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The Role of Religious Institutions: Peace in Eastern Orthodoxy

Yuri Stoyanov

Introduction

The historical roots, evolution and current articulations of the approaches to peace and peacebuilding in Eastern Orthodox cultures demonstrate both telling analogies and dissimilarities to the corresponding Western Christian stances. They have attracted much less comprehensive investigation and attention than their Western Christian counterparts for a variety of reasons, one of the most significant being the unavailability of proper editions or translations into Western European languages of crucial late antique, medieval and early modern sources (Greek, Old Church Slavonic, Georgian) on this problematic. Two recent collections of representative Eastern Orthodox texts on war and peace (the Apostolic Canons and the codification of early ecclesiastical legislation, as well as synodal and patriarchal declarations of the modern period) have brought together much of historical and current source material essential for understanding and further exploration of the Eastern Orthodox theory and practice of peace and peacemaking (Bos & Forest, 1999; Stoyanov, 1994).

Historical and Theological Background

Similar to Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity, the quintessential inherited approaches to the normativity of peace in Eastern Orthodoxy can be traced to the New Testament moral

precepts and their underlying pacific perspectives (Mathew, 5:7, 26:52, Luke, 2:14, 3:14, 6:29). Another authoritative corpus of texts, which have been continuously drawn upon in Eastern Orthodox religious thought, comprises the statements of the early Church Fathers[1] on war and violence as well as their admonitions regarding non-retaliation and nonviolent martyrdom. They articulate the predominant anti-militarism and pacific beliefs of the early Church and its ideal of the normativity and affirmation of peace in all its dimensions, from the individual inner peace to the peace among humans.

These pacifistic aspirations in early Christianity could be accompanied by apocalyptic anticipations of forthcoming eschatological peace indebted to a large degree to the ideas of the final and universal eternal peace in some currents of Jewish prophetic and messianic thought and nascent Christian messianism. The early Christian pursuit of the pacific ideals could also be manifested in the pronounced denunciation and avoidance of Christian participation in (Roman) military service. Still, a growing amount of evidence and research indicates that some Christians served in the Roman army in the pre-Constantinian era (especially from the late second century onwards), starting to form characteristic Christian networks within Roman military structures. The institutionalization of the Christian church in the Roman Empire inaugurated during the reign of Constantine the Great (306-337) precipitated various models of rapprochement between the imperial state and the clerical leadership. The newly evolving consonance between the secular and ecclesiastical order in the empire also had a bearing on the justification and sanctioning of warfare. In a number of instances, however, this consonance developed along divergent avenues in the West and East Roman Empire as prompted by the dissimilar development of church-state relations in the Greek East and Latin West. The foundation of the

medieval Catholic just war tradition were established by figures such as St. Ambrose (c.339-397) and St. Augustine (354-430) in the very specific political and religious conditions in the Christian Latin West. In the Greek East religious and ecclesiastical attitudes were shaped by a different corpus of (Greek) patristic writings and the church instituted and secured a different model of relationships with the East Roman/Byzantine centralized imperial state and its new political theology. Accordingly, the Eastern Orthodox Church preserved some essential elements from pre-Constantinian Christian pacific attitudes to the morality and sanctioning of war.

In the Christianized East Roman Empire, the pacific tendencies of pre-Constantinian early Christianity could be integrated into the system of the newly conceptualized Christian imperial ideology by influential Christian figures such as Eusebius of Caesaria (c. 260-c. 340), St. Cyril of Alexandria (376-444) and St John Chrysostom (345-407). According to their assertions, the establishment of the Christian Roman Empire accomplished a providential design to pacify the world (hitherto prone to conflicts and violent strife) and end humanity's ceaseless wars. Partially indebted to certain antecedent trends in the Christian understanding of *Pax Romana* (even before its Christianization) as facilitating the spread and global mission of Christianity, such assertions certainly drew in addition on earlier Stoic contemplations regarding the presumed general pacifying role of the Roman Empire.

In the spheres of East Roman Christian/Byzantine political theology and associated Eastern Orthodox leadership ideologies, similarly with Western Christianity, the Old Testament dramatic narratives of righteous wars in the service of God in biblical books such as the Deuteronomy, Numbers, Joshua and the Maccabees furnished a suitable normative source material for justifying, legitimizing and conducting warfare. Thus, as with other Christian cultures and

ideologies, Eastern Orthodoxy inherited and embodied the dichotomies and tensions between the notions of war and peace respectively in the Old and New Testament that, notwithstanding certain obvious continuities, also diverged in some vital areas.

