of 'East' and 'West' as camps of peace and war.[27] Examining collective social events in a Cold war Czechoslovakia (late 1940s – early 1950s) he showed how representing the 'East' as a 'Peace camp' was used to strengthen the socialist 'comradeship' through *"the bipolar aesthetic of good and evil, hero and villain"* that had been developed as early as the interwar USSR but escalated in the context of the postwar peace movement and nuclear threat.[28] Although his work is not devoted to the Russian context, this research provides some clues as an example of how postwar church for peace and existing geopolitical dichotomies could influence cultural representations of the 'other' and the 'self.'[29] Another observation on the Cold War confrontational mindset made by Boris Knorre and Aleksandra Zasyad'ko was that anti-ecumenism as a religious idea was very reminiscent of the ideology of late Soviet politicians who saw the world as such a kind of confrontation.[30] Therefore, it could be the mutual adaptation or 'synchronization of mindsets' under the external challenges that drove the state bureaucrats and Orthodox intellectuals in the same direction. In sum, the Cold War context actualized the militaristic mindset and protectionist aspirations of both the Soviet state

[26] Ibid., 123.
[27] Roman Krakovsky, "The Peace and the War Camps: The Dichotomous Cold War Culture in Czechoslovakia" in *Cold War Cultures. Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies*, ed. Annete Vowinckel, Marcus M. Payk, Thomas Lindenberg (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012), 213-34.
[28] Krakovsky, *"The Peace and the war camps,"* 230, 213-30.
[29] Ibid., 213, 229.
[30] Boris Knorre, Alexandra Zasyad'ko, *"Orthodox anti-ecumenism* as an Element of the Mobilization Model of Society: Political Aspects of Religious Fundamentalism*,"* in *State, Religion and Church* 8, no. 2 (August 1, 2021): 93. https://doi.org/10.22394/2311-3448-2021-8-2-69-98.

and the ROC and led them to find parallels and commonalities in their imaginaries of West and East.

Under the conditions of alignment with the Soviet state, the Church also created a specific 'multidimensional' or multi-contextual political language, which I propose as the key to understanding Russian Orthodox political thought of the period. Conceptually, here I draw on John Pocock's notion of political language with its long-term structural background and short-term aspects influenced by current events or the role of individuals,[31] and the Cambridge intellectual school of contextualist interpretation. Speaking in 'Cambridge' terms, the changing context of the post-war period led to the dynamic and contested nature of the 'political language' of Soviet Orthodox clergy and intellectuals. Thus, the normative vocabulary of the JMP after 1943 was influenced by the Marxist-socialist context, especially in the "In Defense of Peace" section and within the framework of the WPC, as much as it was by the Stalinist national-patriotic rhetoric and postwar victor's sentiments, or by the 'liberal' context of the WCC in the 1960s. One interesting discovery I made during my research through this lens is that in transmitting orthodox ideas and imaginaries, at least in the interwar, and postwar context, orthodox intellectuals did not only adapt their 'language' to a new political discourses, but also restored some enduring archaic patterns of 'Russian imperial past.

Literature Review

One of the most crucial debates for the research context are those concerning the role and agency of the church in postwar Soviet church-state relations. For the answer to this question in a sense determines whether the ROC participated in the formation of certain discourses,

[31] John Pocock, "The concept of a language and the métier d'historien: some considerations on practice," in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 19-21.

appeals, and ideas, or was simply an instrument of propaganda. I have divided the debate on postwar Soviet church-state relations into two parts. The first group centers around the question *Did the church have agency in its public representation, and what kind of agency was that?* The second group concerns the vision of *how the mode of church-state relations is understood by scholars* and *how it could be explained and rationalized by the church itself*. In both cases, I also tend to focus on the connection between the post-World War II and Cold War context and church-state relationships, as this connection is important for the context of the research.

Some scholars view the rapprochement between the state and the church primarily as the state's instrumentalization of the church, placing too much emphasis on state agency. For example, in her seminal work on post-war church-state relations in the USSR (2002), Tatyana Chumachenko concluded that the ROC was not entirely deprived of agency. In her argument she relied on the materials from the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), including Stalin's correspondence with Georgy Karpov, who was the head of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CROCA). Chumachenko argued that the identification of the church with the state was characteristic of the dogmatic tradition of Orthodoxy, and within this framework, the ROC managed to establish its position *"in new, Soviet historical conditions."*[32] However, Chumachenko also emphasized the significant roles of Stalin, Karpov, and other state officials in the process, noting that CROCA was not democratic in its decision-making.[33] She argued that CROCA's commissioners viewed the renewed church *"as a part of the state system or as a new link in the developing structure of various communities"* of Soviet citizens,[34] whereas the church was depicted by her rather as

[32] Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 194.
[33] Ibid., 32-36.
[34] Ibid., 32.

homogenous, not-differentiated unity. To sum up, from her point of view, it was a kind of state 'benevolence' and political strategy in the fact that the state has given the church some agency.

Another aspect of her analysis is that it focuses mainly on hierarchy and decision-making processes rather than the production of ideas. For example, Chumachenko provided some crucial details about the education and background of CROCA members, when she stated that only one council member had more than a secondary education. And even if after the war some commissioners completed higher educational programs, still over a half of them did not have a diploma.[35] However, she did not juxtapose this to the background of key postwar Orthodox ideologues and thinkers, who were educated and gained their experience as clergy before the revolution. It would be interesting to consider how this rupture influenced not only administrative decision-making but also the development of imperial imaginaries. To address this gap, in my thesis I focus on the life trajectories of people who acted as Orthodox ideologues both in the USSR and abroad, or who otherwise represented Orthodox ideas. By examining the pre-revolutionary or pre-World War II past of these individuals, I reveal their contributions to the continuities in the representation of the 'East' and 'West.'

Zoe Knox is another scholar who examines the postwar USSR through the lens of the state's instrumentalization of the church. In her work *"Russian Religious Life in the Soviet Era,"* she characterizes 1943 'concordat' as a missed opportunity for the church *"to push for greater independence."*[36] According to her, the church was instrumentalized by the state, particularly to disseminate the Soviet agenda abroad, as in the case with the WCC.[37] At the same time

[35] Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 19, 24.
[36] Zoe Knox, "Russian Religious Life in the Soviet Era," in *The Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought*, ed. Caryl Emerson, George Pattison, and Randall A. Poole (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 66.
[37] Ibid., 68.

Knox also acknowledges the centrality of Orthodoxy to historical and national identity, highlighting its significant mobilization potential.[38] The same point on postwar church-state relationships is represented as a central argument in her earlier book *"Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Post-Communist Russia."*[39] In that text Knox characterized the MP during the whole Soviet period as *"a suppressed institution, directed and regulated by an atheist regime"* and almost deprived of agency.[40] The weakening of ROC's agency and authority, according to her, was gradual. It started when Metropolitan Sergius declared loyalty to the state in 1927 and lasted until the end of the Khrushchev period.[41] The church's participation in international initiatives, including the WCC, during the postwar period is, according to Knox, further evidence of state control over the church. She views the ROC's entry into the WCC in 1961 as the culmination of a fusion between the interests of the KGB and the MP. The KGB helped the MP eliminate dissenters and overcome internal schisms, while the MP provided the KGB with information from abroad and access to international institutions.[42]

In summary, Knox argues that the Soviet ROC lacked the independence and strength to promote a truly authentic Orthodox agenda, though she doesn't delve into the specifics of the decision-making process and the new account of the church-state 'bureaucracy' as extensively as Chumachenko does, for example. Consequently, there's a sense of overgeneralization in her analysis, not just an overemphasis on a specific context. However, similarly, as in the case of Chumachenko scholarship, I argue that while Zoe Knox presents convincing evidence that the Soviet state instrumentalized the church in decision-making and foreign policy, a broader look

[38] Ibid., 66.
[39] Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church,* 41-49.
[40] Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church,* 2.
[41] Ibid., 41-42.
[42] Ibid., 51.

at agency in the production of ideas is needed. To understand who or what drives certain ideas, one should probably examine not only the process of 'giving orders,' but also the origin and reciprocity of certain narratives or their connections to historical contexts and personal experience of 'narrators.'

The perspective of viewing the post-war Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) as an instrument of public affairs controlled by the state, particularly for foreign policy purposes, is also relevant for Nadezhda Belyakova and Nikita Pivovarov. They characterize the relationship between the church and the state, in which the ROC represents Soviet interests abroad, as 'religious diplomacy.' Belyakova and Pivovarov point out that this was a new phenomenon in the post-war era, which did not exist in the 1920s-1930s due to the different positioning of the USSR in the global agenda.[43] Through religious diplomacy, they argue, it became possible to address issues that could not be resolved through formal state interaction, especially for political reasons.[44] While the idea of Soviet religious diplomacy as a 'soft-power' tool during the Cold War is convincing, it is also framed by notions of hierarchy and domination-oppression dynamics. Consequently, such a perspective may probably put too much emphasis on secular politics and hinder consideration of the church's own interests in the process.

I argue that, while the state certainly played a key role in the institutional revival of the church, it was not the decisive factor in the intellectual revival of Orthodox thought. The relationship between the church and the state can rather be characterized as a mutual interaction where the state held more power in decision-making, while the church retained some influence over the representation and production of ideas. In some ways, the state and

[43] Belyakova and Pivovarov, "Religioznaia Diplomatiia," 131.
[44] Ibid., 142-43.

the church may have shared common interests in the dissemination of Soviet propaganda, shaped by their shared historical context.

The role of WWII in shaping the new status of the church and in the creation of the examined imaginaries is also a subject of debate. One of the seminal works on this topic, *"Stalin's Holy War"* by Steven Merrit Miner, in a way reinstated the role and agency of the ROC in the war period. By asserting that *"the Russian church defied the dominant trends of late Stalinist politics,"*[45] Miner suggested to reevaluate of the significance of religion in Soviet life,[46] providing the account of the Great Patriotic war as an example of such a reassessment. Another significant issue he addressed is the common lens of 'victim and oppressor' often used in studying the history of the church in the USSR, which makes it challenging to recognize *"those instances where both sides' interests intersected."*[47] Indeed, issues such as the unity of the nation, especially in the reclaimed territories on the western border of the USSR, or the assertion of Moscow's mission on a global scale, could illustrate instances where the interests of church and state coincided. For example, in the first chapter of this thesis, I analyze texts written by Metropolitan Nikolai for Ukrainian clergy, which exemplify the shared interest of the church and the state in regaining influence and control over specific territories.

Another point of agreement I have with Miner concerns religiosity during this period and the state's ability to control the church amidst a real revival of religious sentiment. His assertion that *"as the Soviets sought to manipulate Russian Orthodoxy, they began to lose control over the process"*[48] is somewhat aligned with the early revisionist views on the purported decline

[45] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 5.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 6.
[48] Ibid., 12.

of religiosity in postwar USSR, as articulated by Dmitrii Konstantinov.[49] Konstantinov described the state of Orthodox religiosity in the USSR as an *"irreversible process of renewal"* and *"the spiritual awakening,"*[50] suggesting that even under persecution, the Church remained the sole antithesis to Marxist-Leninist propaganda and retained a degree of spiritual freedom.[51] He characterized the ROC's relationship with the Soviet system as a mode of survival, arguing that clergy in the USSR were not entirely corrupted but rather motivated to cooperate with the state to safeguard Russian Orthodoxy under oppressive conditions.[52] Konstantinov also emphasized continuity, positing that there was no *"Soviet, but Russian Church,"*[53] which managed to preserve religiosity and transmit spiritual values, with cooperation with the state serving to maintain this continuity.

Although his perspective may be over-focused on the belief in a deep and genuine Orthodoxy among many Soviet people,[54] and the argument about spiritual heritage is not always grounded in rational evidence,[55] there are some fruitful ideas for research. One such idea, consistent with Miner's perspective, is that the state initially granted the church some agency for political purposes, expecting to maintain control over religious institutions. However,

[49] It is interesting that his revisionist perspective came as if both from the inside of the ROC's tradition, and from the outside of the Soviet context. Konstantinov was born in St. Petersburg in 1908, lived in the USSR after the Revolution, was educated as a theologian, and served in the Red Army, but in 1944 was ordained to the ministry of the ROCOR, after becoming a prisoner of war, and later became an archpriest of the Orthodox Church in the USA, working also as a historian and expert in Soviet ROC for different western institutions. Konstantinov, *The crown of thorns*, 333; Dmitrii Konstantinov, "Ya srazhalsya v krasnoy armii [I fought in the Red Army]," (orig. pub. 1952.), accessed April 30, 2024, http://militera.lib.ru/memo/russian/konstantinov_dv1/index.html.

[50] Konstantinov, "Orthodoxy and the younger generation in the USSR," in *Religion and the search for new ideals in the USSR*, ed. William C. Fletcher and Anthony J. Strover (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 24.

[51] Ibid., 24.

[52] In this argument he also relied on the assumption that the policy of the MP could be formally accepted as *"painful necessity,"* but never supported genuinely. Konstantinov, *The crown of thorns*, 55.

[53] Ibid., 54. As evidence he also gives examples of 'shifting' from the church context to academia or other intellectual activities through which they could transmit some spiritual values. Ibid., 45-47, 68-70.

[54] In seeking evidence of genuine faith, he cites examples such as church attendance or the act of kissing an icon mentioned in personal correspondence. He also mentions territories on the western border of the USSR where many marriages were still performed in churches in the 1960s. However, the latter account is likely not comparable with the rest of the country. Ibid., 56-57, 59.

[55] E.g., *"The Soviet people of today are drawn to the church by some intuitive force which makes them follow the tradition of their ancestors."* Ibid., 8.

certain aspects of religious life proved difficult to control and direct. And the second idea, also consistent with Miner's scholarship, could be described as that researchers need to shift the focus from the mere fact of church-state cooperation to examining the mutual interests of both parties.

As for religiosity in the postwar USSR, I do not focus on it in this thesis, but I consider the arguments about it important to understanding the role and agency of church intellectuals. If those who produced discourses could provide even formal evidence of a revival of religiosity, their 'voice' could sound more authoritative to the state. An interesting observation in this context is that the number of young believers and clergy appears to have increased in the postwar period.[56] Other examples include church celebrations,[57] a softening of the attitude to religion in education in 1945,[58] and a rising number of churches.[59] Perhaps, since there were some signs of religiosity, the clergy could have had potential to strengthen their position in the church-state 'concordat,' but whether this potential was realized or not is a question.

The second set of perspectives, which revolve around how-questions about the mode of church-state relations and the ROC's own perception of that mode, concerns visions of the terms 'Symphonia' and 'Caesaropapism.' The first represents the Russian Orthodox vision of church-state relations as 'acting together in harmony.' One more recent interpretation of this idea was given by Patriarch Kirill when, in his 2009 speech, he characterized Russian

[56] Some intriguing statistics from the postwar period indicate that in 1949, only 9% of bishops were aged between 30 and 49, but by 1965, this figure had risen to 28% (see Teodorovich Nadezhda, "The Rejuvenation of the Russian Orthodox Clergy," in *Religion and the search for new ideals in the USSR*, ed. William C. Fletcher and Anthony J. Strover (New Tork: Frederick Praeger, 1967): 37).
[57] Konstantinov, *Crown of Thrones*, 64, 73-75.
[58] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*, 156.
[59] E.g., Nathaniel Davis pointed out that between 1944 and 1947 the CROCA allowed about 1,300 new churches to be opened, mostly in the Russian republic. In 1956 official statistics gave data of 12,000 Orthodox churches in the USSR (see Nathaniel Davis, "The Number of Orthodox Churches before and after the Khrushchev Antireligious Drive," *Slavic Review 50*, no. 3 (1991): 612-14). However, as demonstrated in the first chapter, the increasing number of churches did not necessarily correlate with their functionality.

Orthodox symphonia as a *"harmonious combination of interests"* and *"distribution of responsibilities."*[60] Although, 'Symphonia' is sometimes believed to have roots in the Byzantine legacy,[61] apparently this vision of a 'need to act together' was shaped during the reign of Peter the Great, who abolished the Patriarchy and *"established an institutional dependence of the church over the state"*.[62] As John Meyendorf stated in his text on the 1905 church reforms, the reforms of Peter the Great made the sense of 'symphonia' problematic. Without a patriarchate and under the administration of the Department of Orthodox Confession, the ROC was absorbed by the state and could not 'act in harmony.'[63] Perhaps, in a certain sense, the term 'symphonia' has become the church's own imaginary, which compensated for the loss of agency and institutional independence it had before reforms of Peter the Great.

In this context it is noteworthy that some authors explain Russian Orthodox vision of 'symphonia' by a church's need for survival. For example, Lucian Leustean, reviewing Eastern Christianity in the context of the Cold War, defines Orthodox notion of 'Symphonia' as *"an ambiguous balance between the religious and the political spheres"*[64] that could present atheistic regimes as a necessity and *"the will of God"* and perceive cooperation with the state as some kind of temporary measure.[65] Nonetheless, 'Symphonia,' as a specific Russian Orthodox concept explaining why the ROC sometimes cooperates with the state, addresses

[60] "Arkhipastyri — uchastniki Pomestnogo Sobora prisutstvovali na prieme v Georgievskom zale Bol'shogo kremlevskogo dvortsa [Archpastors – participants of the Local Council attended a reception in the St. George Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace]," Moscow Patriarchate, February 2, 2009, accessed April 30, 2024, http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/548365.html.
[61] E.g., Kirill in his speech stressed Byzantine roots of 'Symphonia.' Ibid.
[62] Donald W. Treadgold, "Russian Orthodoxy and society," in *Russian Orthodoxy under the old regime*, ed. Robert L. Nichols, Theofanis George Stavrou (Mineapolis: University of Minesotta press, 1978), 22.
[63] John Meyendorff, "Russian bishops and church reform in 1905," *Russian Orthodoxy under the old regime*, ed. Robert L. Nichols, Theofanis George Stavrou (Mineapolis: University of Minesotta press, 1978), 170.
[64] Leustean, "Eastern Christianity and the Cold War," 1.
[65] Ibid., 1-15.

not only the problem of survival but also the broader question of why the ROC may be perceived as a church that cannot exist without the state.

Another term used by scholars and some orthodox intellectuals to describe the mode of church-state relationships in the USSR is 'caesaropapism,' which may be defined as when the church delegates supremacy over spiritual institutions to secular authorities. Harald Wydra characterized this mode in the extended meaning as *"a temporal authority being in command over the spiritual apparatus"* and stated that, e.g., in pre-revolutionary period the church *"provided the Tsars with the idea of the continuity of empire."*[66] Konstantinov also defined the church-state relationships as 'caesaropapism,' stating that even in pre-revolutionary period the church was only formally governed by the Synod, and the emperor *"could intervene in church affairs."*[67] John Anderson, in his article on the history of the CROCA, also noted that the ROC had been under the control of the Synod since the 18th century. However, what made the Soviet situation unique, according to him, was that Soviet successor *"have operated under the auspices of a regime ostensibly committed to the total elimination of religious institutions and ideas."*[68]

This last point by Anderson highlights significant differences in church-state relations before and after Soviet anti-religious policies. While before the revolution, the state, even if nominally dominating the church, at least purportedly acted in the interests of Russian Orthodoxy, the Soviet state was guided by non-religious considerations. For church-state relationships, this meant not only reducing the church's agency but also using it to serve non-religious interests of Soviet citizens, including political representation of the USSR abroad

[66] Wydra, *Politics and sacred*, 77.
[67] Konstantinov, *Crown of Thorns*, 5-6.
[68] John Anderson, "The Council for Religious Affairs and the Shaping of Soviet Religious Policy," *Soviet Studies* 43, no. 4 (1991): 690.

and engaging in global peace debates. However, some orthodox thinkers debate the term 'caesaropapism' in general, and for the Soviet period in particular, emphasizing the 'pagan' origin of the term and the 'secular' character of the Soviet state, which was separate from the church.[69] Without delving into discussions on the consistency of this term with the Soviet reality, I argue that what makes Soviet church-state relationships reminiscent of some features of 'caesaropapism' is the fact that some church leaders and ideologues viewed their alliance with the 'dominant' state as an opportunity to transmit the ideas and imaginaries intrinsic for Russian Orthodoxy into the dominant 'secularized' Soviet culture. Thus, even without having sufficient agency, clergy members attempted to operate within the proposed mode of church-state relationships in a manner consistent with what was imagined as a tradition of church-state relationships.

