

Yuri Stoyanov

Eastern Orthodox War Justification and Ecclesial
Dilemmas Arising from the War in Ukraine

Studies in World Christianity 30.2 (2024): 230–248

DOI: 10.3366/swc.2024.0472

(accepted version)

Eastern Orthodox War-Justification and Ecclesial Dilemmas Arising from the War in Ukraine

Yuri1 Stoyanov

Abstract

The escalation of ecclesial and religio-political conflicts since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has further complicated the convoluted ecclesial situation in Ukraine and have been addressed in a series of sermons, formal statements and documents issued by senior Russian and Ukrainian ecclesiastical figures. Their ideological and theological rhetoric demonstrates the active participation of senior Russian Orthodox clerics in the justification of the Russian military effort which represent some radical ruptures in Eastern Orthodox ecclesial involvement in war-making and mobilization. The Moscow Patriarchate's war-legitimization stances and policies have major repercussions for the current debates on and reconceptions of the Christian just war tradition in the frameworks of just peace, peace-building and reconciliation, as well as the potential key role of Christian religious actors in these processes.

Keywords: Eastern Orthodoxy, Church-State Relations, Christianity and Militarism, Just War, Pacifism and Peace-building, Just Peace, Russian Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Orthodoxy, Ecumenism and Inter-Church Relations

The ecclesial and religio-political collisions and crises accompanying Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the consequent armed conflict in Donbas have escalated since

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The outbreak of full-scale war has further complicated the already convoluted ecclesial situation in Ukraine and has also refocused attention on the modern relevance and resonances of historical and more recent Christian stances on war justification, especially in the cases of Eastern Orthodox cultures and their ecclesiastical elites. The theological and ecclesial dilemmas arising from the involvement of these clerical elites in religiously-framed war-justification strategies and contests for ecclesial legitimacy have important implications for church-state and church-military relations in Eastern Orthodox-majority states. The struggle to find a balance between the inherited legacy of clerical pacific/non-violence attitudes and the martial necessities dictated from political and military leaderships have posed massive challenges to ecclesiastical structures in Russia and Ukraine as well as across the wider Eastern Orthodox world.

These challenges have been especially acute in the sphere of just war theory and conduct in which earlier and modern Eastern Orthodox stances have displayed some significant divergences from their Western Christian counterparts and have attracted much less historical and theological scrutiny than the latter.¹ In modern East Slavonic Orthodox cultures the gradual evolution of the Muscovite religio-political ideology of 'Moscow the Third Rome' (adopted after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453) was a contributing factor in the Russian Empire's diplomatic and military interventionism in the late Ottoman empire and its self-declared mandate as a protector of Eastern Orthodox communities under Ottoman rule.

¹ The state of evidence and debate on the just war traditions in medieval Byzantium and the Byzantine Commonwealth and their continuations during the early modern to modern periods remain outside the scope of this article.

The decades following the Crimean War (1853-1856) and leading to WW1 and the USSR establishment in 1922 were marked by intense debates in Russian Slavophile, Pan-Slav, clerical and intellectual circles on pacifism, Tolstoyism and the justifiability and sanctification of warfare, which continued in Russian émigré circles in the 1920s/1930s. When the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) was reinstated during WW2, after waves of anti-church measures in the Soviet Union, to marshal support for the ‘Great Patriotic War’, prominent Russian hierarchs blessed and eulogized the war effort as the ‘Holy War of Liberation’ with a global liberating mission and significance.¹

Throughout the Cold War era the restored Patriarchate of Moscow and the national Eastern Orthodox churches became involved in a series of international peace initiatives and engagements which in the cases of the churches of the Eastern Bloc states were closely monitored by the respective Communist governments. During these long-term engagements the topics of Christian participation in armed conflicts and the viability of just war theories in Eastern Orthodoxy remained a constant focus of attention in the intra-Orthodox dialogue and exchanges. Post-Cold War geopolitical shifts and cataclysms like the Wars of Yugoslav Succession in the 1990s (with the ensuing challenges to modern warfare ethics: inter-religious violence, ethnic cleansing, humanitarian intervention, etc.) were addressed in a new series of Orthodox meetings and appeals, with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople continuously reaffirming the Eastern Orthodox patristic and clerical pacific stances (Patriarch Bartholomew I 2003). Concurrently, while reconceiving and rectifying its interrelations with the post-Soviet Russian state and military institutions, in 2000 the ROC issued an important statement of faith² with a section on ‘War and Peace’. The section re-emphasizes the traditional Eastern Orthodox tenets on war as categorically evil but also allows for cases in which war,

though unwished-for, might be necessary. The statement reflects the ROC's deepening interaction with the military establishment, highlighting its particular responsibilities for the Christian education of the military and the military chaplains' duties. While declaring ROC's obligations to foster international peace-making, the document adapts some of the Western Christian just war theory *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* norms. A vaguely-worded statement stresses the 'difficulty' of differentiating between an aggressive and defensive war, sketching the cases in which war could become necessary: national defence, defence of neighbours and 'restoration of trampled justice', with its obvious potential for broader applications of war justification (Stoyanov 2009: 206-207; Coman 2023: 344-346).