In addition to the scriptural and patristic sources, early medieval Eastern Orthodox stances on warfare, peace and peacebuilding underwent the formative impact of earlier and selectively inherited Graeco-Roman ideas, moral norms and theories that, among other venues, were articulated in military manuals and imperial secular law books and collections. This legacy of Graeco-Roman conceptions and attitudes comprised influential classical precepts such as the Aristotelian paradigm of peace as the preferable condition and the eventual desired condition of any warfare.

The principal foundational notions and approaches of the Eastern Orthodox ideology of war and peace during its early imperial Byzantine stages can be discerned in the Byzantine authoritative military tracts (with their distinct Christian just war statements acknowledging the "evil" or anti-normative nature of war and the permissibility of defensive warfare and focus on the conduct of extensive religious practices in the Byzantine army), imperial statements, military orations and religious services. Incorporating religious and secular concepts, and influential military manuals such as Leo VI's *Taktika* uphold the Christian ideal of the normativity of peace: the tract explicitly states that peace should be welcomed not only for the Byzantine imperial subject, but also for the "barbarians" and all men ideally "ought to embrace peace" and live in peace with their enemies (Stoyanov, 2014: 173). Hence peace should be sought first and foremost, but if it is broken by warfare unjustly or initiated by imperial adversaries (triggered by the "contrivances of

the devil"), defensive military measures would need to safeguard the security and safety of those under attack until peace can be re-established and cherished to become a way of life (Stoyanov, 2014: 173-174). Leo VI's *Taktika* thus highlights the maleficent and anti-normative nature of war whose origin is attributed to the devil that instigates people to engender violence and conflict. A similarly forceful endorsement of peace as the paradigmatic and optimal norm and condemnation of war as "a great evil" and "the worst of all evils" are explicitly asserted in another well-known Byzantine military tract, *Peri Strategikes/De Re Strategica* (Stoyanov, 2014: 174). Byzantine pre-battle military orations could also emphasize the Romans' alliance with peace and justice and constant pursuit of peace, as demonstrated by the reported speech of the Roman army commander, Justinian, during Byzantine-Persian Sasanian hostilities in 576 (text and commentary in Stoyanov, 214: 177). The various stipulations in the military manuals regarding the need to avoid unnecessary loss of life in open battle reflect both the characteristic notions of Byzantine philanthropy and the actual strategic and practical concerns of Byzantium. Being intermittently on the defensive side on one or more fronts, the intended to prevent and solve conflicts, whenever achievable, through diplomacy and other non-military channels (Haldon, 1999: 26ff.)

The diverse extant source material does not comprise conclusive evidence that the Byzantine church made any systematic attempt at formulating a just war theory in addition to the theory and practice of justification of warfare developed by the imperial court and government. Attempts by warrior-emperors such as Heraclius (610-641) and Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) to introduce the notion of military martyrdom into Byzantine ideology of warfare could not find mainstream acceptance and support, as the ecclesiastical elites seem to have been continually and uniformly

opposed to the theologizing and employment of such innovation. Accordingly, Byzantium, the Byzantine Commonwealth and medieval Eastern Orthodox cultures remained largely unaffected by the changes in Western Christian attitudes to the involvement in warfare (and the religious rationale for its legitimization) between the mid-ninth and late eleventh century. During this period the first concepts of absolution and heavenly rewards for fallen Christian soldiers, seen as defending the church and Christendom, were concocted and promulgated by the Papacy, namely by Leo IV (847–855), Pope John VIII (872–882) and Pope Leo IX (1049–1054). These concepts made vital contributions to the evolution and configuration of Catholic religious military ideology in the period leading to and during the crusading era (Brundage, 1969: 22-29).

While also concerned with the status of Christian soldier, the Eastern Orthodox canon law inherited and introduced a series of rulings, which highlight the pacific nature of the vocation of clerics and monks and explicitly and emphatically proscribe them from bearing arms or taking part in any fighting or acts of violence[2]. Highlighting the precepts of clerical and monastic non-resistance to violence, these canonical regulations establish a kind of a "stratification of pacifism" (Harakas, 1981: 85-87) prescribing that both clergy and monks were obliged to adhere to the pacific and pacifistic standards of the early Church and hence were prohibited from any military activity, which thus remained strictly reserved for the laity. These Eastern Orthodox canonic regulations made the nonparticipation of clergy and monks in warfare obligatory and unconditional, representing one of the major differences from the corresponding Western Christian developments in this important area of medieval religious-military ideology.