As mentioned, researchers also use more secular terms for the describing of these relationships, e.g. 'concordat' or 'modus vivendi.'[70] I suggest that despite meanings and contexts, and some debates around the terms 'caesaropapism' and 'symphonia' in the ROC, all the terms listed can in different ways characterize postwar church-state relations as a reciprocal interaction, in which the ROC also tried to pursue some of its interests. For example, some church leaders and ideologues under the conditions of war could use their alliance with the state for 'spiritual transmission' of orthodox values and imperial imaginaries, and for the restoration of such mode of church-state relationships that they considered proper for orthodoxy. I borrow this term 'spiritual transmission' from anthropologist Stephen S. Headley, who stated in his book that while there were some interruptions in spiritual

[69] Thus, it was disputed by Sergei Troitsky, whose texts are analyzed in the thesis. In 1960 he characterized caesaropapism as 'paganism' in his debates with the ROCOR. In the same context he also pointed out that Soviet citizens did not have 'obligation' to be orthodox, and since the Soviet state was secular, it did not really intervene in religious life (see Sergei Troitsky, *O Nepravde Karlovatskogo raskola [The untruth of Karlovtsy schism]* (Paris: 26, rue Peclet, 1960), 39, 78).

[70] For example, Felix Corley characterized the ROC as a church that achieved a modus vivendi as a useful tool of government, especially in foreign policy (see Corley, *Religion in the Soviet Union,* 10).

transmission in the Soviet period, even in 2000s one could still find a priest who represented *"part of spiritual lineage"* from the *'martyrs'* of the 1930s.[71] Headley himself in his book emphasized such Russian Orthodox values as *'Sobornost'* (commonality) in contrast to western individualism, and commitment to national identity, when he quoted White Emigres saying that *"Russian Orthodox are more Russian than Orthodox."*[72]

To summarize, the analysis of the Russian Orthodox Church's vision of its own mission in the global postwar context, as well as its vision of the role of the Soviet state as a precursor of Russian civilization, may be complicated by several factors. A major obstacle is the overemphasis on the instrumentalization of the Church by the state and the issue of oppression and domination. The main problem is that such a focus leads to seeing political decisions, ideas, and discourses as solely products of the state rather than of Orthodox agency. Notably, even such authors, who gave the church certain agency, tended to focus on its limitations and the responsibility of the state in taking decisions.[73] By shifting the focus away from the state's dominance over the church, we can explore the interests and ideas of church actors in global politics and their vision of their mission. Nevertheless, an examination of anti-religious policies and repression can be valuable in understanding how the church's perspective has evolved under such conditions. However, it's also important to identify aspects that have remained unchanged or, for example, changed unnecessarily, potentially increasing risks for religious actors.

Another obstacle is the overemphasis on institutions rather than on people who were empowered and capable of producing ideas. How did they manage, for example, to combine

[71] Headley, *Christ after Communism*, 148.
[72] Ibid., 521-522, 525.
[73] E.g., Dmitry Konstantinov pointed out that even though the ROC had certain independence in internal communication, it was completely utilized by the 'communist dictatorship' in foreign politics (see Konstantinov, *Crown of Thorns*, 79).

the progressive socialist view with the anti-modernist and nationalist perspective of Russian Orthodox exclusivity and messianism? Could it be that the interference of state actors in the production of ideas was not sufficient or necessary, because the deputies themselves could have similar interests as their state 'counterparts?' Thus, I would like to pay more attention to the personal biographies of some of the key figures who produced discourses, emphasizing their role in the development of specific ideas and imaginaries.

Sources

One of the sources I use throughout my thesis is the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (JMP), which was revived in September 1943 during Stalin's campaign to liberate Soviet territories from Nazi occupation. From its inception, at least 50% of the JMP's circulation was intended for an international audience.[74] In the first chapter of my thesis, I discuss how, against the backdrop of the USSR's territorial recovery and the beginning of its European campaign, the authors of the JMP focused on identifying enemies and traitors, documenting Nazi war crimes, expressing sympathy for 'Christian brothers' suffering under a common enemy, and justifying a future Soviet presence in Europe.

In analyzing these discourses, I also address the question of the JMP's target audience, using secondary literature and logical assumptions. I argue that some of the content was aimed at the Ukrainian Uniate clergy, particularly in the newly liberated regions of Ukraine. Internationally, the JMP sought to reach Orthodox believers and clergy abroad to restore and enhance the reputation of the ROC among global Orthodox communities. In addition, it was intended for the Western Allies and their intelligence services to demonstrate religious freedom and legitimize Soviet war strategies. This dual domestic and international purpose

[74] Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 78.

highlights the role of the JMP in consolidating Soviet influence within its borders and projecting a favorable image of the ROC and the Soviet state to the wider world. In the second chapter, I also examine the messages in the JMP concerning the Moscow Patriarchate's relations with the WCC and the WPC, analyzing how Orthodox perceptions of 'the West,' 'the East' and 'the self' were presented to the international audience.

The second set of sources consists of materials from the WCC archives. By examining correspondence, reports and other documents from these archives, I contextualize the ROC's self-representation in its communications with the West and explore on the example of the WCC how 'the West' perceived the ROC. For this part of the research, I focus on texts from 1947-1948 by WCC experts and Christian newspapers published during Moscow's refusal to join the ecumenical movement. Materials from the WCC archives help to illustrate the politically binary context of the ROC versus the 'universalist' and 'tolerant' stance of the WCC. The correspondence between them is also one more source, which validates that the WCC faced condemnation from the MP not only for short-term political reasons, but also for historical and theological ones. Moreover, it was interesting to look at that correspondence in dynamics, since before and after the early 1960s, when the ROC finally decided to join the WCC, their mutual perceptions changed significantly. In the final part of this research, I examine this shift to find out how changes in church-state relations affected Orthodox historical and political imaginaries of the East, the Self, and the 'West.'

Thesis Outline

The first chapter explores the political discourses in the JMP from its re-establishment in September 1943 until 1945. I argue that historiography on Russian Orthodoxy during the war period overemphasizes church-state relations, overshadowing the ideas and imaginaries

produced by Orthodox ideologues and their role in transmitting traditional 'imperial' legacy. Thus, the integration of these imaginaries into the Marxist-socialist and early Cold War context remains underexplored. The analysis is contextualized with the revival of Russian nationalism and Orthodoxy under the conditions of Stalinist cultural transformations and the personal life trajectories of the JMP contributors, highlighting the patriotic consolidation of the clergy and Orthodox intellectuals during and after the war.

The chapter posits that during the Great Patriotic war the state propaganda was intertwined with Orthodox ideologues' genuine involvement in issues of peace, war, victimhood, victory, and messianic aspirations. This allowed Russian patriotic stances to coexist with internationalist leftist statements about the equality and friendship of people. Linking this part of research with other chapters I suppose that such themes as partisan-heroes, betrayals, and Nazi crimes in occupied territories emerge during the war and remain a distinctive feature of the period. However, some other discourses, such as Soviet socialist superiority, Russian national exceptionalism, and anti-Western sentiments, persist after 1943-1945, affecting the postwar content of the JMP.

In the second chapter, I explore how the ROC in the late 1940s aligned closely with the government and became involved in global politics. The first subchapter traces the ROC's journey from 1946 to 1948, from initial cooperation to diverging from the ecumenical movement. It examines the ROC's perceptions of the West in the context of its ecumenical initiatives, revealing both longue-durée continuities and new postwar aspects in Orthodox self-positioning. The second subchapter examines the ROC's subsequent participation in communist peace initiatives like the WPC, highlighting the connection between Orthodox views of the West and East, ideas of Soviet socialist superiority, and peace advocacy.

Using correspondence, reports, and other materials from the WCC archives, I explore the ROC's self-presentation and its views of the West within the context of ecumenical initiatives and discourses of Christian unity. The second subchapter is focused on the texts written in 1949-1950, when after condemning the ecumenical movement, the ROC joined the WPC. Here, I rely on political debates in the newly created section of the JMP, titled “In Defense of Peace,” to explore how the politically binary context of the WPC affected Orthodox views of the West and self-perception. The chapter also explores how the ROC's views of the West varied in different contexts. For instance, it examines the religious context by comparing the ROC's perceptions of the Vatican, the Anglican order, and Protestant initiatives. Additionally, it looks at the ROC's vision of the East and the West as political units, revealing 'Cold War' depictions of the East and West as 'peace' and 'war' camps, respectively.

CHAPTER 1. THE REVIVED MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE, ITS WARTIME DISCOURSES AND SENTIMENTS

This chapter examines the development of political discourses in the JMP from its re-establishment in September 1943 to the immediate postwar period. While analyzing the texts published during this period, I found it intriguing how the theologically educated JMP contributors used Soviet political language to advocate for both church interests and the state political agenda. In their statements, they could intertwine ideas of the superiority of Soviet socialism with ideas of Russian national exceptionalism, all accompanied by anti-Western sentiments. Meanwhile, as stated in the introduction, the history of the ROC in the postwar period tends to obscure the production of political imaginaries by Orthodox ideologues, as if due to their lack of agency. Perhaps this is why the postwar account of Orthodox political imaginaries and their integration into the Marxist-socialist and historical background of the early Cold War has not been extensively studied.

In this chapter, I draw on the context of the extraordinary patriotic consolidation of the clergy under the conditions of war. However, I view this fact not through the lens of the instrumentalization of the church by the state, but rather from the perspective of the revival of traditional aspects of Russian nationalism and Orthodox heritage. This perspective is also highlighted by the personal life trajectories of Orthodox ideologues, their social and intellectual backgrounds. I examine the discourses produced by them within the context of Stalinist cultural transformations, the Great Patriotic War in the USSR, and the beginning of the Cold War. I argue that the political ideas of the ROC representatives reflected the interplay between the formal promotion of the Soviet agenda and their genuine engagement with issues of peace and war, sacrifice and victory, and certain messianic aspirations. Therefore, their Russian patriotic stance could coexist with internationalist leftist statements

about the equality and friendship of peoples. And a desire for cooperation and unity with other 'Christian brothers' abroad may have paralleled the rhetoric of Russian Orthodox and Soviet socialist exceptionalism and superiority. This chapter analyzes these ideas, examining their correlations, the circumstances of their emergence, and their appearance in different contexts.

1.1. The Revival of the Moscow Patriarchate and its 'New' Ideologues

On Restoration of Patriarchy and a New Mode of Church-State Relationships

The restoration of the MP took place on September 4, 1943, after the meeting of Stalin with future Patriarch, Metropolitan Sergius, and two other representatives of the ROC. The text on that Kremlin meeting was published first in the issue of "Izvestia" and a few days later in the restored JMP.[75] Author(s) reported that the intention to restore the Patriarchate was an initiative of the Church, but Comrade Stalin *"sympathetically reacted to these assumptions and stated that there would be no obstacles from the government."*[76] However, the church announced the support of the state even earlier, in June 1941.[77] The state also included some representatives of the higher clergy into public activities before the official restoration of the MP in 1943. For example, in November 1942 Metropolitan Nikolai (Boris Jarushevich) of Kyiv and Galicia was appointed as a member of the Extraordinary State Commission for the

[75] Metropolitan Alexy of Leningrad and the Exarch of Ukraine, Metropolitan Nikolai of Kyiv and Galicia, "Priem tovarishchem I. V. Stalinym Mitropolita Sergiia, Mitropolita Aleksia, Mitropolita Nikolaia [Reception of Metropolitan Sergius, Metropolitan Alexy and Metropolitan Nikolai by Comrade I.V. Stalin]," *JMP*, January 1943, 5.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Here some researchers rely on an official announcement by Metropolitan Sergius made on June 22, 1941, from GARF documents (see Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 4). However, as known from Sergius' biography published in 1947, he received information about the German invasion only in the evening when returning from liturgy (see *Patriarkh Sergij I ego dukhovnoe nasledstvo* [*Patriarch Sergius and His Spiritual Heritage]* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Moskovskoj Patriarkhii, 1947), 234). Thus, the text of the announcement was probably written later, but even if it was composed with some interference from government, officials could have had some sort of consensus with the Metropolitan Sergius.

Investigation of War Crimes Committed by the German Invaders.[78] In the same year Nikolai also edited the book "The truth about religion in Russia," which was published in 50000 copies and destined for abroad to change the opinion of Soviet allies on the religious politics in the USSR.[79] In summary, not only has the party apparatus softened its religious policy, some key representatives of the church have also shown readiness for closer rapprochement with the government.

It is noteworthy that some sources show that the state during the war could also allow the church to have more agency. One curious fact that I discovered while studying the correspondence of Metropolitan Alexy of Leningrad (future patriarch Alexy I) from the year 1945 is that as a high-ranking church-official he did not hesitate to set the rules in communication with the head of the institution that was supposed to control them. For example, in a letter written by Metropolitan Alexy to Georgy Karpov, one can see: "*Now, it has been decided that you will attend the session* of the Council on January 31st having left from St. Peter's Square. Ostrovskogo at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Here *you are reading to us*

[78] "Ob obrazovanii Chrezvychainoi gosudarstvennoi komissii po ustanovleniiu i rassledovaniiu zlodeianii nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov i ikh soobshchnikov i prichinennogo imi ushcherba grazhdanam, kolkhozam, obshchestvennym organizatsiiam, gosudarstvennym predpriiatiiam i uchrezhdeniiam SSSR. Ukaz ot 2 noiiabria 1942 g. [On the formation of the Extraordinary State Commission for ascertaining and investigating the crimes of the German-Fascist invaders and their accomplices and the damage caused by them to citizens, collective farms, public organizations, state enterprises, and institutions of the USSR]" in *Sbornik zakonov SSSR i ukazov Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR (1938 – iiul' 1956 gg.)*, ed. Y.I. Mandelstam, (Moscow, 1956), 96-98.

[79] Anatoly Kashevarov stated that such a circulation could mean that the government was interested in distributing the book abroad for debating the issue of persecution of believers in the USSR (see Anatoly Kashevarov, "Chastichnoe vozrozhdenie i osobennosti tserkovnoi pechati v 1940-e gody [The Partial Restoration of Ecclesiastical Publications in the 1940's and Their Particularities]," *Khristianskoye Chteniye*, no.4 (2016): 192; Daniela Kalkandjieva mentions the report of British experts, who considered that despite of the announced circulation there were apparently only around 10 000 copies, although the aim of the book indeed was *"to produce a good impression on Christians abroad"* and to *"disarm their criticism"* of Soviet anti-religious politics (see Daniela Kalkandjieva, *The Russian Orthodox Church, 1917—1948: From Decline to Resurrection* (London: Routledge, 2015), 163.

an address on behalf of the Government and then, after listening to my reply, you will reply, without meeting anyone in person."[80]

Such a fact can be regarded, of course, not only through the exclusive account of Alexy-Karpov relationships, but also through some kind of the state instructions on giving the church more agency. Thus, Tatyana Chumachenko brings an example from archival correspondence, showing that despite of putting the church under the control of the NKVD Stalin aimed to emphasize the church's independence.[81] She also shows that the state could even patronize the church, and characterizes the CROCA as a kind of intermediary between the party's bureaucracy and clergy.[82] Notably, as mentioned in the introduction, CROCA members were much less educated than representatives of the MP, and in general, than almost every Orthodox priest.[83] The intellectual rupture between state bureaucrats and clergymen perhaps was one of the reasons why having a plenty of bureaucratic resources, commissioners were not always able to control the religious communication, but could rather report to the higher state authorities on what they could understand. And this rupture could be especially significant immediately after the restoration of the MP and in following years, since there still were people who got their theological education and started sermon yet before revolution.[84] In the following sections, I give some examples of such life trajectories.

[80] "N2 Mitropolit Leningradskii Aleksii – G.G. Karpovu. 29 ianvaria 1945 [N2. Metropolitan of Leningrad Alexy to G.G. Karpov. January 29, 1945]" in *Pis'ma patriarkha Aleksiia I v Sovet po delam Russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi pri Sovete narodnykh komissarov – Sovete ministrov SSSR. Tom 1. 1945-1953,* ed. N. A. Krivova and Y. G. Orlova. Moscow: Russian Political Encyclopedia (ROSSPEN), 2009, 34.
[81] Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 16.
[82] See the analysis of Karpov's letter to Khrushchev, written on the tactless treatment of the Metropolitan of Kyiv (*Chumachenko, Church and State*, 24) or the letter of a commissioner Tikhonov on the forbiddance of the control over sermons (ibid., 31-32) or the case with releasing of Daniel Ostapov from the prison in 1946, because he was a close friend of the patriarch (ibid., 49-50).
[83] Chumachenko, *Church and state*, 19, 24. The argument is discussed on p.14 of the introduction to the thesis.
[84] John Anderson, on the other hand, gave the example of CROCA's influence on the intellectual context through its interference in the selection of seminary students (Anderson, *The Council for Religious Affairs*, 697). However, I would say that, judging by his data, such a kind of interference in religious life became significant

Key Figures and Transmission of the Orthodox Legacy: Metropolitan Nikolai

Looking at the personal and intellectual backgrounds of the key-figures of the MP and JMP at that time, one can see that, unlike many state officials, they were extremely well educated, in some cases not only in the theological sense. For example, Metropolitan Nikolai, who headed the publishing house of the MP and was one of the editors of the JMP, had experience of both physical-mathematical and theological education, which he had received in the pre-revolutionary period. In his biography, published in JMP in 1945, it is said that in order to enter the St. Petersburg Theological University, he completed the entire course of the theological seminary in three months, independently, without teachers, and passed all the exams in the first place among more than 70 students.[85] Of course, it would be wrong to attribute his success only to his intellectual abilities. Metropolitan Nikolai's family background also played a role. He was born in Kovno in 1892 (1891) into the family of the archpriest Dorofey Iaroshevich, who later became the rector of the Vvedensky Gymnasium of the St. Xenia Institute in St. Petersburg.[86] After the revolution Nikolai served as a priest and worked as a lecturer in theology, but in 1923, in a position a bishop of Petergof, he was arrested and persecuted by the GPU.[87]

Considering these facts of his biography, I may conclude that Metropolitan Nikolai could perfectly fit into Stalin's plan to normalize relationships with Christians abroad. Nikolai hold

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and visible in the 1960s, but in the 1940s there were still many representatives of the old pre-revolutionary legacy, such as Metropolitan Nikolai in the MP, for example.

[85] Antonina Shapovalova, "Mitropolit Nikolai Krutitskii [Metropolitan Nikolai of Krutitsy]," *JMP*, April 1945, 48.