With the ROC growing politicisation since the 1990s its structures had begun to play an increasing role in state-building processes, confessional identity formation, foreign policy strategies and religious diplomacy (Knox, 2005; Papkova 2011; Knox and Mitrofanova 2014; Chawryło 2015; Stoeckl 2020). The ROC main wings (traditional, fundamentalist and liberal - with various sub-currents) interfaced with revived and novel religious, philosophical and geopolitical trends. The interaction between the ROC's traditionalist and fundamentalist factions with the rejuvenated and popular Neo-Slavophile and Neo-Eurasianist streams led to various blends of chauvinistic, anti-Occidental and neo-conservative concepts and rhetoric, variously redefining modern versions of Russian exceptionalism and messianism (Engström 2014; Curanović 2019; Lewis 2020; Curanović 2024; Suslov 2024). Pre-Soviet and Soviet-era subterranean apocalyptically-oriented currents of Russian religious messianism (Duncan 1999:87-88) came to the surface to acquire influence and mainstream acceptance (Shnirelman 2019; Østbø 2018: 181-223; Engström 2014: 363-370; Suslov 2024: 90-96).

These cross-fertilizations was also impacted by the process of the securitization of Russian religious policies which started in the early 2000s (Bacon 2002, Admiral 2009: 204-206), as a succession of legal ‘National Security’ documents (issued first in 2000, then updated in 2009, 2015 and 2021) and the amended Russian Constitution of 2020 highlighted what they describe as the inseparable link between national security and traditional ‘spiritual-moral values’. The concept of ‘spiritual security’ entered official Russian political, clerical and public discourse (Stoeckl 2022), increasingly endorsed in relation to the ‘Russian World’ (‘Russkiy Mir’) ideology formally adopted by the Kremlin establishment in 2006-2007 and enthusiastically upheld by Patriarch Kirill (elected to the patriarchal throne in 2009). According to Patriarch Kirill’s religio-political formulation the ‘Russian World’ denotes a unique common civilizational and multi-national community and sphere with a shared historical memory arising from the Orthodox heritage of the East Slavonic Christian civilisation of medieval Kievan/Kyivan Rus’.³ With its nucleus represented by Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, it can also include other countries of the ‘historical space of Russia’. As the ‘Russian World’’s religious and spiritual pillar, ROC’s canonical territory transcends current state borders and can facilitate integration processes within this broader transnational sphere. This enhanced religious dimension of the ‘Russian World’ ideology reinforced ROC’s position as a major social, cultural, and political actor on the domestic and international scene, including its growing role in cultural and religious diplomacy (Blitt 2011; Petro 2015; Payne 2010; Hovorun 2022: 5-7).

As the formal and public pronouncements of the Moscow Patriarchate’s higher echelons increasingly focused on and extolled traditional patriotic and Christian values to underpin its declared mission as the principle vehicle of moral renewal, the ROC assumed a major place in the transnational neo-Conservative Christian arena, engaging actively in the global culture wars

(Curanović 2015; Stoeckl 2016; Stoeckl.2020a: 47–59; Uzlaner and Stoeckl. 2022) and facilitating Kremlin’s soft power and religious diplomacy initiatives and gambits (Payne 2010; Curanović 2012; McGlynn 2021; Curanović 2021). While official Russian government documents portray the Russian Federation as a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state established in consonance with a harmonious inter-ethnic and inter-faith entente, in the 2010s the ROC attained a virtually hegemonist and advantaged position in the socio-religious and cultural realms through which state and church essentially mutually legitimized their *raison d'être*.

The deepening post-Soviet links between the ROC and the military was incipiently conditioned by the church’s reaffirmation of the nexus between ancestral patriotic values and faith (Garrard and Garrard 2008: 207-242). These intensifying links found expression in the reintroduction of military chaplains, church-building on military bases, the renewal of the controversial practice of the clerical blessing of weaponry, growing clerical penetration of military structures and the formation of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Synodal Department for Cooperation with the Armed Forces and Security Organs. The intensity of the ensuing ecclesiastical-military collaborations and partnerships was particularly striking in the progressively close association between the church and the nuclear weapons corps conceptualized as ‘Russian Nuclear Orthodoxy’ (Adamsky 2019), arguably leading to a process of ‘military theocratization’ (Adamsky 2019: 6, 234-35).