At the same time, specific tensions and debates developed in spheres where the concerns over the status of Christian soldiers in Byzantine canon law, Byzantine political military ideology and the

characteristic lay piety of the Byzantine military classes understandably overlapped. The disputes with Byzantine canon law largely draw on the perceived contrast between the respective approaches of such influential patristic figures as St. Basil the Great (c.330–379) and St. Athanasios of Alexandria (c.296–373). Much debate has been focused on St. Athanasios' war-related statement in his *Epistle to Ammoun the Monk* (text and commentary in Stoyanov, 2014: 181-82) and whether it can be considered an early and authoritative patristic articulation of just war thinking in Eastern Christendom (Cf. Swift, 1983: 95; Haldon, 1999**:** 26; Webster, 2003: 25-27; Harakas, 1999: 155-56; McGuckin, 2006; McGuckin, 2008: 403-404; McGuckin, 2011: 37-39). Saint Basil's well-known *Thirteenth Canon* clearly stipulates that although the act of killing during war needs to be distinguished from voluntary murder, it remains advisable that the perpetrators should abstain from communion for three years (text and commentary in Stoyanov, 2014: 182-83). The strictness and impact of Saint Basil's Canon has been often seen as forestalling the development of just war theory in Eastern Orthodox thought in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages, analogous to that formulated (in its early and seminal stages) by Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose approximately during the same period in the Latin West (Harakas, 1999; McGuckin, 2008: 40). Contrasting views and disputes on the applicability of St Basil's Thirteenth Canon continued in Byzantine's canon law throughout the Byzantine era and beyond (Stoyanov, 2014: 183-185), demonstrating the continuing topicality of the theoretical and practical implications of the Christian participation in warfare vis-à-vis the normative ideal of peace.

In addition to regulatory prescriptions and debates that defined the nature and bounds of Christian engagement with warfare in Canon Law and ecclesiastical praxis, reflections and

speculations on the proper and appropriate Christian response to warfare in view of the necessary affirmation of peace remained a vital sphere in Eastern Orthodox theology, ethics and anthropology throughout the medieval period and beyond. Against the backdrop of the major theological polemics and schisms in the Church during the fourth century, particularly divisive and discordant in Eastern Christendom, the ideal of religious peace enjoyed a central significance in Greek patristic thought of the period, as highlighted by its prominence in the thoughts of the Cappadocian Fathers, Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory of Nazianzis (330-389) and Saint Gregory of Nyssa (331-396). Thus, this emphasis on the pursuit of religious peace was intrinsically connected to hopes and endeavors for the doctrinal and ecclesial unity of the Church (Zampaglione, 1973: 266).

The influential works of John Chrysostom combine a forceful denunciation of warfare and the endorsement of true peace (Goodwin, 2005; Hamalis, 2007), which according to his *First Homily on Corinthians* can come only from God. In his *Fourteenth Homily to the Philippians*, John Chrysostom declares, "God is not a God of war and fighting" (both of which are hence against God), whereas the Christian ideal and virtue encompasses the complete ending of warfare and bloodshed, so peace can prevail with all men. In his *On the Priesthood* John Chrysostom also clearly delineates the Eastern Orthodox "stratification of pacifism" according to which the priesthood is required to adhere to the loftiest Christian norms and, if necessary, to provide a corrective to the government's and the laity's actions in the secular realm, including the legitimization and conduct of warfare. The demarcation of the different and contrasting standards for the priesthood and laity regarding involvement in warfare are also underlined, for example, in his *Second Homily on Eutropius 4*.