[86] St. Petersburg Diocese. The church in the name of Our Lady of All Sorrowful Joy at the St. Xenia Institute. List of rectors, last modified, May 17, 2007, http://www.petergen.com/bovkalo/kl/spburgvsskksin.html

[87] A. Sukhorukov, "Maloizvestnye stranitsy Tserkovnogo sluzheniia Ėkzarkha Ukrainy mitropolita Mikhaila (Ermakova) v 1922-1923 godakh (po materialam sledstvennogo dela) [The Little-known Pages Of Church Ministration of Ukrainian Exarch Michael (Ermakov) for 1922–1923: according To The Material For The Investigation Cause]," *Vestnik PSTGU. Seriia II: Istoriia. Istoriia Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi,* no.1 (30) (2009): 81, 107-108.

his position of the head of the Department for External Church Relations (DECR), which he had since 1946,[88] as an educated and experienced representative of the old pre-revolutionary clergy. However, he could also use his background and authority to transmit Russian Orthodox and general Christian values and imaginaries through his sermons, speeches, and articles, adapting them to the state mode and 'language.' For example, in his sermon "Peace" in 1945, he uses the language of biblical mythology about conflicts and peace to respond to the Soviet request for 'Peace,' which was urgent in the context of the final period of WWII.[89]

It is noteworthy that Nikolai himself could be perceived in a certain way as a person who belonged to 'the martyrs,'[90] since he began to serve the church before the revolution and suffered at the hands of the Soviet regime in the 1920s. At the same time, in his past, Nikolai did not hesitate to get involved in the 'political' context and could, under certain circumstances, support the Soviet authorities. Thus, according to his letter written in the early 1920s in Butyrka prison and discovered in TsGAO[91] by A. Sukhorukov, in 1922-1923, Nikolai leaned towards the Renovationists, revolutionary clergymen who supported the new Bolshevik regime,[92] and declared that he had *"nothing in common with the reactionary priests"*.[93] And even though Nikolai later apparently changed his position, this fact shows that long before 1943 he could take a 'progressive' pro-state stance.

[88] In 1946-1960 Nikolai headed the department of external church relations of the ROC. See The ROC. The Department for External Church Relations. Historical background. History, 1946. Accessed May 10, 2024. https://mospat.ru/en/department/history/

[89] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Peace," JMP, January 1945, 17-19.

[90] In terms of Stephen S. Headley, such 'martyrs' were key figures in the transmission of Orthodox values because, as mentioned in the introduction, having survived the 1930s, they represented *"part of spiritual lineage"* from the old to new times (see Headley, *Christ after Communism,* 148).

[91] Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine.

[92] In the context of this research this fact is important, because since renovationists supported the revolution, it was precisely that environment where church-state 'symphonia' could develop under the conditions of Soviet regime. On the context of cooperation of renovationists with the state see, e.g., Alexander Mazyrin, "Soviet Renovationiism, a Church Phenomenon or Instrument Of Secret Services," *Gosudarstvo, Religiia, Tserkov' v Rossii i za Rubezhom,* no.1-2 (2019): 226-248.

[93] Sukhorukov, "Maloizvestnye stranitsy," 107-08.

Steven Merrit Minner suggests in his book that both Nikolai and Sergius were highly likely recruited by the NKVD because they had survived the repressions of the 1930s and had some compromising facts in their biographies. However, these assumptions are based on logical arguments, not on archival documents.[94] And in the context of this study, what is important to me is not why they served the state, but what knowledge, values, and meanings they may have could bring to the new religious communication, even under the state control.

Both Metropolitan Nikolai and Metropolitan Sergius played an important role in reconciliation with the state under wartime conditions. After Sergius' death in the spring of 1944,[95] Nikolai still ran the MP's publishing house, edited the JMP, and was in charge of the ROC's relations with other countries. And after the war, as the head of the DECR and one of key figures in the MP publishing house, he made significant contributions to church life at least until the end of the 1950s.

In the following section, I also examine two other personal life trajectories of JMP contributors who, even before the Great Patriotic War, were similarly characterized by political engagement, a 'patriotic' attitude, and a tendency to 'symphony' with the state. And after the war, they used their experience and background to promote ideas of unity and to bring both political and theological relations into the new image of the USSR with its global role and messianic aspirations. In summary, I suggest that a more nuanced understanding of the personal and historical background of certain politicized Orthodox discourses is needed. The specific background of some key Orthodox intellectuals and ideologues, as well as the changing social, political, and cultural context around them, also affected church-state relations and had an impact on the production of certain ideas.

[94] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 48.
[95] Metropolitan Sergius died in April 1945. See "Kratkoe soobshchenie o konchine sviateiishego patriarkha Sergiiia [Brief message about the death of His Holiness Patriarch Sergius]," *JMP*, May 1944, 3-5.

Why Did the State Need Orthodoxy? The War and Issue of Agency

The surface reason for the 'mass' rapprochement of the clergy with the state could indeed be security concerns and fear of reprisals.[96] Given that a significant number of clergy were repressed, such a perspective could also make sense in terms of a higher percentage of loyal priests among the survivors. Another reason, however, could be related to shifts in state ideology, particularly the emergence of nationalist and Russian patriotic discourses associated with the so-called Stalinist Cultural Revolution.[97]

The new cultural context, at least since the second half of the 1930s, promoted not only socialist realism, but also traditionalist discourses of military heroism, patriotic unity, and national greatness associated with the past. In such a context, it was quite understandable that the Great Patriotic War was accompanied by the image of the "Holy War" [Sviashchennaia voyna], in the words of a famous 1941 song by A. Alexandrov and V. Lebedev-Kumach.[98] Another example of the intersection of this new kind of national patriotism of the 1930s and 1940s with the Orthodox heritage is the appeal to the image of Alexander Nevsky, one of the most important Russian Orthodox saints, as a defender of the motherland against enemies in state propaganda and military contexts[99] Notably, in the speech made by Metropolitan Sergius

[96] E.g., Zoe Knox suggests that the ROC's loyalty to the Soviet authorities and cooperation with the KGB was prompted by the need to protect the clergy during the persecution of the church (Knox, *Russian Society, and the Orthodox church*, 42-51). Dmitry Konstantinov also characterized the church's cooperation with the state after 1943 as a 'painful necessity' in the context of a long period of anti-religious policies (Konstantinov, *The crown of thorns*, 55). However, in his view the repression even somehow strengthened the church because, facing the same threat, different Orthodox communities, previously hostile to each other, could come closer and were more open to cooperation (ibid., 18, 49-50).

[97] For more details on the historical context of the Stalinist cultural revolution, see Malte Rolf, "A Hall of Mirrors: Sovietizing Culture under Stalinism," *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (2017): 601-30; David Hoffman, "Was There a "Great Retreat" from Soviet Socialism? Stalinist culture reconsidered," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian history 5*, no. 4 (2004): 651-74.

[98] Words *"This is a people's war, Sacred War"* appear in every chorus of the song "Sacred war" (see Text. Svyashennaya voyna, http://www.sovmusic.ru/english/text.php?fname=svyashen, accessed May 20, 2024).

[99] First, Nevsky was portrayed as a military hero in Sergei Eisenstein's film in 1938 and later, in 1942, was chosen as the person in whose honor one of the Orders of Merit of the WWII was named. The decision on instituting an order of Nevsky's honour was taken in 1942. See Ukaz Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR

in June 1941, the image of contemporary German invasion also was paralleled with the image of historical enemies of Russia, including Teutonic knights, whom Nevsky defeated in 1242*: "The times of Batyi, the German knights, Charles of Sweden, Napoleon are repeating … Let us remember the holy leaders of the Russian people, such as Alexander Nevsky, Dimitri Donskoy, who laid down their souls for the people and the motherland."*[100]

As noted by Steven Merrit Miner, under the conditions of WWII, and in particular the issue of occupied territories in the western part of the country *"the new Stalinist mythology groaned under the weight of its contradictions: a nationalist internationalism, an atheist Messianism, a determinist voluntarism, ..., and a state supposedly leading the world to a new era of freedom."*[101] Another interesting point on the account of war's influence that he stresses in his text is that institutionally the church was revived not in 'hard times' of 1941 or 1942, but rather under the conditions of *"the sharp improvement in the Kremlin's military fortunes."*[102] Thus, the produced ideas can be considered in this lens also as a 'mythology of victors,' not only as a compensation of fear, losses and other negative feelings. And this 'mythology' could affect not only those educated intellectuals who published their debates with the West in the JMP, but also ordinary priests and their patriotic sentiments.

The openness of Soviet propaganda to traditionalist religious discourses may have been explained by Stalin's role and background. For example, Nina Tumarkin points to the role of Stalin, who, as a person with some clerical education, was able to understand that a

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29.07.1942 "Ob uchrezhdenii voennykh ordenov: ordena Suvorova I, II i III stepeni, ordena Kutuzova I i II stepeni i ordena Aleksandra Nevskogo" [Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of July 29, 1942]," *Biblioteka normativno-pravovykh aktov SSSR*, accessed April 14, 2024, https://www.libussr.ru/doc_ussr/ussr_4361.htm.

[100] "Obrashchenie mitropolita Sergiia (Stragorodskogo) 22 Iiunia 1941 goda [Address by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) on June 22, 1941]," Pravmir, June 22, 2005, https://www.pravmir.ru/obrashhenie-mitropolita-sergiya-stragorodskogo-22-iyunya-1941-goda/.

[101] Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*, 88-89.

[102] Ibid., 9.

commitment to Orthodoxy could "*provide the Russian people with a sustenance*" and help them withstand the challenges of war.[103] On the other hand, researchers also pay attention to the broader historical perspective of Russian state-building, with Orthodoxy as part of the imperial consciousness and nationalism, including the whole Soviet era, not only the WWII period. For example, Zoe Knox, commenting on the case with "The Sacred war" song, noted that *"As Orthodoxy was central to Russian national tradition, there could hardly be any appeal to Russian nationalism without Orthodoxy at its core."* [104] Wallace Daniel in his book stated that by the late 1930s and 1940s Bolshevik's 'eschatology' clearly was not accomplished, that is why it was replaced by nationalism, and the concepts of Great Russia and Holy Russia. [105] Richard Sakwa in his notes about 1970s religious and nationalist dissidents characterized different Soviet religions, not only Orthodox, as *"a mixture of belief and nationalism,"* with the resurgence of Russian national consciousness in the Soviet period its later division into many streams, ranging from fascist to *"moderate Russian nationalism,"* represented. e.g., by Solzhenitsyn. [106] Jane Ellis in her book about Russian Orthodox dissidents in 1960s-1970s also noted that growth of Russian nationalism causes a concomitant growth of interests in Orthodoxy.[107] Perhaps both the rapidness of early Soviet development, which prevented a state ideology and general cultural 'mindset' from being fully adapted to wartime, and the long temporality of Russian Orthodox nationalism explain why even the formally anti-religious Communist Party in the USSR could not eliminate Orthodoxy from public life.

[103] Nina Tumarkin, *The living & the dead: the rise and fall of the cult of World War II in Russia (*New York: Basic Books, 1994), 63-64.
[104] Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church*, 66. The same observations on the song about sacred war, Orthodoxy and nationalism made by Nina Tumarkin (Tumarkin, *The Living & The Dead*, 170-171).
[105] Wallace L. Daniel, *The Orthodox church and Civil Society in Russia* (Texas: A&M University Press, 2006), 60.
[106] Sakwa, *Soviet politics in perspective*, 207.
[107] Jane Ellis, *Russkaiia pravoslavnaiia tserkov'. Soglasie i inakomyslie [The Russian Orthodox Church. Conformity and Dissent,]* trans. George Sidorenko (London: Overseas Publications Interchange Ltd, 1990), 8.

Nevertheless, when looking at the 1940s and 1950s, scholars often consider the repressive and dominating agency of the state as a key factor in the production of religious-patriotic discourses. Meanwhile, the role and agency of Orthodox intellectuals and ideologues in the transmission of the imperial legacy in the Soviet period sometimes remain marginalized and underestimated. Was it the state that, when necessary, instrumentalized religious Orthodox discourse, then suppressed it again, and then reinvented Orthodox imperial imaginaries anew in the post-Soviet era? Or did an intricately managed mental map of Russian Orthodoxy persistently influence both the Soviet party bureaucracy and a certain segment of the theologically educated elite? Could these elites also use and 'instrumentalize' a new mode of church-state relations and a changing ideological background to 'liberate' previously suppressed religious traditionalism? Furthermore, viewing Orthodoxy simply as an integral part of Russian nationalism may obscure how, for example, an imperialist Russian-chauvinist discourse could be combined with the internationalist Marxist rhetoric of the WPC, in which ROC representatives have been actively and enthusiastically involved since the late 1940s.

Examining the texts of certain postwar Orthodox intellectuals and priests' sermons, I discovered a rich array of emotionally charged patriotic narratives that simultaneously encompassed Soviet state-nationalist, Marxist-Leninist internationalist, and 'Great Russian Past' discourses. Perhaps the Great Patriotic War served as a catalyst, unleashing those previously suppressed Russian imperial imaginaries intertwined with Orthodoxy and incorporating them into the mainstream political language. Arguments asserting the exclusivity of Russian Orthodoxy, accompanied by narratives of the great past, could now be integrated into the new sentiments of the 'victors,' fostering the clergy's solidarity with the state and people who had endured the war. I illustrate these arguments further in section 1.2. "War Sentiments and Politicized Discourses in the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate,"

where I show how reflections on Russian greatness in the past were accompanied by victory sentiments of the Soviet present.

The Great Patriotic War had a decisive impact not only on the ideas of Orthodox intellectuals, but also on Orthodox institutions in the USSR. First, the 1943 Kremlin meeting gave the ROC a semblance of increased agency and authority, albeit in a formal sense. This newfound recognition was significant for believers within the USSR and resonated among various Christian denominations internationally. For example, in the first issue of the JMP in 1944, we see that the MP received some greetings from the patriarchs of other Christian churches in the Middle East, such as Jerusalem, Damascus, and Istanbul.[108]

The fifth (May) issue of 1944, which was important because of the report on the death of Metropolitan Sergius and the transfer of patriarchal duties to Alexy Simansky, Metropolitan of Leningrad,[109] already contained many signs of connections between the restored MP and Christians abroad. Since the Orthodox Easter in 1944 was on April 16, and Sergius died on May 15, he was greeted before his death by several Christian patriarchs and metropolitans. Thus, in the May issue, the JMP was able to publish the necrology of Sergius together with Easter greetings to him from Jerusalem, Damascus, Alexandria, Istanbul and the USA.[110] Although there were no greetings from European Christians in the Journal, by the late spring of 1944 the ROC had already achieved some success in strengthening its overseas ties. Notably, this occurred prior to the Overlord military operation, which could be potentially fruitful for the USSR in the context of its need for help from the Western Allies. Also, believers abroad could now be assured that the Church existed in the USSR and might not be so severely repressed if Stalin allowed the Patriarchate to be established.

[108] *JMP*, January 1944, 3.
[109] "Kratkoe soobshchenie o konchine," *JMP*, May 1944, 3-5.
[110] "Paskhal'nye privetstviia Patriarkhu Sergiiu [Easter greetings to Patriarch Sergius]," *JMP*, May 1944, 8-9.

Return to the Moscow Patriarchate. Consolidation of the Orthodox Intellectuals

Another interesting process that may have been influenced by the WWII context is the consolidation in various circles of Orthodox clergy and theologians that took place since 1944-1945. Some prominent priests and ideologues who had previously either anti-Sergian, or anti-Soviet / anti-Stalinist views, sided with the state and the MP, including formerly persecuted Renovationists and returning White Emigrés.

One of the regular contributors to JMP whose texts are analyzed in the thesis, **Archbishop Hermogen (Kozhin)**, belonged to the Renovated Orthodox Christian Movement. The movement united several reformist church groups that supported the communist regime in some aspects, especially in seizing the opportunity for revolution within the church. Specifically, the Renovationists participated in the restoration of the Holy Synod as the governing body of the Church and in the resignation of Patriarch Tikhon,[111] who in 1917 became the first Patriarch after some 200 years of Synodal rule in the ROC. In summary, the Renovationists were able to ally themselves with the Soviet state long before WWII.[112] However, it is important to note that before the 1940s they were openly opposed to the Moscow Patriarchate. This became a problem when Stalin changed his policy toward the ROC.

Edward E. Roslof in his book "Red Priests," relying on GARF materials, tells how Hermogen during his meeting with the local CROCA commissioner in January 1944 said that he had

[111] *"Renovated church. Russian Orthodoxy"* in *Encyclopedia Britannica,* accessed June 7, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Renovated-Church.

[112] As Edward E. Roslof calls them in his book Renovationists were 'Red Priests' who *"emerged out of the same turmoil that produced other revolutionary groups in late imperial Russia."* See Edwar E. Roslof. *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press: 2002), 1.

devoted 20 years to the cause of *"eliminating Tikhonite reactionaries."*[113] In order to demonstrate that the Church could have some 'progressive' commonalities with the state, Hermogen probably wanted to use the CROCA as an instrument to bring the Renovationist priests into a more secure position and to 'reunite' them with the MP. In 1945 he himself joined the MP, publicly changing his robe during the Sunday liturgy and bringing repentance to the MP Archbishop.[114] Since Hermogen was a prominent leader of the Renovationist movement, his decisions had a significant impact on other parishes and clergy. Those who had previously belonged to renovationists but later returned to the ROC, following Hermogen's example, noted that through its patriotic activities, the MP itself seemed to "*take the path of renovationism.*[115]

Thus, in 1945, Hermogen became a bishop of the ROC, and in 1947, he already rose to the position of rector at the Moscow Theological Academy (MTA), despite his prior opposition activities, marriage, and the contested quality of theological dissertation.[116] Whatever the motivations of Hermogen and the state representatives supporting him, such life trajectories could demonstrate to other formerly 'precarious' Soviet citizens the potential for better integration into Soviet society, unlocking avenues for upward mobility. And for those who adhered to a more right-wing traditionalist ideology, like many representatives of Orthodoxy, such opportunities could be not only fruitful in terms of adaptation to a new context, but also probably more secure and available than for representatives of more 'leftist' opposition.

[113] Roslof. *Red Priests,* 198.
[114] Prot. P.P. Romanenko, "Osobennosti perekhoda iz obnovlencheskogo raskola v Russkuiu Pravoslavnuiu Tserkov′ mitropolita Vasiliia (Kozhina) [Features of Transition from the Renovationist Schism to the Russian Orthodox Church of Metropolitan Vasily (Kozhin)]," *Tserkovnyi istorik,* no. 1(11): 141. https://doi.org/10.31802/CH.2023.11.1.007
[115] Ibid., 141-142.
[116] Ibid., 142-143; A.M. Kataev, "Dukhovnye shkoly Russkoi pravoslavnoi ttserkvi v 1943-1949 gg. [Spiritual schools of the Russian Orthodox church in 1943-1949]," *Vestnik Tserkovnoy Istotii*, no.1 (2006): 180-181.

As a bishop and a rector of MTA Hermogen became actively involved in producing politicized discourses about the USSR resisting the West, interwoven with theological and para-theological debates. For instance, in April 1948, in his ideological statement on Vatican policy, he criticized the concept of the Church as a legal society and concluded that the inclusion of papal primacy in the Roman catechism led to the continual involvement of the Roman Catholic Church (the RCC) in "*political intrigues, as well as bloody wars, deceptions, bribes, murders, and poisoning of their opponents.*" Comparing the bygone politics of the Vatican with its modern activity, Hermogen characterized the RCC as a "*capitalist enterprise*" and "*imperialist warmongers*," and reminded readers of the papal support for 'fascist' Italy and Germany.[117] One more text by Hermogen on the 'political intrigues' of the modern Vatican (1908-1948), which I analyze in chapter two, deals with the interference of the RCC in the politics of the Balkans, some Eastern European countries, and the Caucasus.

Another example of the postwar consolidation of formerly opposing Orthodox intellectuals with the ROC was theologian **Sergei V. Troitsky**. Born in 1878 into a family of Siberian seminary teachers, after the Civil War he migrated to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Already an experienced and educated theologian and church historian, in the 1920s Troitsky became a professor at the University of Belgrade and continued to work as an active parishioner and theologian for different orthodox institutions, including the St. Sergius Institute in Paris, Theological Faculty in Belgrade (1937-1943) and Serbian Orthodox church, where he worked as a Legal Advisor and specialist on Serbian Canon Law (in 1953-1958).[118] However, what adds intrigue to his intellectual journey, and is particularly pertinent to the

[117] Hermogen, "Papstvo i Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' [The Papacy and the Orthodox Church]," *JMP*, April 1948, 35-36.
[118] Nicolas Zernov, The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century (London: Darton, Longmann & Todd, 1963), 339. Archimandrite Iriney (Seredny), "Professor S. V. Troitskii; ego zhizn′ i trudy v oblasti kanonicheskogo prava [Professor S.V. Troitsky: His Life and Works in the Field of Canonical Law]," *Bogoslovskiye Trudy*, no. 12 (1974): 217-219.

topic, is Troitsky's contribution to "*The Way*," which was one of the main White Emigrés' periodicals after revolution.

In his seminal work on "*The Way,"* French scholar Antonie Arjakovsky noted that the journal had over 120 contributors, many of whom played a significant role in shaping Russian religious philosophy, and also were integrated into a broader European context of religious and spiritual debates. E.g., alongside Florovsky, Berdyaev, and Bulgakov, "The Way" provided a platform for Pope Pius XI and remained receptive "*to all spiritual horizons,*" including Steiner's anthroposophy and Jewish mysticism.[119] As known, "*The Way*" featured texts expounding different accounts of right-wing orthodox, nationalist, and imperialist ideas, e.g., such as Eurasianism and the 'Russian Idea,' envisioning Holy Russia with the Restoration of the divine Trinity on Earth.[120] The journal reflected also certain ideas of the fascist movement of Young-Russians (Mladorossy) by Alexandr Kazem-Bek,[121] who, ironically, would later side the USSR and become a contributor to the JMP in 1960s.[122]

Arjakovsky attributed Troitsky in his early years to the circles of neo-Slavophiles, who were *"on the eve of the First World War seeking once again a synthesis of spirituality and patriotism."*[123] To sum up, Troitsky's background was affected by a White Emigrés' intellectual context, which was not suppressed by the state and had some exchange with European philosophical and religious debates. This experience, being interweaved with personal patriotic sentiments, theological education, high social status of professor and position of recognized canonical expert, could give him real opportunities to influence

[119] Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 17-21.
[120] Ibid., 57.
[121] Ibid., 121.
[122] See, e.g., his texts in 1960s' issues: A. Kazem-Bek, "Zayavleniie Patriarkha Antiokhii i vsego Vostoka [Statement of the Patriarch of Antioch and the whole East]," JMP, January 1960, 48-50; A. Kazem-Bek, "Paskha i Mir [Easter and Peace]," JMP, April 1960, 48.
[123] Ibid., 43.

Orthodox state-patriotic agenda and shape certain discourses which constituted political language of the ROC after war.

The circumstances and the reason for Troitsky's return to the USSR are not mentioned in his biographies, which I managed to access. Supposedly, it might have connections with that fact that at the conclusion of World War II (between 1944 and 1947) Troitsky joined the MP on the question of inadmissibility of the Karlovtsy schism, which happened almost 20 years before. When Metropolitan Sergius in 1927 signed a document that can be characterized as a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet state, which stated that the ROC should *"not in words, but in deeds to show that loyal citizens of the Soviet Union, loyal to the Soviet power,"*[124] some Russian Orthodox priests, especially those who belonged to the ROCOR, did not support this initiative. Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, who was willing to compromise with ROCOR in Moscow *"if 'loyalty' was interpreted as the clergy of his diocese refraining from any political action,"*[125] was accepted in his point by Metropolitan Sergius, but many clergies abroad did not support the idea of compromise, because communists persecuted the church.[126] All that led to the beginning of inner schism in the ROCOR, known as Karlovtsy schism of 1927.

Troitsky joined Metropolitan Eulogius in the conflict, which means that he was in a way more loyal to the Moscow and Sergianists than other ROCOR's representatives.[127] Troitsky's seminal text on the issue of Karlovtsy schism published in February 1948 in the JMP condemned the ROCOR's announcements of the severance of ties with the church authorities made in 1920s as a schismatic action contrary to Orthodox canon. At the same time in this

[124] "Deklaratsiia Mitropolita Sergia 29.07.1927 [Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius 29.07.1927]," Online-library Pravmir, https://lib.pravmir.ru/library/readbook/1339, accessed June 7, 2024.
[125] Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, 219.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Arjakovky, *The Way*, 231-232; Paul Anderson, "Obituary: Metropolitan Eulogius," *The Slavonic and European Review* 25, no. 65 (April 1947): 564-65.

text Troitsky criticized the current refusal of the ROCOR's Metropolitan Anastasius to recognize *"the improvement of church-state relationships"* in the USSR, and condemned the ROCOR's contacts with Nazis.[128] Such a shift from anti-Soviet to pro-Soviet stance might seem unexpected from his position as a White Emigré's theologian previously involved in Russian Orthodox parish life abroad. And there may be a temptation to attribute this shift to short-term factors related to the war or migration to USSR. However, after his arrival in Moscow in mid 1940s, Troitsky also continued to work in Serbia[129] and published abroad.

Years later, during the Khruschev era, he published a book named "On the untruth of Karlovtsy schism" (Paris, 1960), again providing a criticism of the position of those ROCOR's hierarchs, who supported Metropolitan Anastasius in aligning with the West in 1940s. In his book Troitsky criticized Anastasius and 'similar' hierarchs and characterized their alignment with the West as a betrayal of the interests of the Motherland, stressing that supporters of Metropolitan Anastasius aimed to restore the monarchism and *"overthrow the Soviet power,"* even at the cost of nuclear war.[130] Notably, his work resonated in the Russian Orthodox circles abroad. The year later one of the prominent ideologues and theologians of the ROCOR, Georgy Grabbe, published the text debating with "On the untruth of Karlovtsy schism" from theological point, where he stated that Sergei Troitsky asserted something he's fought against before.[131]

[128] Sergei Troitsky, "Ideologiia Karlovatskogo raskola [Ideology of the Karlovtsy schism]," *JMP*, February 1948, 43, 47, 48-49.
[129] In 1948 Troitsky joined the Serbian Academy of Science, in 1951 became a full member of the Academy of Science of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see Fr. Jovan Marjanac, "Canonical Assessment of the ROCOR in the Works of Prof. Sergei V. Troitsky," ROCOR Studies, October, 2021, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.rocorstudies.org/2021/10/25/canonical-assessment-of-the-rocor-in-the-works-of-prof-sergei-v-troitskii/).
[130] Sergei Troitsky, *O Nepravde Karlovatskogo raskola [On the untruth of Karlovtsy schism]*, (Paris: 26, rue Peclet, 1960), 108.
[131] Georgy Grabbe, *Pravda o Russkoi Tserkvi na rodine I za rubezhom [The truth about the Russian church at home and abroad]*, (New York, 1961), 5.

The consolidation process, which apparently began during the interwar period and was accelerated by wartime, not only led many Orthodox ideologues and clergymen to adopt a Soviet patriotic stance but also influenced the production of 'imperial' imaginaries in the public representations of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). Some of the key contributors to the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (JMP), who previously did not align with either the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) or the Soviet state, or both, as mentioned, were part of White Émigré circles. In that position, they engaged in intellectual debates with neo-Slavophiles, imperial monarchists, and Russian religious philosophers. As Arjakovsky has shown, many of these debates centered around reflections on Russia's relationship with Europe and, more broadly, with the 'West.'

Apparently, this interwar Russian émigré intellectual activity helped preserve a messianic stance on Russian Orthodoxy and the ideas of Russian exclusivity, which would not have been so feasible in the 'internal' Soviet context before the war. On the other hand, there were also Renovationist priests and Sergianists who, remaining in the USSR, managed to adapt to the political framework proposed by the Communists and incorporate some elements of their political language. By consolidating with each other and with the state in the context of war, representatives of these two communities — loyal White Émigrés and surviving Soviet Orthodox priests — created fertile conditions for merging Communist (socialist-Marxist) and old Russian imperial legacies. Some examples of this are shown in the next subchapter.

1.2. War sentiments and Politicized Discourses in the Journal of Moscow Patriarchate

Regaining Territories: Grief, Unity and Faith in Victory

Why did people who previously had anti-Soviet views change their opinion? Of course, in the context of the Soviet victories of 1943-1945 and the strengthening of the regime, such changes could have been caused by fear of new repression or recruitment by the intelligence services. But if we look at the texts of those members of the higher clergy who were, at least outwardly, in a more stable position, we can see that the late war and postwar texts of the ROC are often full of emotionally affective patriotism. Patriotic sentiments of clergy and orthodox ideologues could be based on pre-revolutionary grounds, for example, on the idea of 'Narodnost' (the unity of the common people as a nation). However, that JMP content, which appeared during WWII, was rather related to the newly emerging 'Great Patriotic War' context, accompanied by a sense of pride and victory, calls for unity against Nazis, and pain and sympathy for the country that had suffered so much during the war.

In this context, the MP clergy merged 'civilian' grief with 'religious' grief, reflecting on the destruction of shrines by the Nazis. Thus, the official "Appeal of the Council of Bishops of the ROC to All Christians of the World," published in the very first issue of the journal,[132] opened with an emotionally charged statement on the entire world is being *"engulfed in the flames of war,"* when *"blood covers the fields of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; the civilian populations of many countries occupied by the Germans endure unheard-of atrocities, enslavement, and extermination; our sanctities are being destroyed, the treasures of centuries-old culture are perishing; fascism everywhere brings destruction and death."*

In the second issue, in October 1943 Metropolitan Nikolai, who was one of the key figures in the ROC at that moment, published a dramatic text about his expedition on the western borders of Russia in March 1943 titled "Desolation and Death." In his report Nikolai narrated

[132] "Obrashchenie Sobora Episkopov Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi ko Vsem Khristianam Mira [Appeal of the Council of Bishops of the ROC to All Christians of the World]," *JMP*, September 1943, 14.

on horrific details of Nazi crimes in the regained territories of Smolensk, Rzhev and Vyazma, putting the story of grief and sufferings of local people to the space of 'temple,' also in a way merging the state and church interests. See, e.g.: *"the unfortunate people languished in the church for two days without food and water, awaiting their fate; in unbearable thirst they licked the dirty snow that had fallen into the temple through broken glass; could not calm the incessant crying and screaming of the children. The Red Army soldiers who opened the temple were hugged by happy people for a long time" OR "dozens of villages and towns burned to the ground … along with the destruction of residential buildings by the Germans, churches in the villages were also destroyed"; "mountains of bricks [and] burnt houses."*[133] In the end, he finalized the text with inspiring patriotic rhetoric of unity against a common enemy and rhetoric of 'liberating', addressed to Christian brothers abroad: *"We know that our brothers-Slavs abroad and other people who fell under the temporary yoke of the German executioners suffer the same torment, torture, and destruction"; "Dear brothers! We are with you in spirit! We are filled with the same goal and thought – to erase our common enemy from the face of the earth forever!"*[134]

Autumn 1943 was still the beginning of a decisive shift in the Soviet campaign on the Eastern Front. Although Stalingrad and many Russian cities had been retaken by the USSR, Ukraine and Belarus were under German control. It was also unclear where the USSR would end its campaign, in the former western borders of the country, or somewhere else in Europe. In such a context the appeal of Nikolai could also have a political sense, at least, for Christians abroad and in the western part of the country. Especially if one considers the issue of the JMP's audience, half of which was located abroad (see below). Thus, Nikolai's appeal to the 'Christian brothers' was reasonable also from a political point of view. Notably, letters from

[133] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Razrushenie i smert [Desolation and Death]," *JMP*, February, 1943, 34, 39.
[134] Ibid., 39.

soldiers titled “Correspondence from the Field,” published in JMP in 1944, showed that at least Soviet militants responded enthusiastically to his missionary rhetoric: *"We will carry the name of Dmitry Donskoy on the armor of our tanks forward to the West to complete and final victory."*[135]

Reflections on the Past and the Present: Russian Greatness and Soviet Superiority

The rhetoric of current fighting the Nazis was accompanied in the JMP by narratives of resistance to the enemies and sufferings of Russian lands in the bygone past. For example, in the report of Metropolitan Sergius to the First Council of Bishops (September 8, 1943), made on the restoration of the MP, he explained the need to support the Soviet state by the threat of fascists, and at the same time drew on the bygone past in his call for unity and overcoming disagreements for the need for resistance: *"before we had time to define our position in any way, it had already been defined – the fascists attacked our country, devastated it, took our compatriots captive, tortured them in every possible way, robbed them...,How many times in our history it has happened that Russian people with a small army and even less skill defeated the strongest enemies. This is how the Tatar yoke was thrown off at the Kulikovo field."*[136]

The second issue of the JMP, in October 1943, reported on the Church's collection of funds for the tank division, to be named after the medieval prince of the Muscovite state, Dmitry Donskoy, as announced by Metropolitan Sergius.[137] Telling many stories of believers and priests in local dioceses who donated their savings to the Red Army, the author of the text,

[135] “Korrespondentsiia s mest (Mitropolitu Nikolaiu) [Correspondence from the fields (to Metropolitan Nikolai)],” *JMP*, August, 1944, 35.
[136] “Doklad Mitropolita Sergiia na Sobore Episkopov 8 sentiabria 1943 [The report of Metropolitan Sergius at the Council of Bishops on 8 September 1943],” *JMP*, September 1943, 7.
[137] “Tankovaia kolonna Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi imeni Dimitriia Donskogo [Tank Column of the Russian Orthodox Church named after Dmitry Donsky],” *JMP*, October 1943, 30-32.

Metropolitan Nikolai, mentioned that believers themselves wanted to name new airplanes or other units in honor of Alexander Nevsky or Dmitry Donskoy.[138]

Apparently, this convergence of traditional Russian national patriotism with the new sentiments and messianism of the 'victors' accompanied the church's future involvement in the international Cold War agenda. As noticed above the JMP already during the war appealed to other Christians in Europe with promises to liberate the West and reported on Nazi's crimes. For example, in addition to the article "Desolation and Death," Metropolitan Nikolai also reported on the genocide of the Jews at Babi Yar, in another his texts on the regained territories of Ukraine.[139]

Another idea that appeared in connection with the mentioned contexts was the idea of the superiority of socialism, e.g. the comparison of the Soviet regime with the German government in the occupied territories of the USSR in favor of socialism. For example, Bishop Photii of Krasnodar in his Easter sermon used the rhetoric of 'friendship of peoples' and national liberation: *"Numerous and nationally free peoples … live in peace and friendship, jointly defending their common homeland.*[140] In explaining why Nazis failed to defeat Russia, he states that the Germans mistakenly believed in the possibility of secession of the Soviet peoples, but Soviet national policy prevented any separatism: *"Because each of our* [Soviet] *nationalities has the right to nurture its own national culture."*[141] Similar narratives on the advantages of national policy in the USSR can be seen in the text written by another local priest, Luka, Archbishop of Tambov: *"20 years of struggle to destroy national and class*

[138] Ibid., 31-32.
[139] See "Kiev [Kyiv]," *JMP*, April, 1943, 16-23. There were also some examples of mentioning the Nazi's crimes in the JMP by local priests. See aforementioned Luka, Archbishop of Tambov, "Bog pomogaet narodam SSSR," 22.
[140] "Slovo, skazannoe na paskhal'noi zautreni v kafedral'nom Ekaterininskom sobore g. Krasnodara 16 aprelia 1944 g. [The word spoken at Easter martins in the Catherine Cathedral in the city of Krasnodar]," *JMP*, May 1944, 15.
[141] Ibid.

privileges", "the liberated Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Azerbaijanis, having gained access to higher education and government, have already shown all the wealth of their spiritual powers"... "How infinitely far is this from the Nazi-fascist contempt for all peoples...[142] To sum up, in that view, the Soviet state was better suited to fulfill the mission of 'liberation of nations,' including through the socialist national policy of 'self-determination of nations'. Notably, if ideas of anti-fascist/anti-Nazis unity and 'liberating the West' appeared already in 1943, the 'friendship of nations' and 'socialist common good' narratives became especially visible in 1944. Perhaps because, while regaining more and more territories in the western part of the country, Moscow faced great difficulties in 'reunification' of people, many of whom had become part of the USSR not so long ago (after 1939).

Another interesting observation which may be done from the analysis of *the JMP* wartime texts is that during this period ideas of Russian Orthodox exclusivity and its imagined continuity with ancient imperial legacy were interwoven with victor's and sacrifice's discourses. Imaginaries from ancient Rome's and Byzantine legacy could be also supported by some allusions to sacred spatial symbols and concepts such as 'Moscow the Third Rome,' 'New Jerusalem,' and 'Holy Rus,' though not as prominent as in post-Soviet Russia, appeared in the postwar JMP issues. Thus, in March 1945 commenting his visit on Local Council of the ROC in Moscow (which was visited by Patriarchs of Georgia, Alexandria, Antioch, together with representatives of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Serbian and Romanian churches), Metropolitan Veniamin of the Aleutian Islands and North America[143] in one text mentions in

[142] Ibid., 22.
[143] It is noteworthy that after the 1927 'schism,' Metropolitan Veniamin did not support Eulogius in his withdrawal from the Moscow Patriarchate. Even while living abroad during the interwar period, he remained a supporter of the Moscow Patriarchate and the 'Sergianists.' See "Sorokoust [Sorokoust]," *JMP*, January 1993, 86.

the one text 'Holy Rus,'[144] 'Moscow the Third Rome,'[145] and sacrifice of Soviet people in WWII.[146] In the same issue, an article about The Jerusalem Icon of Mary was published, detailing the story of the icon's creation in Jerusalem and its journey through Constantinople (referred to in an ancient Russian manner as 'Tsargrad')[147] to Korsun (Kherson in Crimea), Kyiv, Novgorod, and Moscow.[148]

Such narratives of continuity with the imperial legacy might have previously been incompatible with the official Soviet agenda, but in the new historical context of war, hopes for peace and coming victory, it became feasible to emphasize them. Thus, Veniamin ends his text with a patriotic statement that returning to America he is *"Even more convinced in the might of the Soviet Union's peoples and the Red Army. Awaiting the imminent end of the war and the victorious peace."*[149] Perhaps the affects of suffering and coming victory were to some extent the common sentiments of many Russian Orthodox clergymen, government officials and deputies, and CROCA representatives. And in a case with Russian Orthodox clergies those sentiments were familiar to them from both old pre-revolutionary political language[150] and biblical language of a religious sermon. Thus, Nicholas, in his January 1945

[144] Full quotation: *"Rus' is still Holy. Yes, even now, I can say without any doubt: the Orthodox faith is alive in the Russian people."* See Metropolitan Veniamin, "Moi vpechatleniia o Rossii [My impressions on Russia]," *JMP*, March 1945, 23.
[145] Full quotation: *'"Almost an Ecumenical Council,' as many of us said. I won't describe how solemnly all the Eastern representatives of Orthodoxy were welcomed. But the thought involuntarily arose: has the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, moved its center to Moscow? Is it destined for the foremost city to fulfill the old prophecy of Monk Philotheus: "Moscow is the Third Rome"?"* Ibid., 21.
[146] Full quotation: *"Such self-sacrifice in Russian people. Only they could send their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers to the front for their beloved Motherland... Like nowhere else in the world."* Ibid., 23.
[147] T.M. Bogoslovsky, "Moskovskie sviatyni. Ierusalimskaia ikona Bozhiei Materi [Moscow's Holy Site. The Jerusalem icon of Mary]," JMP, March 1945, 64.
[148] Ibid., 64-66.
[149] Veniamin, "Moi vpechatleniia," 24.
[150] See examples above in the beginning of subchapter.

sermon, spoke about the Peace of Christ [Mir Khristov], citing, for example, the biblical myth of Cain and Abel, as well as various Gospel statements about Peace and God.[151]

The church still maintained its traditionalist 'post-imperial' patriotic spirit and elaborated narratives of not only historical religious, but also institutional religious continuity between the pre-revolutionary period and the MP in the USSR.[152] Thus, the ROC's calls for the unity of Christians around the world could not only be a consequence of the pressure of the state on the Church but also a manifestation of the true position of the Orthodox clergy, which probably was not just supportive but also 'revivalist' and messianic, aimed both at its 'own' people and at Christians abroad. The intervention of ideas of socialist superiority in the JMP, on the other hand, could reflect the increasing authority and agency of the Soviet state in setting the framework for the Church's public communication with its audience.