John Chrysostom's emphasis on the peace of the spirit and its correlation to the divine peace, the mission of Christ and the establishment of peace among humans remained one of most important themes in Byzantine theology, mysticism and monastic spirituality throughout the medieval period. It found other early expressions in the reflections of Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite (c. 500) and Maximus the Confessor (580-662). Foundational New Testament passages invoking God as "not a God of disorder but of peace" (Corinthians, 14:33), Christ as "our peace" (Ephesians, 2:14), "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians, 4:7) and the Kingdom of God as "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans, 14:17) have already received much attention, interpretations and elaborations in the patristic era. In such patristic renditions of the New Testament paradigmatic pacific themes Christians could be characterized as "sons of peace", a "peaceable race", "soldiers of peace", "workers for peace" or "craftsmen of peace", notions which throughout the Byzantine period continued to predicate and foster the ideals of the cultivation of and quest for peace in the individual human, social, and divine realms.

A similar predominant emphasis on the notion of peace in all its diverse dimensions was shared in the Byzantine liturgical, hymnographic, hagiographic and mystical traditions. In Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite's highly influential system, for instance, primordial peace possesses an archetypal cosmological dimension—its restoration in human societies and within individual human beings is an imperative prerequisite for embarking on the spiritual path to *theosis* (divinization), individual and collective universal salvation, bringing about the advent of the final eschatological peace.

Since the launch of the First Crusade (1095-1099) and the subsequent crusades, Byzantine theologians, canonists and secular elites were becoming variously acquainted with aspects of the war theology of the crusading movement, with its combination of pilgrimage, just war and religious (holy) war notions. However, no comparable innovations in canon law or attempts to systematize comparable just and religious war doctrines were undertaken in high and late medieval Byzantium or the Byzantine Commonwealth in South-Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Russia. Meanwhile, lately a stimulating, interdisciplinary debate has been initiated on whether Byzantine secular and religious elites ever formulated and employed in practice elements (or a restricted version) of war ideology underpinned by a religious rationale of the type developed in the contemporaneous Islamic and Western Christian cultures[3]. This debate has highlighted and uncovered more multifarious data regarding the various interfaces between Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Byzantine (and Eastern Christian) ideologies of peace and war. The present balance of argument and evidence demonstrates that religious elements and rhetoric were present in some Byzantine campaigns but were used sporadically and do not represent the outcome of a coherently and systematically devised ideology of religious war. Among other differences from Western Christendom, the Byzantine Orthodox church delegated the justification and practice of warfare to the secular imperial government and Byzantine cannon law remained static in the medieval period, underlying the Eastern Orthodox Church's continual antagonism to military martyrdom, whether in its theological or operational aspects. Byzantine churchmen and *literati* similarly repudiated and polemicized against the practice of Catholic bishops and priests fighting in the crusades, attitudes eloquently expressed, for example, in Anne Komnene's celebrated work, *The Alexiad* (text and commentary in Stoyanov, 214: 185). These reactions demonstrate

both the repudiation of this “Latin” phenomenon and the preeminent conviction endorsed both by Byzantine secular and ecclesiastical circles that the pacifistic precepts in the New Testament and Eastern Orthodox canon law unequivocally prohibit such a practice for Eastern Orthodox monks and priests.

At the same time, some of the major general questions related to the convergence and divergence in the explication of ideas of peace in war in Byzantine imperial-political and ecclesiastic thought and praxis, as expressed, for example, through the tropes and vocabulary of Byzantine philanthropy, clearly need a fresh reappraisal. These include the related customary employment of pacific rhetoric and symbolism in diplomatic and political discourse as well as the frequent allusions to and images of Byzantine emperors as “peace-loving” and “peace-protecting” rulers, avoiding and preventing wars and violence, which assumed a formal and ceremonial character. A similar reevaluation needs to address the related problem of whether Byzantine diplomatic and military policies, regularly regarded as pacific and retreatist, stem from analogous pacific traits in Eastern Orthodoxy (as argued), or from the challenging and complicated geopolitical situations which the empire recurrently had to confront and which conditioned its consequent strategic concerns, priorities and decision-making (Haldon, 1999).