Target Audience of the JMP

Who could be the target audience of the JMP in general? As mentioned, the politicized discourses that appeared in the JMP since 1943-1944 were produced at the time of the USSR's regaining of territories and the beginning of the campaign in Europe. Under these conditions, it is understandable why the JMP dealt with such issues as the problem of enemies and traitors in the occupied territories, the Nazi war crimes, or the need for Soviet presence in Europe. Since the Great Patriotic War, its propaganda and culture produced enough patriotic sentiments, there was probably no need to deliberately spread such an agenda through the

[151] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Mir [Peace]," *JMP*, September 1945, 17-19.
[152] E.g., in the text "Patriarchs of Moscow" anonymous author signed as [Pr.Gr-j] (it could be a priest Gregory Razumovsky) lists all patriarchs of the MP, especially highlighting Hermogen (1530-1612) who united the community against the common enemy in The Times of Trouble (see "Patriarkhi Moskvy [Patriarchs of Moscow]," *JMP*, September 1944, 12-13). The same year, in the 11th issue of the JMP one may see the scholarly prepared historical article on the first Patriarkh of Moscow (Professor G.P. Georgiyevsky, "Pervyi Patriarkh Moskvy [The first patriarch of Moscow]," *JMP*, November 1944, 12-16).

instrument of religious communication inside the country. Considering the results of the persecutions of believers in the 1920s and 1930s, it is also unlikely that the clergy could be used to strengthen Soviet influence in the USSR, since it did not have enough instruments of influence.

However, in the case of 'enemies' and 'traitors' discourses, and in the context of the liberation of the western territories of the USSR, the target audience could be the Uniate clergy and other Christian communities in Ukraine.[153] At least some Nikolai's statements addressed to believers in Ukraine can be found in many issues of the JMP in 1943 and 1944.[154] It is noteworthy that in those statements he referred to Kyiv as 'our' [nash], meaning 'Russian Orthodox.' For example, *"Our Kyiv, imbued with the breath and blessing of the first centuries of Christianity in Rus,"*[155] or "rodnoy," which in the context could be read simultaneously as 'dear,' 'beloved,' and 'native,' as seen in: *"Burning hatred towards thugs and villains who distorted, plundered, defiled, and drenched with blood our beloved Kyiv."* [156] Such a perception might have felt 'natural' for Nikolai, who previously served as exarch of Ukraine, but it is noteworthy that he was born in Kovno and lived in St. Petersburg, and was appointed as exarch of Ukraine only in the beginning of the 1940s, after the USSR established its influence over former Polish territories, taken under the terms of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Thus, it is more likely that his attitude belonged to a Russian Orthodox post-

[153] The relationship of the ROC with the Uniates were strained in the 19th century, in particular, because of Uniate's position on Polish uprisings in 1830-1831 (see, e.g., James W Cunningham, *S nadezhdoi na Sobor. Russkoe religioznoe probuzhdenie nachala veka [With Hope for the Council: Russian Religious Awakening at the Beginning of the Century]*, trans. Rev. George Sidorenko (London: Overseas Publications interchange Ltd, 1990), 25). Therefore, the dominant position of the MP in communication with the Uniate clergy could be a display of the continuity of the ROC's views with the imperial legacy of the XIX century. An interesting observation is done by Steven Merrit Miner, who stated that during the WWII Uniates were disfavored by both the Soviets and the Catholic West, since they were perceived by Poles as nationalists, and by the MP as heretics (Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 179).

[154] See, e.g., Metropolitan Nikolai, "Obrashchenie k kliru i veruiushchim zhiteliam Ukrainy [Address to the clergy and believers of Ukraine]," *JMP*, November, 1943, 5; Metropolitan Nikolai. "Kiev [Kyiv]," 16-23.

[155] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Kiev [Kyiv]," 16.

[156] Ibid., 17.

imperial legacy, in which Kyiv, as he stated in the epigraph to his article, citing the Slavophile Khomyakov, was *"The cradle of Russian glory."*[157] To sum up, Nikolai addressed the Ukrainian clergy with 'fresh' WWII sentiments of grief and suffering of believers and clergymen, while simultaneously using an old 'imperial' language of a unified Christian 'Rus,' where Moscow and Kyiv cannot exist separately.

Who might be the target audience for the JMP as a whole? The magazine's circulation was originally planned to be 15,000 copies per month, but it ended up being 3,000 copies per month in 1943 and 6,000 copies per month in 1944. About half of this circulation was intended to be sent abroad.[158] Therefore, I can assume that the SPM was not aimed at the general masses, and that its audience in the USSR even after 1943 could only be, for example, the clergy of local dioceses. How many parishes were there in the mid-1940s? According to statistics by Nathaniel Davis, between 1944 and 1947 the Soviet government announced the opening of about 1,300 new churches, mostly in Russian territories, and about 2,500 Ukrainian Eastern Rite or Uniate Catholic churches that were transferred to the ROC in western Ukraine.[159] As can be seen from the latest data, the ROC's 'restoration' and 'reestablishment' efforts in Ukrainian territories were almost twice as intensive as in Russian territories. This also supports the assumption that the Ukrainian clergy was one of the main target audiences of the journal during the war period.

It is noteworthy that the request for opening did not mean that all these churches were functioning. For example, Chumachenko gives the example of the Moscow region in the

[157] Ibid., 16.
[158] Tatyana Chumachenko points out that the journal was not the only edition produced by the MP Publishing House. They also published 30000 copies of the book dedicated to the All Saints of Russia, prayer books and various theological literature (ibid., 77-78). From her data I may conclude that limited circulation of the JMP was not connected to publishing issues, but rather to a limited target audience, more educated theologically, than ordinary parishioners (see Chumachenko, *Church and State,* 78-79).
[159] Nathaniel Davis, "The Number of Orthodox Churches," 612.

period between 1944 and 1947, where only 13.8% of the number of churches that had applied for opening were active.[160] Thus, even if count only half of the 6000 copies of the JMP published in 1944, the Soviet state could provide at least some copies to every active parish. And hardly Orthodox community needed more, since the traditional form of religious 'enlightenment' in Russian Orthodoxy is communication with a priest, not reading theological texts. The internal 'Russian' audience of the journal could also have been important immediately after the war in terms of strengthening ties between the state and the church. Initially, the 'concordat' occurred only between a few key figures of the JMP and Stalin, but many local priests were probably yet to be convinced of the need for such unity.

The JMP could also be read by some theologians and theological philosophers, and later in the 1960s and 1970s also by representatives of 'right-wing' Orthodox dissidents involved in theological debates. Nevertheless, even in the immediate postwar period (1946-1947), the total number of teachers and students in all theological academies and seminaries in the USSR was low, 63 and 355, respectively.[161] During the period under study, the theological audience could be even less significant and not considered a target for the journal.

To whom was the other 'overseas' half of the JMP addressed? Initially, overseas 'readers' may have included believers and clergy abroad. Another target 'reader', especially given the political statements, might have been the Western Allies and perhaps their intelligence services. Editors might seek to demonstrate religious freedom in the USSR or provide a legitimizing rationale for the next step in the war campaign. Finally, the Journal could also help restore the authority and reputation of the ROC abroad, which could have implications for other Orthodox Christian communities, such as those belonging to the Patriarchate of

[160] Chumachenko, *Church and State*, 66.
[161] Chumachenko, *Church and State,* 73.

Constantinople or Antioch and All the East. The greetings from the other Orthodox dioceses and parishes mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, e.g. from Jerusalem, Damascus, Istanbul, USA, show that the recognition of the ROC abroad took place already in 1944. Perhaps it was a kind of common goal of the state and the church at the end of WWII to convey their ideas to the international community of Christians and to present a vision of 'themselves' and their mission through the journal.

Concluding Remarks

In summary, after its restoration, the JMP represented an intriguing mix of ideologies and discourses about the ROC and the Soviet mission in world politics. Targeting both international and local Soviet audiences, the journal offered its readers a mixture of Marxist-socialist and Russian national narratives. While supporting the Red Army in its fight against the Nazis, JMP contributors called on other Christians to unite and promoted the image of the USSR as a country capable and ready to liberate other Christians. Alongside their propagandistic aims, these discourses were supported by traditional Orthodox narratives, including images of the suffering Church and believers as martyrs, appeals to Russia's great historical past, and heroic warriors who defended Orthodoxy. These narratives in the JMP were also paired with ideas of socialist supremacy and a society with social benefits, such as friendship of nations, equality, and the right to self-determination.

The personal and intellectual backgrounds of some key JMP contributors, as well as the historical context of their convergence with the state, played an important role in the production of ideas. Theologically trained and experienced in political engagement, intellectual and spiritual leadership, they were able to present strong and convincing arguments on related issues. Moreover, with certain patriotic sentiments and involvement in

debates on unity, and by not supporting a 'schismatic' stance, they could more easily align themselves with the Soviet state and hope for a kind of 'symphonia' in church-state relationships.

The Great Patriotic War also provided a proper context for the church-state rapprochement, with calls for peace and unity, the revival of patriotic sentiments, and the actualization of discourses around 'victims' (martyrs), 'victors' (liberators, defenders, saviors), and 'enemies' (betrayers, collaborators). Many of these narratives were also 'familiar' to the Christian tradition. In turn, the engagement of Orthodox clergy in the sensitive situation of war brought them closer to the secular political context. As a result, representatives of church and state acted symbiotically, each contributing their agencies and instruments to the production of ideas.

One specific outcome of this interaction was that the MP became significantly involved in Soviet politics, especially in representing the USSR abroad after the war. In the next chapter, I show how the ROC's political involvement was linked to the representation of the peace and war camps associated with the East and West, respectively. These discourses framed the context of many texts published in a new regular section of the JMP, “In Defense of Peace,” which was introduced in 1949 and included socialist-Marxist, nationalist-patriotic, and anti-Western proclamations that had already appeared in the journal during the war. At the same time, the ROC condemned the Protestant ecumenical movement and the aspirations of other Christian churches for peace and unity. *Was the Orthodox position in this context 'leftist' in form, but nationalist and traditionalist in content? And how did the various elements of the clergy's political thought in the public sphere differ from their professional 'clerical' communication, including with the WCC?*

CHAPTER 2. FIGHTING THE WEST AND STRUGGLING FOR PEACE: CONFLICT OF THE ROC WITH THE WCC AND JOINING THE WPC

Drawing closer to the government during the war, the ROC became actively involved in global politics in the second half of the 1940s. In the first part of this chapter, I explore the ROC's journey from 1946 to 1948, from initial plans for cooperation to its divergence from the ecumenical movement. By examining the ROC's conflict with the ecumenical World Council of Churches (WCC) and its subsequent participation in social democratic and communist peace initiatives (such as the World Peace Council, WPC), I outline the connection between Orthodox anti-ecumenism, the belief in the superiority of both the Soviet socialist system and Russian Orthodoxy, and their perceived alignment with the task of advocating peace.

The ROC's relationships with the WCC and the WPC are the main focus of this research chapter. In addition, I examine the MP's representations of the Vatican in the late 1940s, along with other political, social, and economic representations of an imagined West. The second part of the chapter delves into the ROC's involvement in the communist peace movement and the creation of a new section of the JMP in 1949 entitled “In Defense of Peace.” Through an examination of the statements made in this section, I explore the historical and political imaginaries of the MP, with particular emphasis on the 'Cold War' representation of the East and West as 'peace' and 'war' camps, respectively.

One of the main themes of the study is the question of the coexistence and mutual 'co-adaptation' of different political languages and images in the ROC's public statements, in particular social democratic and communist discourses and traditionalist 'great Russian past' and Orthodox narratives.

2.1. The ROC and the Ecumenical Movement in Late 1940s

The Ecumenical Initiative of Protestants VS Catholicism and Orthodoxy

The WCC was officially created in 1948 in Geneva. The Council itself traces its roots back to the *"student and lay movements of the 19th century,"* the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, the 1920 proposal of the Orthodox Synod of Constantinople to establish a 'fellowship of churches' akin to the League of Nations,[162] and 1937-1938 Edinburgh conference initiatives, which were temporally postponed because of the impending war.[163] The movement was spearheaded by Protestant Christian activists who advocated peace and unity amid the tensions of the post-WWI era. Miriam Dobson, a researcher of Protestantism and religious communication in the USSR, describes the Ecumenical Council in Geneva as an *"interwar innovation of European and American Protestants horrified by the violence of the First World War*." [164]

The first official Assembly of the WCC took place in 1948. Based on written correspondence between Moscow and Geneva in 1946-1948, especially in the lead-up to the Assembly, one can see that the relationship between the MP and the WCC had moved from an initial mutual interest to a state of conflict. In a forthcoming analysis, I will examine the Moscow resolution together with an expert report on the ecumenical movement in 1948, emphasizing the reasons why the MP decided to withdraw. It is worth noting that the issue of Christian unity was relevant and significant not only for the ROC, but also for other Christian churches. Like

[162] A vision of ecumenism as 'brotherly fellowship of Christians,' was relevant also for the WCC self-representation in 1947. See Letter of the President of the Provisional Committee of the WCC to the Patriarch of Moscow. WCC archives: WCC Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3 Russian Orthodox Church 1946-1947, 1.

[163] "About the WCC. History," WCC, https://www.oikoumene.org/about-the-wcc/history, accessed May 10, 2024.

[164] Miriam Dobson, "Protestants, Peace and the Apocalypse: The USSR's Religious Cold War, 1947–62," *Journal of Contemporary History* 53, no. 2 (2018): 364.

Moscow, the Roman Catholic Church discussed the concept of Christian unity and refrained from joining the WCC. However, although the Roman Catholic Church never became a member of the WCC, it has participated in some WCC activities since the 1960s.[165]

In 1948 Catholic Church's position on ecumenism was rather critical. It could be influenced by a view of the Catholic Church as the one true church, also actualized during the war. See, e.g. in "Mystici Corporis Christi" (1943) by Pope Pius XII (1939-1958): *"13. If we would define and describe this true Church of Jesus Christ – which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church."*[166] Nevertheless, Pius XII reflected on the problem of Christian unity, although he considered that this unity could mean rather a universal 'Christian community,' but not a particular religious organization or any other church than the Catholic one. See, e.g.: *"If the Church is a body, it must be an unbroken unity, according to those words of Paul: "Though many we are one body in Christ."* [167]

Russian Orthodox intellectuals abroad also demonstrated an interest in ecumenical initiatives during the interwar period. Bryn Geffert and Theofanis G. Stavrou, e.g., show how some Orthodox thinkers from Russian émigré circles, such as Sergei Bulgakov and Nicolas Zernoff (Nikolai Zernov), deliberated on the necessity of Christian unity and were engaged in debates on ecumenism. Sergei Bulgakov in his speech delivered to ecumenical conference in Lausanne (1927), stated the presence of the fundamental essence of church unity in Orthodoxy, through the concept of 'Sobornost,' which to his opinion had ecumenical

[165] *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, ed. Daniel Patte, s.v. "Ecumenism." Cambridge University Press, 2010, 353.
[166] Pope Pius XII, "Mystici Corporis Christi," 1943, accessed 24 May 2024, *https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html*.
[167] Ibid.

character [168] Characterizing Bulgakov as *"a dedicated advocate for the reunion of all Christian churches,"*[169] the authors noted that he believed that the church could operate in harmony *"with every organism,"*[170] but at the same time was committed to church hierarchy. The text presented in the book also shows that he distinguished between Orthodoxy and Catholicism as 'true' churches that had not broken *"the apostolic succession"* and Protestants as 'schismatics.'[171] To sum up, one can say that Bulgakov considered the unity of the Christian churches important, but saw certain obstacles in this way, since the notable ecumenical initiatives of the early twentieth century were organized by Protestants. Another White Emigré's text selected for the book was written by Nikolai Zernov and was devoted to 'obstacles' for the Christian unity. His essay was meaningfully called "Psychological barriers to Reunion with Western churches," (1928) and contained, among other things, reflections on Russian 'national pride' as the cause of *"inability to understand the ecumenical nature of the church."*[172]

Thus, some Christian thinkers, including prominent ones such as Sergei Bulgakov, reflected in the interwar period on the need for Christian unity and possible obstacles to it, such as the ROC's tendency toward hierarchy and the sense of 'dignity' or 'pride' that prevented its participation in the ecumenical movement. In addition, Protestant denominations were seen by them as not equal to Orthodoxy and Catholicism. This view was in line with the parliamentary resolution on ecumenism and the expert report on the issue, which I analyze later in this chapter. It is noteworthy that these documents resonated with the materials from the WCC and

[168] Bryn Geffert and Theofanis G. Stavrou, "Orthodoxy and Ecumenism" in *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: The Essential Texts,* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2016), 405. It is noteworthy that 'sobornost' is also sometimes understood as the gathering of a community together to celebrate the Eucharist, and because of this need to be together in one community, national divisions may be considered inappropriate. See Donald Fairbairn, *Eastern Orthodoxy through western eyes,* 146.
[169] Geffert and Stavrou, "Orthodoxy and Ecumenism," 404.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid., 406.
[172] Geffert and Stavrou, "Orthodoxy and Ecumenism," 408.

various Western Christian newspapers regarding the Russian Orthodox view of Protestants, Catholics, and other Western Christians. Therefore, they provide an interesting case for analyzing Orthodox perceptions of the West during this period.

Drawing from these sources, I argue that between 1946-1947 and 1948, representations of 'the West' in texts on the ecumenical movement were theologically split, as the MP distinguished between Protestants and Catholics as 'true' and 'non-true' Christians while continuing to criticize the Vatican on some issues. In contrast, politically, the imagined 'West' in the late 1940s was already seen as more or less homogeneous and opposed to the MP's vision of justice and the 'common good' of the Soviet socialist system, as I will show in the second part of this chapter.

The WCC and the ROC in 1947-1948: from Rapprochement to Conflict

How did relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the ecumenical movement change in the postwar period? The correspondence between the ROC and the WCC, kept in the Council's archive in Geneva, shows that in 1946-1947 the ROC showed at least some interest in ecumenical initiatives. For example, Metropolitan Nicholas, who headed the newly created Department for External Church Relations (DECR), even after postponing the meeting in Prague scheduled for the late 1946, showed interest in the publishing activities of the WCC.[173] In his letter from August 1947, he complained that not much literature had been sent to Moscow and kindly asked the WCC representatives to send more material to better study the movement. The general tone of his message could be described as, if not ingratiating, certainly not overbearing or authoritarian. Rather, Nikolai sounded like an interested observer

[173] Letter of Metropolitan Nikolai to the secretary of the WCC, August 21, 1947. WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.

making a gentle request. In comparison with his statements in the JMP, intonations of his 1947 letter to the WCC were soft and polite, see, e.g. *"Allow me to express our gratitude for...," "In accordance with your kind suggestions, we would like to ask you…."*[174] However, even in the context of gentle request he reminded (*"warned"*) in his letter that some other orthodox priests abroad had not been *"authorized by the MP ... to take any action on the ecumenical matters."*[175]

In late November of the same 1947 year, Archpriest Gregory Razumovsky, who in 1948 wrote an extended 99-pages expert report condemning the WCC, sent another message to Geneva. He kindly asked the WCC to acknowledge receipt of Metropolitan Nikolai's letter and to respond to the request for literature. Razumovsky's tone was as courteous as that of Metropolitan Nikolai (e.g., *"Would you kindly acknowledge receipt of our letter?"*).[176] Even though, ironically, six months later he became one of the key figures in the 'breakaway' from ecumenism.

The year before, in late 1946, the MP acted as if it were truly open to rapprochement. Its representatives had agreed to participate in a meeting with WCC members in Prague, and probably also to visit Paris and Geneva, since these cities had been mentioned in correspondence. In October 1946, Moscow assured that the MP had already prepared two delegates for the Prague meeting. [177] Razumovsky, as one of the delegates, was to study the ecumenical work 'on the ground' in Geneva and to examine the periodicals of the Council. At the last moment, however, the Moscow representatives announced that they were unable to

[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Archpriest Razumovsky's letter to the secretary of the WCC, November 24, 1947. WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.
[177] On preparations for the Prague meeting, including with delegates from the United States, see. Letter to Mark Boegner from Metropolitan Nikolai, October 1946. WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.

participate in WCC initiatives because of visa issues[178] and offered to 'temporarily postpone' the planned meeting and organize it, for example, next year.[179] In 1947, as noted above, Moscow was interested in receiving more information and new WCC periodicals, but not in the meeting. Although Visser't Hooft[180] still expressed the hope that Moscow would participate in ecumenical work and in the 1948 Amsterdam Assembly.[181]

The WCC representatives reflected on reasons for Moscow's hesitation to cooperate already in 1946. For example, in his letter to the WCC delegates Willem Adolf Visser't Hooft reported that the MP demonstrated some interest, but finally postponed the meeting in Prague on the pretext that there was no time to arrange visas. He argued that point, saying that the WCC had already asked migration services for help and that no one had yet tried to apply for visas, *"neither in Paris, nor in Switzerland."*[182]

Thus, at the end of 1947, the MP gave no real reason for its reluctance to cooperate with the WCC. Visser't Hooft himself saw the reason in the anti-schismatic position of Moscow, which did not approve of WCC contacts with some Orthodox churches abroad (*"we were too*

[178] See, e.g., Telegram to Doctor Mark Boegner, October 30, 1946. WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.
[179] Telegram "Podgotovlennymi k Naznachennoy v Dekabre 1946… [Prepared for the scheduled meeting in December 1946…]," WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.
[180] As mentioned in introduction, Visser't Hooft played a key role in the rapprochement with the MP in Geneva and advocated the need for the ROC's presence in the WCC. Overall, according to Jurjen A. Zeilstra, Visser 't Hooft sought to create within the WCC a 'third way between East and West,' and the ROC was an important part of that vision. See Zeilstra, "The Cold War, the Unity of the Church," 361–400.
[181] Archpriest Razumovsky's letter, November 24, 1947, WCC Archives; W.A. Visser't Hooft's letter, "À l'évêque Monseigneur Nicholas, 6 decembre 1947 [To Bishop Nikolai, December 6, 1947]," WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.
[182] Visser't Hooft, Letter to the members of the delegation appointed to meet with a delegation from the Moscow Patriarchate, 1946, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.

friendly with those they consider schismatic"). However, in the same paragraph he expressed the hope to *"enter the normal relations"* with the MP.[183]

Why did Moscow not Join the WCC Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948

While keeping in touch with the WCC through correspondence, the MP made it clear in 1947 that Moscow still had no intention of participating in the 1948 assembly in Amsterdam, and later issued a condemnatory resolution on the ecumenical question, which I analyze below. What might have been the reason for the withdrawal of contacts? One possible factor is the position on Germany expressed in Geneva against the background of the Cold War, including the weakening of the occupation regime in the Soviet zone.[184] Since the WCC was created by Protestants, and headquartered in Geneva, a demonstration of rapprochement with such a council could be politically unacceptable.

Another, obviously more important, factor can be attributed to the ROC's own 'ecumenical' initiative. The official condemnation of ecumenism was announced at the July 1948 Moscow Pan-Orthodox Conference, sometimes called the All-Orthodox Council or Assembly. This event was officially dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Russian Orthodox 'autocephaly,' marking the ROC's refusal to support the decisions of the Ecumenical Council of Florence (1431-1449), the rejection of papal primacy, and some other points of disagreement with Catholics, despite the position of Constantinople.

The preparatory work for the Pan-Orthodox Conference of 1948 was carried out by Metropolitan Nikolai, with the participation of Prof. Sergei Troitsky and G. Razumovsky in

[183] Ibid., 2.
[184] See Volokitina T.V. "«Moskovskii Vatikan»: zamysel sozdaniia i popytki ego realizatsii [Moscow Vatican: the idea of creation and attempts of implementation. 1943–1948]," *Slavianie i Rossiia: Slavianie v Moskve. K 870 godovshchine osnovaniia Moskvy. Sbornik statei*, ed. S.I. Danchenko, no. 1. (Moscow, 2018.): 351. doi:10.31168/2618-8570.2018.19.

some of the pre-council activities.[185] Interestingly, Nikolai and Razumovsky were both engaged in 1946–1947 in relationships with the ecumenical WCC as the main representatives of the ROC, and Sergei Troitsky was already mentioned in the first chapter as an example of a person who constructed connections between the 'post-imperial' intellectual environment of White Emigrés and the postwar 'expert' context of the JMP. Below I illustrate how he reflected on the East-West dichotomy in the context of ecumenical debates.

The political reason for gathering the Moscow pan-orthodox assembly could have been to increase the influence of the ROC in the Middle East, Mediterranean region, and Eastern Europe, as the invited Orthodox churches were primarily from these areas. Thus, the archival correspondence between Soviet government agencies published by Marina Mongush shows that the Soviet authorities viewed religious communication in the context of international politics. For example, V. Zorin, a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reported to the CROCA that if all the Eastern patriarchs or bishops did not attend the meeting, it would be used against them by *"Catholics and the Anglican Order."*[186] When, in the end, the Patriarchate of Constantinople and some other Eastern Orthodox delegates did not participate in the 'official' part of the event[187] and did not join the resolutions of the MP, it could indeed look to the Soviet authorities that the Church could not be used effectively as a 'resource in global politics.'[188]

[185] Kalkandjieva Daniela. "The Moscow Pan-Orthodox council," 3-6, 7, 8.
[186] Mongush, "Vsepravoslavnoe soveshhanie," 94-102.
[187] For example, the list of delegates mentions representatives of Constantinople and Greece, but, unlike most other delegations, not patriarchs, but priests of lower rank. Moreover, neither Constantinople nor Greece made a presentation in the official part of the Assembly, but were only present during the opening ceremony. The delegates from the Church of Cyprus did not come to the ceremony, and the Alexandrian delegates received their representation from Antioch. See *Deianiia soveshchaniia glav i predstavitelei avtokefal'nykh Pravoslavnykh Tserkvei. Tom I [*Acts of the Meeting of the Heads and Representatives of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. Volume I*]*, accessed 10 June, 2024, https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Istorija_Tserkvi/dejanija-soveshhanija-glav-i-predstavitelej-avtokefalnyh-pravoslavnyh-tserkvej-tom-1/1_1.
[188] Mongush, "Vsepravoslavnoe soveshhanie," 94.

Some researchers examining the conflict between the ROC and the WCC from the perspective of the state instrumentalizing the church view 1948 as a turning point in the escalation of the conflict with the West.[189] For example, Belyakova and Pivovarov, in their article on the relationship between the ROC and the WCC, point out that after the Pan-Orthodox Conference, the USSR sought to achieve *"a complete break from the West for the Orthodox churches in the countries of people's democracy."*[190]

The rejection of ecumenism by the Soviet bureaucrats as a matter of policy began even earlier. Miriam Dobson gave the example of I.V. Polianski's letter of June 1947, which was important because Polianskii was the head of a Council for the Affairs of Religious Denominations under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. In his correspondence with the party's Central Committee, Polianskii emphasized that the defeat of fascism had sparked a resurgence of *"reactionary forces, especially Christianity,"* leading to the emergence of an anti-Communist ecumenical movement. Against this backdrop he proposed to create a Soviet-sponsored 'ecumenical movement' under the auspices of the ROC, but with the participation of other religious organizations.[191]

The initial engagement with the WCC for the purpose of obtaining information and setting a precedent, followed by the withdrawal at the end of 1947 and the subsequent convening of the Pan-Orthodox Assembly in 1948, may have been part of the USSR's strategy in this direction. Both the conflict with the WCC and the organization of its own ecumenical conference show that the Soviet side was involved in the international political context and engaged in a kind of global competition for the formation of a new 'peaceful' order. Thus, the conflict between

[189] Oleg Kyselev, "Anti-Ecumenical Movement in Russian Orthodox church" in *Theories and Trends in Religions and in the Study of Religion*, ed. Bulcsú K.Hoppál (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2015), 262-263; Belyakova and Pivovarov, "Religioznaja diplomatija," 132.
[190] Belyakova and Pivovarov, "Religioznaja diplomatija," 132.
[191] Miriam Dobson, "Protestants, Peace and the Apocalypse," 379.

the ROC and the WCC can be partially explained through the lens of religious diplomacy and the Cold War context. However, both perspectives overlook some important non-political issues and do not fully explain how and why Orthodox intellectuals aligned themselves with the state on this issue. Based on the sources produced by the ROC, it can be observed that the ROC had not only political, but also historical, cultural, and theological justifications for condemning ecumenism and positioning itself in a global context. Considering that the political reasons are important for the context, I would still like to outline how the ROC explained its position, starting with formal statements and then analyzing possible intentions and underlying rationales.

Correspondence from the WCC archives (1948) shows that the MP sought greater influence in the ecumenical movement, especially in matters of interaction with other Orthodox churches. For example, in a letter dated March 29, 1948, the MP insisted on the exclusion of 'schismatics' from the Council.[192] By that term the letter meant those Russian Orthodox dioceses or churches abroad, which did not belong to the MP, but *"considered themselves Russian Orthodox."* [193] The authors asked whether *"the Assembly aiming to uphold the authority of the ROC in its exclusive canonical right to express the views of this church on all issues?"*[194] In general, from the source it's clear that the issue of 'schisms' was still sensitive for the MP in 1948, as it had been before in 1946-1947. As already mentioned in a paragraph on Troitsky and his position on the 'Karlovtsy schism,' the issue of the ROCOR was sensitive for the MP, since a large part of Orthodox priests abroad had already been 'alienated' from

[192] Letter N164/21, 29 March 1948, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948, 1.
[190.] The letter, in particular, calls Orthodox Bishop Theophilos in America and Metropolitan Anastasios in Munich (ROCOR) 'schismatics'. Ibid., 2.
[194] Letter N164/21, 29 March 1948, WCC archives, 2.

Moscow in the late 1920s, and some ROCOR priests interacted with the Nazis, and this fact was used by the MP to condemn them after the war.

The historical context of the WWII and the Great Patriotic War obviously influenced the communication between the ROC and the ROCOR and their images of each other and of themselves. The vision of exclusiveness and superiority of the ROC, intrinsic to Russian Orthodoxy, was strengthened by the victory and projected not only on the relations with the 'West' but also on the tensions between the ROC and the ROCOR. Both churches in a way imagined that they were transmitting the 'true' Orthodox heritage. The ROC and MP could base their vision on the fact that they remained in 'Russia,' while the ROCOR could base its perspective on the fact that the clergy abroad had not been 'corrupted' by collaboration with the Bolsheviks.

One reason why the ROC wanted to 'cleanse' the global Christian movement of schismatic and/or not 'truly' Christian attitudes could be its sense of superiority and perception of itself as the 'true' church. Considering the global peace movement and Christian unity important, especially after WWII, the ROC wanted to have more agency in the process of its creation to achieve such a 'peaceful order' that would not be distorted by other, not-true, agents. Therefore, the ROC wanted to 'cleanse' the global Christian movement of schismatic and/or not 'truly' Christian attitudes and return agency to the 'true' churches, such as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox.

Not only was the MP an instrument of the Soviet state, but at least some key figures of the ROC were also driven by a messianic belief that Russian Orthodoxy could protect world Christianity, and humanity in general from 'hypocritical' initiatives of 'the West.' Official

ROC resolutions, correspondence and reports, which I analyze below, as well as texts written by Orthodox intellectuals of the time, confirm this view.

The 'true' Christian Unity and the Issue of Agency

Why did the ROC not consider the WCC as a 'true' Christian initiative and requested for more agency? As mentioned, before taking the decision the MP 'studied' the activity of the WCC. In one of the letters sent to the MP from Geneva, the ecumenical council was presented as 'a fellowship' of Christians, formed by *"the leading bodies of the Protestant and the Anglican churches."*[195] It was emphasized that the Council was in the process of formation, and that hierarchs of several Eastern Orthodox churches and Eastern Orthodox theologians had participated in meetings and activities of the WCC before. Moreover, the author pointed out that the WCC was conceptualized as *"a fellowship in which Eastern and Western churches have an equal share"*.[196] To sum up, on the one hand the WCC presented the movement as a kind of 'brotherly fellowship' with equal rights. On the other hand, the Protestant contribution was positioned as a leading one. Notably, one of the news articles collected by the WCC in the same box with correspondence and other materials on relations with the ROC in 1946-1947 states that *"the Moscow Patriarch was interested in first-hand impressions of the international Protestant agency"*.[197]

How did the MP perceive the role and agency of various Christian churches in the Council? In his report to the Moscow Theological Congress in 1948, Archpriest Gregory Razumovsky attributed a key role in shaping the movement to *"the interference of Anglo-Saxon and*

[195] Letter by the President of the Provisional Committee of the WCC to the Patriarch of Moscow, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.
[196] Ibid.
[197] News (October 1947, Geneva), WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 3. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1946-1947.

Scandinavian brothers".[198] While the report recognized the need for communication "*with the faiths supporting"* the WCC, Razumovsky clearly distinguished them from the leading bodies. One of the main points of condemnation of the WCC was that the Council wanted *"to acquire international influence over the mundane, notably economic life of the nations."*[199]

In explaining the ROC's refusal to join the ecumenical movement, Razumovsky pointed to the corrupted and politicized nature of the Council, which did not correspond to the true interests of Orthodoxy.[200] Finally, he also called upon all other Orthodox denominations to follow the example of the ROC and break off contacts with the WCC: *"The ROC calls upon all other brother churches ... to take the most effective steps to protect the pillars of Orthodoxy and even the principles of true Christianity ... from the great temptation embodied in the contemporary ecumenical movement….and refuse to participate in this movement."*[201]

Another key point in Razumovsky's criticism was the inconsistency of the ecumenical movement with the goals of 'true Christianity' represented by the Catholic Church and Orthodoxy. He blamed Protestantism for the 'evil of division,'[202] and the WCC as a Protestant movement hostile to the Roman Catholic Church[203] and giving not enough agency to Orthodoxy. Assessing the role of the Orthodox Churches in the ecumenical movement, Razumovsky noted that *"Ecumenical movement is still a pan-protestant organization, with the participation of orthodox representatives, who if they do influence the general work, do so*

[198] The report by Archpriest G. Razumovsky, WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948, 99.
[199] The report by Archpriest G. Razumovsky, WCC Archives, 93.
[200] Notably, arguing this point, Visser't Hooft noted that it was based on an inaccurate analysis and a *"curious misunderstanding"* of the Edinburgh conference (1937). He assumed that Razumovsky's misinterpreted some statements (see *"the Edinburgh conference never said that [the primary goal of the WCC was to gain worldly influence],"*), and that what was important to the Council was the effectiveness of its work in the public sphere, not political ambitions. (Some comments on the above documents, WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948, 1-2).
[201] Ibid., 99.
[202] Ibid, 7.
[203] Ibid., 15, 18, 21-22.

more by their presence *<...> [but] for direct influence they were too small in number."*[204] Notably, he reflected also on the East-West dichotomy, but represented it as 'not important' for the issue of Christian unity: *"The question is not one of uniting the Christians of East and West <...> The unification of Christian souls should always be the starting point."*[205] In Razumovsky's representation, the WCC wanted to use the religious status for political purposes and did not give enough agency to the Catholic and Orthodox participants in this process. Therefore, the ROC should have refused to participate in the movement.

In the official resolution on the ecumenical question, the Patriarchate stated that the ROC was under pressure from two sides, the Vatican, with its 'ties' and initiatives, and the "*Protestantism in all its diversity and fragmentation into sects,"* which in its turn, according to the MP, was seeking to take *"the path of confrontation with the Roman papacy."*[206] It was also stated that the ROC had been tempted by politicized ecumenical initiatives, alien to the sense of Christian unity because of their political nature. At the end of the resolution author(s) concluded that not only Moscow, but all other Orthodox churches under the jurisdiction of the ROC should refuse to participate in the ecumenical initiative.[207] This condemnation resonated deeply abroad, and led to a new round of debate about East and West in religious communication.

The West Responding to Moscow's Position on Ecumenism

The reaction to the Moscow conference of July 8-16, 1948, and the resolution on ecumenism adopted there, appeared almost immediately in the 'Western' religious media. For example, the London “Church Times” in the fall of 1948 made the Moscow statements the central

[204] The report by Archpriest G. Razumovsky, WCC archives, 40.
[205] Ibid., 51.
[206] The Resolution on the ecumenical question, WCC archives, 1.
[207] Ibid., 4.

theme of several issues, analyzing them on its front pages.[208] In early September, the "Church Times" provided a translation of the resolution on the Anglican Order adopted at the Moscow Conference.[209] The author(s) noted the *"friendly tone"* of Orthodoxy toward the Anglican Church and considered this tone as an *"opportunity for discussion"* of the Anglican clergy with the MP. The anti-Vatican and anti-ecumenical statements of the ROC were analyzed on the basis of a few sources, not only the JMP and the text of the resolution, but also Soviet News, a TASS report, and testimonies of some conference participants who could compare what was said at the event and what was published in the resolution. Author(s) also noted that the Roman Catholic Church was condemned by the MP much more strongly at the conference than in the resolution, and that the ROC refused to join the Protestant WCC because of *"political issues rather than the real concerns of the church."*[210]

Examining the ROC's position on relationships with other churches, the authors pointed to the perception of external threats that drove the deputies in such decisions and quoted the early beginning of the ROC's official resolution on the ecumenical question: *"Attacks of heterodox influences are directed against the Orthodox Church from at least two directions,*[211] meaning Protestant ecumenical movement and Vatican. In one of the articles in the "World Council Courier," which was called "Challenge to the West", the ROC's activity in international affairs as well as the general involvement of the Christians in a new Cold War agenda was

[208] See "Church Times" newspaper cuttings for the September 3; September 17; and October 29, WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948.
[209] Text of Moscow resolutions. Question of Anglican order. Orthodox criticize Ecumenical movement, Rome and Amsterdam, in "Church Times," London, Friday, September 3, 1948. No 4,465 – Vol. CXXXL, WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid. This phrase was almost the direct quote from the MP resolution, albeit without a link.

perceived as a threat. Meanwhile, the author(s) stated that Christians should equally reject both communism and capitalism.[212]

Sergei Troitsky's Reflection on 'Western' Ecumenical Initiatives

Ecumenical initiatives were not only on the agenda of the WCC. As noted above, some reflection on Christian unity was also taking place in Catholicism and Orthodoxy. And both the Moscow Patriarchate and the Vatican did not recognize that the WCC, as a 'Protestant' organization, was capable and 'worthy' of leading a worldwide Christian union. One of the first post-war Orthodox reflections on the 'Western' churches' vision of Christian unity came from Sergei Troitsky, who in his article published in the JMP in August 1948 criticized all non-Orthodox perspectives as if from the position of the 'Early Church.'