The authoritative Byzantine synthesis between inherited religious and political pacific models, the late Roman just war tradition and various innovations in the theory and practice of peacemaking and warfare endured from late antiquity to the fall of Constantinople in 1452 and created a flexible system of nuanced attitudes to peace and war underpinned by the notion of normativity of peace both on the religious and imperial-political level. This adaptable complex of

notions and attitudes reflected and was consonant with the secular and religious concerns of an imperial state which regarded itself as the singular *Imperium Romanum Christianum*. This religious-political complex also proved suitable for the Orthodox cultures and state-formations which emerged in the Balkans, Ukraine and Russia—with the inevitable modifications and acclimatization in the various medieval and early modern contexts, especially in the spheres of royal and lay military-religious ideologies (Stoyanov, 2009: 184-185). Apart from the characteristic canonization and popular veneration of historic Orthodox warrior-princes and rulers, South Slavonic and Russian Orthodox cultures offer some early emblematic examples of saintly princes who accepted martyrdom without resorting to violence or self-defense—for example, St. John Vladimir, Prince of Duklja (d.1016), and Saints Boris and Gleb, Princes of Kievan Rus (d.1015).[1] As true passion-bearers and adhering to Christ's precepts of non-resistance to evil, Saints Boris and Gleb, the first Russian saints to be canonized, represent also the archetypal and foundational figures of lay pacifism in the Eastern Slavonic Orthodox world and their laudable non-retaliation to violence have been repeatedly invoked in the Eastern Orthodox pacifistic tradition.

The intrinsic foundation of East Orthodox attitudes to peace and peacemaking in the late antique and medieval eras hence betray certain significant differences from corresponding conceptions and developments in medieval Western Christendom. These dissimilarities can be approached and explored both in relation in individual religious-political circumstances and settings in the history of medieval and early modern Christendom or in the general trichotomy of Christian attitudes to war and peace proposed by Roland Bainton: pacifism, just war and crusade (Bainton, 1960; Harakas, 1981: 74-81) to which political realism is sometimes added as a separate

category (Hamalis, 2018). Pacific and pacifistic trends in Eastern Orthodoxy display various patterns of continuity from the pre-Constantinian into the medieval and modern periods, undergoing in the process some inevitable transformations, originally conditioned by the Christianization of Roman imperial ideology. The distinct persistence of these continuities and their adaptation in Byzantium and the Byzantine Commonwealth need to be considered also against the background of the various factors causing discontinuities with the late Roman past in the medieval Latin West and the early Islamic world in the Levant and Near East which contributed significantly to the divergences of views on peace and war among these three cultures.

Challenges of the Modern Era

In the wake of the Ottoman conquests in Anatolia and the Balkans and their integration into the expanding Ottoman Empire, the Orthodox churches in these regions, along with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, found themselves in completely new and challenging religious-political conditions. The Eastern Orthodox churches under Ottoman dominion inevitably started to develop changed and distinct sets of state-church relations which were to have significant consequences in the modern era of nationalism and nation-state building. The implementation of the various regulations, comprising the so-called *millet* system, delegated important civil, educational and judicial roles to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, where the previously independent patriarchates came now under its authority (with the temporal exception of the Serbian Patriarchate which was re-established between 1557 and 1766). The *millet* system may have ensured the durability and relative health of Orthodox Christianity in the Ottoman Empire, but it triggered a process of secularization of the ecclesiastical structures of the

Ecumenical Patriarchate, from its synod to the diocesan metropolitans and the village priests. Functioning as a secular administrative mechanism, these structures were also laid open to periodic lay interference in its internal church affairs.

Furthermore, in the course of the nineteenth century the Orthodox churches in South-East Europe started seeking and eventually accomplished autonomy from the Ecumenical Patriarchate's jurisdiction, which in most cases proved a difficult and divisive process, accompanied by acrimonious polemics and a series of ecclesiastical crises. This also was a period when the Orthodox communities and churches within the Ottoman Empire went through the various dramatic and violent phases of nationalist anti-Ottoman struggles and uprisings and the establishment of post-Ottoman nation-states. A number of Greek or South Slavonic churchmen became actively involved in the armed struggle and rebellions against Ottoman authority and a few of them strove for assigning a providential and religious dimension to the military and political conflicts with the Ottomans. Their activities, statements and agendas diverged from the official position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate whose goals and efforts largely remained focused on the peaceful resolution to such conflicts and advocating reforms to enhance the status and conditions of Orthodox Christians in the late Ottoman state. This was a stance was obviously conditioned to some extent by the precarious position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the late Ottoman imperial capital, but also owed some of its pacific ethos to the inherited patristic, canon law and ecclesiastic Byzantine standpoints on peace, war and armed conflict.