Troitsky identified three major actors in the 'Western' global debates on Christian unity, including the Anglican Communion, the Catholic Church, and the Protestant ecumenical movement. He criticized all three 'Western' perspectives by contrasting them with the ideal of *"Holy, [sobor] and apostolic church,"* including the notion of 'sobornost' built on the theological concept of 'Catholicity': *"The one and holy Church is, at the same time, the Church of 'sobor,' catholic,[213] i.e. comprehensive, unlimited neither by space nor time, but always and in the whole world embracing the faithful, and since the world is one, the 'catholicity' of the Church is an expression of its unity."*[214]

Troitsky called *"the unionist aspirations of the Roman Church"* 'imperialist' and characterized them as a failure of true apostolic Christianity. He saw the main difference between

[212] "Challenge to the West," World council courier, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.067, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1948.
[213] This term does not refer to the Catholic Church contemporary with Trinity, but to the Nicene Creed formulated in 381 at the First Council of Constantinople.
[214] Sergei Troitsky, "Edinstvo Tserkvi [Unity of the Church]," *JMP*, August 1948, 69.

Orthodoxy and Catholicism in the fact that the ROC *"is governed not by one bishop but by the 'unanimity of the bishops' – these successors of the Apostles – ... a reflection of the unity of the Trinity ...."* Therefore, in his opinion, the ROC was naturally *"completely alien to any imperialism."* Criticizing Protestant ecumenism, Troitsky noted that its theological basis for unification had been replaced by *"an external mechanical unification on the basis of the struggle against social and economic injustice, and also the struggle against the Church of Rome."*[215] As for the Anglican order, it got quite a positive evaluation from Troitsky, but he noted that it *"does not give proper importance to the apostolic succession."*[216]

Thus, the shortcomings of the Roman, Anglican, and Protestant Churches made their pursuit of ecclesial unity 'flawed' in Troitsky's vision as an Orthodox theologian and canonical expert. With his recognized status and experience in theological debate and teaching, Troitsky was able to provide a convincing rationale for an anti-Western and anti-ecumenical perspective. Just as importantly, he could be seen by both the state and the church as a 'persuasive' voice not only for the Soviet Orthodox community but also for JMP's foreign readers, who, as discussed in chapter 1.2, were also the target audience. As a returned White Emigré who, after 1945, chose cooperation with the USSR over further exodus to the West from Yugoslavia, Troitsky was likely endowed with unquestionable authority for both categories of readers: the foreign European audience, mainly represented by Orthodox dioceses abroad, and Soviet clergymen. They could see Troitsky as both a Soviet patriot and a representative of the pre-revolutionary generation of Russian Orthodox thinkers.

[215] Ibid., 70.
[216] Ibid., 69.

Criticism of the Vatican and Imaginaries of the 'West' by Hermogen (Kozhin)

In 1948 the JMP was also already actively involved in discussions on the Peace and the War and the role of Christian churches in World politics. One of the constant topics of those discussions was the destructive role of the papacy. Thus, Archbishop Hermogen, a regular JMP contributor, whose life-path was briefly described in the beginning of the chapter, in his article "*Papacy ant the Orthodox Church*"[217] characterized the Catholic Church as *"not of divine origin but purely earthly."*[218] He criticized the dogma of papal infallibility adopted in 1870,[219] and the false interpretations of Scripture made by popes to justify their authority, [220] *"falsifications and forgeries."*[221] To strengthen his arguments on the unreliability of the Catholic Church in the pursuit of peace Hermogen enumerated a long list of historical events, starting from the medieval age, to show how the Roman Catholic Church always acted "*against the Slavs*" and "*against Russia.*"[222]

The world is divided in this text into the Catholic West, Russia and "*peoples of the East,*" with the West seeking to sow discord between other parts.[223] A modern state of western countries is shown as reactionary and 'anti-democratic,' because of the church incorporation with global capitalism, e.g.: "*in all anti-democratic intrigues of world reaction, there are traces of close cooperation with the Vatican.*"[224] In another text, published after the official establishment of the WCC, Hermogen criticizes 'peaceful' initiatives of the West, although, not mentioning the ecumenical movement directly. In another article, called "*On the Issue of Vatican Intrigues*

[217] Hermogen. "Papstvo i Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' [Papacy and the Orthodox Church]," *JMP*, April 1948, 29-36.
[218] Ibid., 29.
[219] Hermogen. "Papstvo i Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'," 32.
[220] Ibid., 30.
[221] Ibid., 31.
[222] Ibid., 34.
[223] Ibid., 35.
[224] Ibid., 36.

against the Universal Orthodoxy in Poland, the Balkans, Romania, Ukraine, and the Caucasus in the Last Forty Years (1908-1948),"[225] he doubts whether the West can unify different Christians, and questions claims that the Vatican was not involved in wars in Eastern European countries.

To summarize, Hermogen and Troitsky shared certain anti-Western ideas, although Troitsky's vision was more 'scholarly' and theologically elaborated, while Hermogen' statements were based on a kind of popular historical rationale. It is remarkable that in some sense they also had similar life trajectories of 'return' to the MP after 1943. Their pre-war experience in the White Emigré's circles (Troitsky) or the Renovationist movement (Hermogen), as well as their post-war entry into the highest Moscow clerical circles, may have signaled a compromise between the position of the MP, the views of the Orthodox intellectuals, and the popular views of the broader circles of clergy and believers.

2.2. Participation in the World Peace Council (WPC) and the Section "In Defense of Peace"

The ROC, 'Peace Partisans' and 'Communization' of the JMP

The "In Defense of Peace" section first appeared in JMP[226] in 1949, in the May issue, in connection with the global peace initiatives held in Paris and Prague in spring 1949. Officially the WPC was created on the initiative of Cominform in 1950, but before its creation there

[225] Hermogen, "K voprosu ob intrigakh Vatikana protiv vselenskogo pravoslaviia v Pol′she, na Balkanakh, v Rumynii, na Ukraine i na Kavkaze za poslednie sorok let (1908—1948 g.) [On the Issue of Vatican Intrigues against the Universal Orthodoxy in Poland, the Balkans, Romania, Ukraine, and the Caucasus in the Last Forty Years (1908-1948)]," *JMP*, August 1948, 71-74.

[226] The information on the participation of the ROC in the peace movement appeared even before the April Congress in the state media and was devoted to internal Soviet peace initiatives. Thus, "Call to autocephalous Orthodox churches to take active actions in defense of peace in the conditions of the possible Third World War" was printed on March 25, 1949, in the newspaper "Izvestiya." And this appeal was mentioned by Metropolitan Nikolai during his speech in April Congress, published in the JMP. See Metropolitan Nikolai, "Na Vsemirnom Kongresse storonnikov mira [At the World Congress of Peace Supporters]," JMP, May 1949, 17.

were a few initiatives in Europe that framed the future movement, such as the First World Congress of Peace Partisans (WCPP) in April 1949 in Paris and its 'side-conference' in Prague, which was opened simultaneously, since France did not give visas to all the participants in Paris.[227] The newly established section of the JMP, devoted to the event, was opened with six texts, including official resolutions of the Congress, texts of speeches made by Metropolitan Nikolai and another Orthodox bishop from Czechoslovakia, the Appeal of the Congress to all Christians, and the composition of the Standing Committee of the WCPP. Notably, Metropolitan Nikolai became one of the few Soviet representatives and the only religious figure from the Soviet side.[228]

The rhetoric of exclusive Russian Orthodoxy, which is closer to 'true' Christianity, together with Soviet patriotism and ideas of socialist superiority, derived from the immediate postwar period. In "Defense of Peace," however, these discourses were also enriched by the 'current' global social-democratic, communist, and internationalist rhetoric. From the debate on Christian unity from an ecumenical perspective, which ironically was accused by the MPs in the 1948 resolution as a 'politicized' initiative, the ROC has come to debate Christian unity from a 'class struggle' perspective. See, for example, the first message of Patriarch Alexy I on the April session of the WPC: *"The defense of peace is the work of all the peoples of the world," "Let the peaceful labor of peoples be the basis of common well-being! By united forces, may lasting world peace and the security of peoples be ensured!"*[229] or public Appeal to all Christians, made by the MP in the context of the peace congress: *"... the struggle of*

[227] Krakovsky, *The Peace and the war camps*, 217; 70 years ago, the First World Congress of Peace Partisans. World Peace Council, April 10, 2019, accessed May 19, 2024, https://www.wpc-in.org/statements/70-years-ago-first-world-congress-peace-partisans-0.
[228] *JMP*, May 1949, 12-33; (list of delegates) 31.
[229] "Obrashchenie Sviiateishego Patriarkha Aleksiiia K Eparkhial′nym Preosviiashchennymm Khristos Voskrese! [His Holiness Patriarch Alexy's Address to Diocesan Bishops. "Christ Is Risen!]," *JMP*, May 1949, 13.

classes, this bitter fruit of the greatest injustice of capitalism, can be resolved not by force, ... but by justice that defends the oppressed."[230]

Throughout 1949, "In defense of peace" section was filled with the speeches of representatives of the ROC at the international WPC, and the USSR Peace Congress. Briefly these narratives could be described as a story of the ROC fighting for peace, together with ordinary citizens of various countries, including '*workers, comrades, women*' of the West; while the imperialists and capitalists of the USA and some Western European countries are leaching the war. See, for example: *"Men and women of all countries! – <...> – Just as in August 1914 and September 1939, universal peace is threatened,"*[231] or *"Workers of physical and mental labor, men and women of all ages and all conditions, of all faiths and all convictions, whose lives are equally threatened, will declare: we demand peace!"*[232]

It is not entirely clear whether the idea of peace was promoted with the inclusion of 'women's counterparts' discourses because women were more easily associated with peace than with war, or because of the global demand for a feminist agenda and the opportunity to represent the USSR favorably from this perspective, or for both reasons. It is worth noting, however, that prominent Soviet women and representatives of women's committees were included in WPC delegations, such as the member of the Antifascist Committee of Soviet Women Z. Gagarina, or the mother of World War II partisan hero Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Lyubov Kosmodemyanskaya,[233] who told in her speech about the absence of *"oppressed and oppressors"* in the USSR. Commenting the report of Lyubov Kosmodemyanskaya, the author

[230] "Obrashchenie ko vsem khristianam v zashchitu mira [Appeal to all Christians in defense of peace]," *JMP*, May 1949, 26.
[231] "2 oktiiabria — Mezhdunarodnyi den′ bor′by za mir [2 October – International Day of Struggle for Peace]," *JMP*, October, 1949, 19.
[232] Ibid., 20.
[233] "Postanovleniia Vsemirnogo Kongressa storonnikov mira [Declarations of The World Congress of Peace Supporters]," *JMP*, May, 1949, 31.

(named A.Sh.) stressed the solidarity of Soviet women with women of other countries: *"...what Soviet women know, millions of women of foreign capitalist countries understand."*[234]

To sum up, by combining some contemporary ideas and imaginaries, such as anti-Nazi partizan and Soviet victory over Nazism, women's equality and solidarity, anti-war and anti-capitalist stance, the MP in its self-representation at the WPC sessions created a multifaceted discourse of unity and superiority of the 'East' over the 'West.' It is noteworthy that in these narratives the ROC adopted the Communist rhetoric of class struggle to explain that Communism and Orthodox Christianity are not alien to each other, both in political language and in the language of biblical imagery. See, e.g. The ROC *"...blesses honest people all over the world who want man to be a brother to man, not a beast,*[235] or *"...In our days, the fear and hatred of communism threatens to make Christians forget that the idea cannot be put behind prison bars or destroyed by bombs."*[236] In a way, similar accounts of equality, justice and collectiveness allowed MP to represent these ideas not only as part of the socialist-Marxist but also as essential elements of the orthodox heritage.

Imaginaries of the 'East,' the 'West,' and Russia in the JMP section "In Defense of Peace"

In the same section, one could also observe an account of Russian nationalist and patriotic sentiments. For example, speech by Metropolitan Nikolai' at the All-Union Conference represented a mixture of Russian 'defensive' nationalism with the Communist notion of class oppression and the idea of people's representatives: *"Some Catholic newspapers, no doubt inspired from above, continue to assert that the Church in the USSR is 'not free,' 'captive,' 'enslaved,' subordinated to the power and ruled by it ... It is permissible to ask the authors of*

[234] A.Sh, "Storonniki Mira [Supporters of Peace]," *JMP*, June 1949, 24-25
[235] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Rech' na Vsesoiuznoi Konferentsii [Speech at the All-Union Conference]," *JMP*, September 1949, 16.
[236] "Obrashchenie ko vsem khristianam v zashchitu mira," 26.

these statements…: with whom should the Russian Orthodox Church go? Against the power of the people, freely elected by the people and representing the people? With the enemies of this power: the people of the golden sack and the slave whip, from whom the Russian people freed themselves thirty years ago? With their foreign associates? But this would mean not only to plunder the country, but also to trample on the very foundations of Christianity, which forbids man to oppress man...."[237]

Such a mixture of aggressive and somewhat 'progressive' rhetoric, combining the struggle against class oppression with the preservation of the national and religious interests of Russian Orthodoxy, demonstrated the flexibility of various postwar discourses. In the new context of the Soviet Union's postwar status, it may also have been easier for clergy of the old pre-revolutionary formation, such as Metropolitan Nikolai, to align themselves with the ideology of the victors and 'speak' this communist language, integrating it into a single message with the familiar rhetoric of "Russia and its enemies. At the same time, this is somewhat consistent with certain representations of Eastern Orthodoxy as a religion, where the preferred way of interpreting the past was not the 'dynamic,' historical way.[238] The Revolution and Civil War[239] in Nikolai's message was not a loss of Old Russia, it led to liberation from exploitation and oppression, made society free and power elective. Thus, the new inequalities and new hegemony that were essentially established in Stalin's time, the emergence of new large communities of the oppressed, fall out of this image and make it a 'frozen' idealistic image of Soviet socialist harmony.

[237] Metropolitan Nikolai. "Rech' na Vsesoiuznoi Konferentsii," 16.
[238] What Alexander Schmemann called *"Continuity and identity of the church in time and space... reveals her always as the same church"* (Schmemann, *Church, World, Mission*, 15).
[239] See in a paragraph at the top of the page: *"...the people of the golden sack and the slave whip, from whom the Russian people freed themselves thirty years ago? With their foreign associates,"* the text which is clearly written about the fight of the Bolshevik's Red Army with bourgeois 'oppressors' and foreign supporters of White army.

It is interesting how during the period of 1948-1950, Soviet Marxist and social-democratic rhetoric in the "In Defense of Peace" section, on the one hand sometimes began to encroach upon the old 'Russian' nationalist discourse that had predominated during the Great Patriotic War period, on the other hand was built on the ground of Soviet patriotism, boosted by victory. For instance, Hegumen Pavel (Golyshev), a representative of White Emigrés who returned after WWII and became a monk in Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius in 1947, and simultaneously worked as a translator from French in DECR,[240] stated in his report from the WCPP session that *"The Soviet system is a blessing for our people, who have seen their true prosperity... There is no power in the world that has been able to heal the post-war wounds as the Soviet government ...."*[241] Reporting on the engagement of foreign counterparts with Soviet socialist ideas, Pavel cited the WCPP report of the head of the Canterbury Cathedral, Hewlett Johnson, who in his words said that *"people are building a life worthy of human beings. The Soviet Union is a living embodiment of the eternal dream of all humanity and Christianity,"* and juxtaposed these best socialist aspirations to *"the criminal plans of American war instigators, who claim they are preparing weapons against communism."*[242] In the same issue the speech of Czech priest Chestmir Krachmar was published, where he pointed out that *"millions of workers, inflamed with fraternal love under the auspices of the Soviet Union, the true protector of peace, which during the last war, by immeasurable sacrifices and heroic exertion of its people and its valiant army, won freedom not only for itself but for the whole world."*[243]

[240] In 1918 he left Russia with his family, being just 4 years old, and during WWII served as a priest in France, and joined the MP in 1947.
[241] Hegumen Paul (Golyshev), "Mir [Peace]," *JMP*, June 1949, 19.
[242] Ibid., 28.
[243] "Rech′ mitrofornogo protoiereiia o. Chestmira Krachmara (Chekhoslovakiiia) na Vsemirnom Kongresse storonnikov mira v Prage 25 aprelia 1949 goda [Speech by Archpriest Chestmir Krachmar (Czechoslovakia) at the World Congress of Peace Supporters in Prague, April 25]," *JMP*, June 1949, 5.

In contrast, the 'West' in the late 1940s and early 1950s was presented in the section "In Defense of Peace" as an imperialist war camp, with high tension polemics. Thus, Metropolitan Nikolai used a Stalinist rhetoric of *"the warmongers of a new war,"*[244] a dehumanizing animalistic metaphor of *"the greedy tentacles of the overseas sprue,"* which are *"trying to entangle the whole globe,"* the imaginary of *"Capitalist America, that raging harlot of the resurrected Babylon"* and pushed other nations to war through a global marketplace.[245] Similarly, as he recounted the crimes of the Nazis in the regained territories of the USSR (see Chapter 1.1), Nikolai portrayed the capitalist West in an ominous and dramatic manner, e.g. "*people are lynched*," *"bread is burned in front of the hungry," "peace valleys are filled with human blood," "plunder, rape, kill – that's their freedom".*[246] Although Nikolai was probably one of the harshest critics of the West, other JMP writers also portrayed the West as a capitalist war camp, saying, for example, that wars are driven by *'Anglo-American capitalists,'*[247] *'American warmongers'*[248] or simply *'warmongers,'*[249] or that Vatican and America are blessing a new war.[250]

Thus, the ROC found itself in a position of almost complete ideological alignment with the Soviet state, which was also fighting the 'capitalist warmongers' as part of the Cold War. As contributors to the JMP, intellectuals from various circles of Russian Orthodoxy, even those who had previously opposed the MP, aligned themselves with the Soviet regime and the ROC. The impact of the WWII and the Great Patriotic War as part of the 'Soviet' narrative played a crucial role in promoting discourses of war and peace. Moreover, key contributors to

[244] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Na Vsemirnom Kongresse," 24.
[245] Metropolitan Nikolai, "Na Vsesoiuznoi Konferentsii," 13.
[246] Ibid, 13.
[247] Hegumen Paul (Golyshev), "Mir," 26.
[248] Ibid., 28.
[249] Krasheninnikov, A. "Tserkov' i Mir [The Church and the Peace]," *JMP*, March 1950, 21.
[250] Full quotation: *"instead of the voice of peace and Christian love, from the fortress of Catholicism, the Vatican, and from the nest of Protestantism, America, we hear the blessings of a new war".* Metropolitan Kirill of Plovdiv, "Voina I Mir [War and Peace]," *JMP*, May 1950, 31.

the JMP during this period were individuals who had experienced not only WWII, but also WWI, the Civil War, and the Revolution in Russia. And as the Metropolitan Nikolai's speech showed, their emotional attachment to this turbulent history lasted for many years afterwards. Perhaps church representatives joined Communist 'peace partisans' in advocating peace not only as a political directive from the state, but also because peace represented their hope, urgent need, and dream as survivors of war.

Moreover, in the context of the confrontation with the former WWII allies, the discourses of the East as a camp of peace and the West as a camp of war overlapped with the church's traditional national-patriotic vision of the exclusiveness of Orthodox Christianity and Russia's unique path. In the narratives that emerged in this context, Russia or the USSR was presented as a force that has always fought for peace, whereas the opposing West was represented as a force that has always been on the side of war. This dichotomy, along with a certain anti-capitalist and pro-socialist stance, shaped the post-war political representations of the ROC, addressed through the JMP mainly to the 'Eastern camp,' but also partly to a 'Western' audience, which was interested in the journal as a voice of the ROC, as I exemplified in subchapter 2.1 on the debates around ecumenism. Perhaps the Soviet authorities also viewed the journal as a tool for controlling the ROC's intellectual activity, and the MP, of course, was able to navigate through censorship constraints.

Concluding Remarks

The debate over ecumenism that emerged in Europe after WWII coincided with the goals of the ROC to unite the Orthodox churches under the leadership of the MP. After the official condemnation of Western ecumenical initiatives and Moscow's own All-Orthodox 'ecumenical' assembly in July 1948, which apparently did not fully satisfy Soviet officials, the

MP joined the communist peace movement and succeeded in presenting the Soviet socialist order as having much in common with Christian values. In their speeches and texts, Orthodox clergy and ideologues portrayed the Soviet state as the main proponent of world peace and as an ideal model of justice and social harmony within the country. In a sense, the MP functioned simultaneously as an instrument of religious diplomacy and propaganda for Eastern Europe, as a sincere supporter of the state for the USSR, and as a defender of the Church's interests for the ROC. Moreover, the clergy who participated in the activities of the WCPP and the WPC were driven not only by a sense of duty or mission, but also by their personal patriotic sentiments.

The social democratic and communist discourses of equality, justice, class struggle, etc. could appear in part because of a consensus with Soviet power and its influence on the church. Through the WPC and the speeches of the clergy at the congress, the Soviet authorities could exert influence on those countries of the socialist camp where religious institutions were strong, and somehow refute their own experience of persecution of believers by demonstrating the loyalty of the church. As for more 'liberal' ideas, such as the value of freedom or elected authority, these could be influenced to some extent by the need to 'export' Soviet propaganda to democratic Europe, or by the social democratic discourse initially associated with the rise of Soviet society. Given the pre-revolutionary, Renovationist, or White Emigré's of those clergy and intellectuals who contributed to the ROC's representation abroad, it is also understandable how they could interweave a progressive 'reformist' agenda with religious Orthodox ideas. Finally, all these 'democratic' discourses and rhetoric of liberation could be a natural consequence of the post-war order, part of the sense of achievement and horizon of expectations of those who belonged to the 'victorious society.'

CONCLUSION

Discourses of peace and war, along with the call for a new peaceful order, became central themes in post-war global debates in Europe. As I demonstrate in this thesis, the ROC intervened in these discussions almost immediately after the restoration of the MP. This intervention included reflections on Christian unity within the context of the WCC and other Western 'ecumenical' initiatives, public speeches by Orthodox clergymen at Communist peace events, and texts published in the reestablished JMP, which was partly distributed abroad. As shown in subchapter 2.1, the JMP indeed had a 'Western' audience, at least among religious actors.[251]

When the ROC publicly portrayed the 'East' as the camp of peace and the 'West' as the camp of war, it reflected the mutual interests of the Soviet state and Orthodox ideologues, as well as their shared patriotic sentiments that emerged in the context of WWII. Calls for unity in the regained territories, interwoven with both Soviet and 'Christian' messianism, became a common interest of the state, and figures such as Metropolitan Nikolai, speaking on behalf of the MP in 1943 and 1944 (subchapter 1.2), saw Kyiv as an indispensable part of the Russian Orthodox world and promised to 'liberate' brother Christians abroad.

Apparently, the life trajectories of the people who contributed to the "ideological" restoration of the JMP also coincided with the task of using the church to promote national unity and represent the USSR abroad. Whether they were representatives of the White Emigrés who, despite the possibility of establishing different life paths, solidarized with the Soviet state and the MP; whether they were Renovationists who had previously divorced the Patriarchate but

[251] E.g., as evidenced by the responses to the JMP materials from the WCC or articles in the Western Christian press, such as "Christian Times," reacting to materials published in the JMP.

supported the Bolsheviks; or whether they were Sergianists with their 1927 declaration of loyalty to the Soviet state, all these individuals could be trusted as 'patriots' and given a certain 'voice' and authority in this status.

In the context of the 1943-1945 Soviet campaign on the Eastern Front and the transformation of the USSR into the leader of a "peace camp," ROC clergy and ideologues were able to merge Soviet political goals in Eastern Europe with the church's interests in 'Christian unity' under Moscow's leadership and the ROC's vision of itself. This merging was evident during the 1947-1948 debates on ecumenism and the 1948 "Pan-Orthodox" conference. Razumovsky's 99-page critical report, which became a central point in the conflict between the WCC and the ROC, highlighted and updated some key aspects of Moscow's vision of the global Christian world and the Russian 'Orthodox' space within it. According to the MP, there were 'true' and 'not true' churches. As other texts by MP ideologues from this period show, such as Troitsky's reflections on Catholic and Anglican initiatives, even among the 'true churches' there was only one, the Russian Orthodox Church, which could supposedly preserve the true Christian heritage because it had 'sobornost' and thus conformed to the ideal model of the *'Holy, [sobor] and apostolic church.'*[252] Such a perspective, being part of the Russian Orthodox 'mindset,' could support a ROC's sense of mission, authority, and 'legitimacy' needed to save the world from the threat of a new war.

Similar notions of Russian Orthodox exclusivity and messianic aspirations in building a new peaceful world order and 'Christian unity' may explain the ROC's engagement with the communist peace movement. Moreover, Moscow's agency and authority in this process was not contested within the framework of the WCPP and the WPC. Although the 'Communist

[252] Troitsky, “Edinstvo Tserkvi,” 69.

Peace' unity was not purely religious, the clergy who spoke at WCPP and WPC events found a way to integrate the political dimension of the initiative with Christian ideals of justice and brotherly love. The very idea of the JMP section “In Defense of Peace” was to present the ROC as an active 'defender' and promoter of the peaceful order benevolently bestowed upon the Eastern camp by the socialist USSR. And as a religious institution appealing to 'brother Christians' in Eastern Europe, the ROC could still use the familiar language of Russian Orthodoxy.

The short-term factors that influenced the production of historical and political imaginaries during the period under study were shaped by the changing context of the war and the postwar period. Thus, depending on the current situation on the Eastern Front or in Cold War debates, the MP's calls and messages could be directed to the believers and clergy of Ukraine and to 'brother Christians' abroad, or to the working class and women of Western countries oppressed by the capitalist system. The common themes of 'liberation' and 'suffering from the enemy' in these two cases were enriched with different details and rationales, with an emphasis on state patriotism and the common 'holy' past in the first case, and a focus on ideas of equality and brotherly love in the second account. Still, the language of 'fighting the Nazis as a common enemy' could intersect with historical narratives of Russian saints standing against Mongols and Teutonic Knights. The rhetoric of liberation could be interwoven with a messianic vision, in the sense that if Russia was chosen for such suffering and overcame it, it could save other 'brother Christians' and bring them peaceful order.

Another short-term factor was the proposed postwar mode of church-state relationships. On the one hand, it could still fit within the framework of state domination because of the influence of Stalin, Karpov, and CROCA. On the other hand, it also involved cooperation, where the ROC had a certain agency in the production of discourses and ideas, as well as in

its relationships with Christian organizations and churches of both the 'West' and the 'East.' However, with the losses the church experienced in its own pan-Orthodox ecumenical initiatives, and with the increased expertise of the commissioners, the church's agency also became more and more limited. The alliance with the communist WPC can already be seen as evidence of this limited agency. It is noteworthy that Orthodox thinkers who lived abroad after WWII, but still sympathized with the MP and in a way advocated the interests of the ROC in the West, such as Dmitrii Konstantinov, as mentioned in the literature review, could understand and explain the rapprochement of church and state in the context of the war, but could not accept the ROC's participation in Cominform initiatives, seeing it as evidence of increasing oppression of the church.

It is noteworthy that the relationships with the WPC remain a certain gap in the history of the ROC in the postwar period. The surface reason for this could be the notion of the church's limited agency in the process, so some researchers may doubt the point of studying the ROC's participation in the WPC. However, as this thesis demonstrated, the relationships between Communist ideas and Russian Orthodoxy were in some respects not contradictory. Some renovationist priests saw the revolution as an opportunity for reform in the church long before WWII. Some contributors to the JMP emphasized commonalities between socialist ideas and Christianity, which, in the words of Metropolitan Nikolai, *"forbids man to oppress man."*[253] In the context of the interwar White Emigrés, as is known, there was also a discussion on the relationship between communism and Orthodoxy, for example, even Berdyaev's critical article “The religion of Communism” (1931) reflected on those debates and stated that *"In*

[253] Metropolitan Nikolai, *“Rech’ na Vsesoiuznoi Konferentsii*,” 16.

Communism there is a great untruth, an anti-Christian untruth, but it also contains much truth."[254]

The Great Patriotic War contributed even more to this rapprochement between religion and Soviet ideology. Although the Soviet regime was not yet fully communist, the Soviet socialist order was perceived by ROC ideologues with a certain sense of superiority over the former Western allies in comparison to the 'capitalist West.' One aspect not fully explored in this thesis, and a potential perspective for future researchers, is whether the ROC could ultimately create a convincing rationale for full alignment with the socialist state and overcoming the contradictions created by Soviet anti-religious policies.

As for the long-term factors that influenced the production of imperial imaginaries, in the immediate postwar period they were driven by the pre-revolutionary past of key representatives of the MP in the public sphere, including their experience of intellectual debate, religious preaching, and education. In a sense, the portrayal of the 'East' as a peace camp with Moscow in the forefront can be seen as a progressive and modernist alternative to the deeply traditional visions of Moscow as the Third Rome or the New Jerusalem, which have existed since at least the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, respectively, and *"both were products of the Muscovite perception of history as a succession of chosen peoples."*[255] The imaginary of 'true Christianity,' inheriting the Byzantine legacy, gave representatives of the church and the state a sense of 'mission' to patronize and protect other Christian lands.[256] However, postwar Orthodox ideologues borrowed their view of Russia as a center of

[254] Nikolai Berdyaev *"The religion of Communism,"* The woman clothed with the sun (blog), Texts. https://www.1260.org/Mary/Text/Text_Berdyaev_The_Religion_of_Communism_en.htm, accessed June 6, 2024; On the account of reaction to the article see also: Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 138.
[255] Daniel B. Rowland "Moscow--The Third Rome or the New Israel?" *The Russian Review* 55, no. 4 (October 1996): 591.
[256] Kevin Kain "'New Jerusalem' in seventeenth-century Russia: The Image of a New Orthodox Holy Land," *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 58, no. 3 (July-September 2017): 377.

Christianity and its 'Savior' from the corrupted faith not from the 16th-17th centuries, but from a late modern Slavophile and imperial-monarchist legacy. And this legacy was very influenced by an 'adaptation mode' to the state, which deprived the church of its institutional independence since at least times of Peter the Great.

Perhaps, in the immediate postwar period, the relationship between the Soviet state apparatus and the MP could develop as a 'wag-dog' phenomenon, whereby a seemingly small and unimportant part of the body, the 'tail,' could, if not control, then somehow operate with a larger and more important, the whole 'body.' Being much more educated than the members of CROCA,[257] with extensive experience in theological and historical debates, people like Metropolitan Nikolai with his texts on the Kyiv account, or Sergei Troitsky with his ideas of Russian Orthodox exceptionalism on the basis of 'trinity' and 'sobornost,' or Metropolitan Veniamin with his remark that 'Moscow (after the war) is again the Third Rome' mentioned in subchapter 1.2., have taken their agency in producing discourses that I call in the thesis 'imperial imaginaries.'

However, I think that they were also able to use their authority and status as representatives of the old pre-revolutionary heritage to communicate with the 'West' and the Orthodox 'East' and to propose to the state a mode of external relations with the Orthodox dioceses that they themselves had achieved and developed. Apparently, some of those mentioned in the thesis attempted to seize this opportunity. As already discussed in the example of the Pan-Orthodox event in Moscow (1948) and relations with the WCC (1947-1948), e.g., Troitsky, Razumovsky, and Metropolitan Nikolai were actively engaged in preparatory work and communication with other religious actors abroad. They had a certain authority and 'voice' in

[257] That was discussed in introduction and subchapter 1.1., on the example of data provided by Chumachenko about almost all commissioners not having even a secondary education during the start of CROCA's work. *Chumachenko, Church and State*, 19, 24.

those relations, and if not all, at least some representatives of the 'West' were also open to communication with the MP and ready to help the ROC in its 'reintegration' into the world Christian community, e.g., such as Visser't Hooft, who, even when disillusioned, promoted further contacts with the MP after the 1948 resolution condemning ecumenism, or as the Anglican Order reacted to those events in the "Church Times."

The question *"Why did not the MP fully use this opportunity,"* why it continued to imagine the 'West' rather as an enemy and preferred to remain dependent on the state, is interesting to answer, since the restoration of the MP and the context of the rise of Russian patriotism during and after the war perhaps gave such a chance first time after more than 200 years of the lack of institutional independence and political agency.[258] One of the short-term reasons, as evidenced by the texts published in JMP and analyzed in subchapters 1.2 and 2.2, could be the merging of Russian Orthodox exceptionalism and messianism with the postwar and Cold War imaginaries of the Soviet state as a state of benevolence, peaceful order, and goodwill.

Another short-term reason could be the security concerns of some ROC representatives. On the one hand, there were individuals such as Troitsky and Veniamin, who were influenced by 'patriotic affect' and made a conscious decision to cooperate with the MP and support the USSR after the war. Although they lived abroad and could have chosen differently, such as joining Metropolitan Anastasius of ROCOR, who did not support the Sergianists in the MP, Troitsky and Veniamin remained attached to the 'Motherland.' On the other hand, some of the main representatives of the MP, such as Nikolai and Sergius, lived in the USSR, survived repressions, had clergy, relatives, friends and parishioners under their care, and probably felt a sense of responsibility and concern for the safety of these people.

[258] Here I mean the abolishing of the Patriarchate by Peter the Great and the creation of secular Holy Synod to put the church over the state control.

As for long-term underlying reasons, one of them was apparently rooted in the tensions and contradictions that arose when some Orthodox thinkers aspired to achieve the 'true' Christian church, which in their vision was the 'one holy catholic and apostolic church.'[259] At the same time, they advocated a deeply national understanding of 'Russian' Orthodoxy, with its ideas of differences from the 'West,' for example, through historical imaginaries of the Great Russian past and the many sacrifices of Russian lands, which in a way confirmed its holiness, specific path, and the 'God's chosenness' of Moscow. Moreover, there was a perception of the ROC as a church that should have acted in harmony with the state, driven not only by the Sergianist (1927) 'loyalty' but also enhanced within the Great Patriotic War context. To become the 'one holy catholic and apostolic' Christian church, the ROC needed to 'accept' at least the Catholic 'West.' To remain 'Russian' Orthodox, it needed to support the Soviet state in its alienation from the imagined 'West' under the conditions of the Cold War.

As for the 'institutional' and 'personal' aspects of the question "why the church could not take more agency in its relations with the state," they are in some ways beyond my current research capabilities. I do not have access to the materials of the GARF and other archives in Russia, nor to the correspondence between the main church actors in this process, where they might have explained to their subordinates why, for example, there was no need or sense in asking for more competencies or in refusing certain state 'requests.'

As far as the WCC archives are concerned, the 1946-1948 materials present the relationship between the ROC and the WCC as a formal communication that was either actually controlled by the CROCA or could be explained by the anti-ecumenical stance of key MP figures (or both). However, an interesting shift occurs in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when reports and correspondence show that at least some ROC representatives were experiencing

[259] Troitsky, "Edinstvo Tserkvi," 69; Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 139.

frustration and a sense of missed opportunities regarding church-state relations and communicating with the WCC already were not so hostile and alienated as before.

During the 1961 rapprochement of the ROC with the WCC, which had started a couple of years before, at least since 1958,[260] one of the representatives of the WCC visited the USSR, together with other 'religious' delegates from western countries. Reporting on his visit, he noted that the position of the ROC has steadily worsened in the last few years.[261] The visitor told a story of Metropolitan Nikolai, who appeared as a man defeated in his attempt *"to obtain the best conditions for the church"*[262] and said that after this 'new policy of repression' Nikolai *"could not make any more compromise ... and ... was forced to resign."*[263]

Apparently, what was behind those words meant that Nikolai became in a sense to 'uncomfortable' for soviet authorities, who now saw the mode of church-state relationships not as a mode of cooperation with at least formal 'agency' of the church in some questions, as Stalin, but rather as a mode of state domination, in which such influential and authoritative clergymen as Nikolai could not fit. Having a choice whether to serve as a priest but far from Moscow or remain in the capital, but resign, Nikolai chose the second, because *"he felt he could still influence the church."*[264] Ending his story, the author reported on the Easter service,

[260] Thus, for example, Metropolitan Nikolai in his interview with Religious News Service shared some details of a recent meeting with the WCC in Utrecht (August 1958) and stated that the ROC will probably become a member of the WCC. See Report by Religious news service. August 25, 1958, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.068, folder 5. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1958.
[261] Including the closure of the churches, transferring church money to the State bank, limitations for students of seminaries and for believers, circulation of anti-religious propaganda, and many internal conflicts between believers and clergy, because some of church officials lost their authority. See Memorandum from a recent visitor to U.S.S.R in May 1961, June 6, 1961, WCC archives: WCC General Secretariat. Correspondence: Member churches: 1938-1993, box 42.4.070, folder 4. Russia – Russian Orthodox Church. 1961.
[262] Ibid., 3.
[263] Ibid., 3.
[264] Ibid., 3.

where Metropolitan Nikolai cried and *"all those attending the service knew why and he is better liked now than previously."*[265]

With a nearly thousand-year history of the church as an institution, a memory of a great past integrated into Russian Orthodox ideas and imaginaries, and with at least some authority in a society,[266] the leaders and ideologues of the MP in the mid-20th century seemed unable to overcome the limitations in church-state relations that had emerged deep in the centuries of imperial Russia. However, the view that the church was fully instrumentalized and served the interests of the state also presents a reductive picture. Perhaps the intrinsic and enduring images of Russian Orthodoxy influenced, in their own way, not only clergy and believers, but also those officials who shaped state interests and continued to believe that they controlled religion and the church.

[265] Ibid.
[266] It is noteworthy that the Soviet society, as some historians of the ROC noted, still retained its religiosity even under the conditions of repressions and managed to transmit some aspects of orthodox legacy through Soviet period. See, e.g. Headley, *Christ after Communism*, 7-13; Konstantinov, *The crown of thorns*, 45-70.

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