Having often acted during the Ottoman era as a nationally and culturally unifying force, the respective Orthodox churches predictably contributed crucially to the formation and

formalization of the corresponding national ideologies. Orthodox ecclesiastical elites came to play a direct role in the nation- and state-building processes and in some cases, the promulgation and legitimization of the military conflicts, which broke out during the course of these processes, paving the way for the creation of the post-Ottoman Orthodox-majority states, with their shifting boundaries and ambitions. The national, political and clerical spheres in these post-Ottoman states in South-Eastern Europe continued to intermingle and cross-pollinate each other in the years preceding and during the First World War as well as during the subsequent unstable interwar period, spawning mixtures of ethno-confessional nationalism and just-war legitimized militarism which occasionally could display distinct neo-crusading overtones.

Some of these statebuilding enterprises and processes in the late Ottoman era were initially triggered by Russian imperial expansionism in the Balkans and Caucasus, which gathered momentum over the course of the nineteenth century. Drawing on some already adopted, as well as some newly developing notions, a novel Russian religious-political ideology gradually took shape in the aftermath of Constantinople's fall to the Ottomans in 1453 and came to claim and assume the imperial leadership of the Orthodox Christian Commonwealth. The Russian version of imperial Orthodox Christianity inherited some of the traditional Byzantine perspectives on the moral and religious problematic of war, peace and peacebuilding, but eventually developed some new approaches in this sphere. These concepts and approaches, however, were not systematically developed even in the wake of the reforms of Peter the Great (1682-1725), when Russian military thinking experienced the strong impact of Western ideas in a variety of crucial theoretical and practical areas.

Russian religious and secular stances concepts on peace, war and peacemaking started to assume recognizable forms early in the history of Orthodox Kievan Rus, with their focus on the justifiability of defensive war and armed conflicts waged to recover lost territories, which could be regarded as legitimate wars of liberation. In the elite and popular spheres of Russian military-religious ideology the phenomenon of lay pacifism, as initiated and represented by the cult of the passion-bearer prince-martyrs of Kievan Rus', Saints Boris and Gleb (d.1015), coexisted with the veneration of or high renown for warrior-princes, extolled as Orthodoxy's defenders, some of whom were subsequently declared saints. While in the early phases of the history of Kievan Rus, the Russian Orthodox Church displayed largely pacific attitudes, some of the later Muscovite campaigns (such as Ivan the Terrible's conquest of the Kazan Khanate) witnessed a clerical involvement in the religious justification and promulgation of warfare.

The notion of just war based on the patriotic duty of defense of the Russian homeland was effectively expanded in the late eighteenth century, as the Russian-Ottoman peace treaty of 1774 formalized a *de facto* recognition of Russia as a protector of Eastern Orthodox communities in the Ottoman Empire. The subsequent complicated sequence and maneuverings of Ottoman–Russia war making and peacemaking which unfolded during the nineteenth century generated Russian religious-political discourses and currents of opinion which sought religious justification for anti-Ottoman military offensives and viewed them as wars of liberation.

The disputes and speculations on the ethics of war, justifiable rationales for resorting to armed conflict and the Orthodox understanding of peace intensified in Russian religiously oriented cultural milieu in the second half of the nineteenth century. Traditional and expanded just war

theories had also to meet the challenge of the conceptualization and spread of radical Tolstoian pacifism from the 1880s onwards. In a succession of works such as *My Religion*, *The Kingdom of God is Within You* and *The Law of Love and the Law of Violence* as well as public statements and open letters, Lev Tolstoi (1828-1910) advanced an influential reformulation and reinstatement of Christian pacifism. Tolstoian pacifism exercised a major impact on a number of major contemporaneous and later figures (including Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr) as well as a variety of currents adhering to the ideals of nonviolence and non-resistance such as Christian anarchism and anarcho-pacifism. The eclectic conceptual origins of Tolstoian pacifism, with his Gospel-based views on non-resistance to evil, government-sponsored and justified warfare, and the army as an instrument of organized mass murder, also integrated the impact of Protestant pacifism, while displaying significant and telling continuities with the traditions of Eastern Orthodox pacifism (Rancour-Laferriere, 2007, 96-99). Lev Tolstoi actively campaigned, moreover, on behalf of Russian pacifistic and persecuted dissenting and reformist groups such as the Doukhobor.

Tolstoian pacifism provoked powerful and long-lasting reaction and antagonism both in Russia and on the international scene. Ecclesiastic circles could be especially hostile to Tolstoi, and the Russian Orthodox Church excommunicated him in 1901; Christian religious philosophers and theoreticians of war ethics also marshalled arguments and vigorous criticisms of Tolstoian pacifism. A forceful critique of Tolstoian views on peace, peacemaking and government-organized warfare accompanied by a concerted effort to develop an ecumenically oriented Christian just war theory was advanced in the writings of the renowned Russian religious philosopher, Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900). Using the form of literary rationalization, for

example, in his well-known *Three Conversations*, Vladimir Solov'ev presents a fictional debate between advocates of Christian pacifism and just war theory (Solov'ev, [1899] 1990: 27-66). A similarly forceful attack on Tolstoism was launched by Metropolitan Antonii Khrapovitskii, who took up the leadership of the Russian Church in exile in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution of 1917. In his *The Christian Faith and War*, he primarily targeted Tolstoian and related pacifist rejections of Christian participation in warfare and disobedience to the state engaged in armed conflict (Khrapovitskii, 1916, 1973). The issues and dilemmas of absolute and conditional pacifism, justifiability of warfare and peacemaking, were of considerable importance for other prominent Russian émigré intellectual figures such as Ivan Il'in (1883–1954), Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948), the influential theologian, Vladimir Losskii (1903-1958) and others (representative texts and commentaries in Stoyanov, 2014: 208-211).

At the same time, the renewed focus on the study and rehabilitation of pacific perspectives of the New Testament, early Church and patristic literature in the interwar period was starting increasingly to demonstrate that the eclectic just war notions and declarations variously adopted and promulgated by Orthodox churchmen and ecclesiastic theologians in the course of the military conflicts of the late Ottoman era, the Balkan wars and the First World War (Stoyanov, 2009: 187-193; Kostić, 2016) did not reflect the ethos of early or Byzantine Orthodox Christianity ethics of peace and war.

The interwar period was particularly challenging for the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Bolshevik anti-Church campaigns in the wake of the Russian Revolution were followed by several cycles of severe Soviet repression of the Church. Bolshevik legislation and measures

against the Russian Orthodox Church began to unfold during the Russian Civil War of 1917–1923. But despite his various declarations and protests against these repressive measures, Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia (1918–1925), canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1989, did not formally endorse or “sanctify” the anti-Bolshevik war effort of the White Army. Along with popular preachers like Archpriest Ioann Vostorgov (1864-1918), he appealed for a nonviolent resistance to the suppression of Church institutional and hierarchic structures and religious life. The Patriarch denounced civil war as the worst kind of fratricidal violence and continuously appealed to the faithful to abstain from violence and vengeance, condemned anti-Jewish pogroms and called upon the Bolshevik authorities to stop the vicious cycle of bloodshed and devastation.

In the wake of the Second World War and the start of the Cold War, nearly all European Eastern Orthodox churches (apart from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul and the autocephalous Orthodox churches of Greece and Cyprus) also faced the challenges of operating and surviving in the circumstances dictated by the Eastern Bloc’s repressive Communist regimes. After the initial stages of anti-Church measures, some of the Eastern European Communist governments became aware of and started to exploit the potential of the national Orthodox churches as a tool of foreign policy, whether through the existing Eastern Orthodox ecclesiastical networks or the World Council of Churches and international ecclesiastic bodies. The participation of these Orthodox churches in international ecclesiastical and lay peace initiatives during the Cold War era was thus a process which the respective Communist governments aimed to direct, monitor and control, albeit not always successfully.

The downfall of Communism in Eastern Europe and end of the Cold War after 1989 marked the beginning of a new period for the revitalization of the Orthodox churches and the reinstatement of their traditional place in the social, cultural and religious life of the respective Orthodox-majority countries. However, the military conflicts of Yugoslav Succession in the 1990s and subsequent military conflicts involving such Orthodox-majority countries posed a series of major challenges to international Orthodoxy (Stoyanov, 2009: 201-205; Saggau, 2017). The role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Yugoslav conflicts (especially some of its high-ranking clerics and despite its participation in international and regional initiatives and meetings for peace and reconciliation during and after the conflicts) provoked wideranging reactions and strong criticism in international Orthodox theological and clerical circles. These ranged from protests of theological networks such as the pacific Orthodox Peace Fellowship to the critical stances and statements of the World Council of Churches and ecumenical movements (Stoyanov, 2009: 201-205).

The various meetings, initiatives, statements and appeals organized and hosted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Orthodox Churches[4] in response to these and other very recent and unfolding armed conflicts further intensified the debate on contemporary challenges to Eastern Orthodox traditional and modern stances on peace, war and current patterns of peacemaking and reconciliation. At the same time, the continuing debate on the existence or nonexistence of a just war tradition in Eastern Orthodoxy among Orthodox theologians and ecclesiastics[5] is now occurring in the context of topical concerns and issues such as interreligious violence, justification of humanitarian intervention, the environmental consequences of military conflicts, etc.

Against the background of the rising prominence and topicality of the peace and peacemaking problematic in intra-Orthodox and ecumenical dialogues and exchanges (as well as increasing contacts and interaction with institutions related to the implementation of the League of Nations Covenant, the United Nations' Charter) in a succession of statements in the 1990s and 2000s, the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, has emphatically reiterated the traditional pacific Eastern Orthodox patristic and clerical precepts on warfare and interreligious violence (Bartholomew I, 2003: 237-243, 239-240, 241, 242; Bartholomew I, 2008: 207, 227). Significantly, after a crucial decade of reformulating and delineating its new models of interrelations with the state and the Russian military, in 2000 the Jubilee Council of Russian Bishops adopted and published a statement of faith which contains an important section on "War and Peace" (Stoyanov, 2014: 220-222). On the one hand, this crucial document reiterates the traditional Eastern Orthodox teaching on war as unconditionally evil and the divine, "grace-filled" and salvific gift of peace, strongly emphasizing the church's commitment to international peacemaking and opposing any propaganda of war. On the other hand, the statement also puts forward a more systematic and up-to-date Orthodox reappraisal of the Christian just war tradition and its relevance to modernity.

These successions of statements, accompanied by the increasingly active participation of Orthodox churches in international peace initiatives and meetings indicate that the Eastern Orthodox plurality of approaches to peace and peacemaking, with its complex theological, philosophical and ideological roots, can certainly contribute considerably to the better understanding and implementation of diverse Christian models of peacemaking. This adds further relevance and significance to the ongoing intra-Orthodox, ecumenical and interfaith

debates, meetings and consultations focused on issues such as the Orthodox contribution to the theology of just peace (Asfaw, Chehadeh & Simion, 2012), just peacemaking and Christian realism (Hamalis, 2018), *theosis*, war and peacemaking (Papanikolaou, 2018), peacemaking as an ecumenical and interfaith vocation (Clapsis, 2010), Orthodox social ethics and the dynamic praxis of just peacemaking (LeMasters, 2010), as well as its interfaces with problems of economic justice and injustice as part of its peacemaking vocation (Clapsis, 2011).

Notes

1. Such as St. Justin Martyr (c.100–c.165), Clement of Alexandria (c.150–c.215), St. Hippolytus (c.170–c.236), Tertullian (c.160–c.225), Origen (c.185–c.254), St. Cyprian of Carthage (d.258), Arnobius (3rd–4th century) and Lactantius (c.250–c.325). See the patristic sources translated in Swift, 1983. On the debate whether Origen might have laid the foundations of later just war theory, cf. Helgeland, Daly and Burns (1985: 40); Hunter (1992: 88); Karras (2018: 138-139).
2. A series of canons in the Apostolic Canons and those of the Ecumenical and Local Councils which entered Eastern Orthodox canon law clearly articulate the prohibitions on Christian clergy and monks becoming involved in military service or the secular state administration and government; for the texts of some of the relevant canons, see Swift (1983: 90-93).
3. Some of the principal studies illustrating the trajectories of this debate have been reprinted in Part 1 in Haldon, 2007. Further references and summaries of the contrasting arguments in this ongoing debate in Stoyanov (2009: 176-180); Kyrou and Prodromou (2018).
4. A number of ecclesiastical appeals and statements resulting from these initiatives (including texts illustrating some of the controversies related to the conduct of the Serbian Orthodox Church during the conflicts) have been conveniently assembled in Bos and Forest, (chapter 9)
5. A whole issue of *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 47:1(2003) was entirely devoted to this debate; for a summary of the dispute and main line of contrasting arguments, see Stoyanov (2009: 208-210).

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