The initial post-Soviet military conflicts like the First and Second Chechen Wars (resp. 1994-1996 and 1999-2000) and the Russo-Georgian War of 2008 showed that there existed and contended divergent views in the ROC on the interfaces between military and religious values. However, following Russia’s ‘conservative turn’ of 2011/2012, militarization intensified in various currents and milieux of Russian Orthodox culture (Knorre 2016; Knorre and Zygmunt

2020; Kurki 2024) and the ROC actively promoted on all levels the creation of an ‘updated’ military-religious ideology.

The 2010s demonstrated that the ROC could provide convenient narratives and frameworks for justifications of Russian military campaigns which also variously reflect principal notions of post-Soviet chauvinist, messianic, neo-Slavophile and neo-Eurasianist discourses. The vague concepts of ‘spiritual security’ and the ‘Russian World’ could be effectively used for a religious legitimization of military operations across the so-called ROC extended ‘canonical territory’ (in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, etc.), unifying thus the stated and implicit strategic goals of Russian political, military and ecclesiastic authorities (Stoeckl 2022).

In 2015 Patriarch Kirill legitimized the Russian military intervention in Syria as a defensive and just campaign to protect genocide-threatened Syrian Christians and civilians,⁴ echoing the imperial-era Russian self-understanding as a champion of Eastern Christian communities. When the then chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Synodal Department for the Cooperation of Church and Society, Vsevolod Chaplin, controversially declared that the battle against terrorism in Syria was ‘a moral and holy fight’,⁵ he was soon released from his duties. The ‘Chaplin’ episode thus indicated that at that time the Moscow Patriarchate was still keen to stick to traditional Christian just war legitimization and avoid ‘holy fight’ rhetoric, at least in the Middle East engagements.

With the outbreak of hostilities in Donbas, however, the Moscow Patriarchate began to issue statements portraying the hostilities as a war on Orthodoxy, its churches and Orthodox Christians in the region⁶ which were repudiated as war propaganda by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP).⁷ The conflict inevitably affected the complex post-Soviet Ukrainian ecclesial configuration comprising the UOC-KP, the Ukrainian Autocephalous

Orthodox Church (UAOC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), alongside smaller Orthodox churches and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church-UGCC. The completion of the process of an establishment of an autocephalous Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) in 2018-2019 (largely based on the unification of the first two churches) under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople triggered a schism between the Moscow and Constantinople Patriarchates, setting the stage for further ecclesial antagonisms in Ukraine.

On the eve of the invasion of Ukraine Patriarch Kirill addressed the Russian military with some standard just war rhetoric on the military vocation's importance in defending the Russian people and the "sacred borders" of the realm⁸; while on the day of the incursion advocated prayers for the prompt restoration of peace.⁹ However, two weeks after the war's start Patriarch Kirill explicitly set the strategic and military goals of the Russian military attack in a broader religious and 'metaphysical' context.¹⁰ The sermon associates the Russian military campaign with themes from the global culture wars, being waged in defence of traditional Christian norms in a 'struggle' that has not a physical, but a metaphysical significance and which is not limited to the sphere of international relations and politics, but bears on human salvation.

In anticipation of the Russian invasion, the Primate of the newly established autocephalous OCU, Metropolitan Epifanii, called for a united resistance to the Kremlin aggression in a fight for Ukrainian statehood until victory and a just peace.¹¹ The head of the UOC-MP appealed for the defence of Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity, imploring the Kremlin to halt the fratricidal war, which he strongly denounced as a 'repetition of Cain's sin', a war which cannot have 'justification from either God or man'.¹²

Patriarch Kirill blamed the conflict on ‘diabolical attacks and provocations’ and evil, dark and hostile external forces and enemies who have always strived to destroy the unity of Rus’ (described as the land which now includes ‘Russia and Ukraine and Belarus and other tribes and peoples’).¹³ In Ukraine Metropolitan Epifanii denounced the Russian political and ‘discredited’ clerical leaderships, praised the heroic resistance and ‘invincible spirit’ of the Ukrainian military,¹⁴ while framing the armed conflict in another set of metaphysical polarities as a ‘struggle of darkness against light, death with life, slavery against freedom’ in which Russia has become ‘the personification of darkness, the empire of evil, the tyranny of slavery’.¹⁵

Disapproval and critique of the invasion was voiced early in the ROC’s domestic and international dioceses. In March 2022, nearly 300 Russian Orthodox priests and deacons from around the world signed an open letter appealing for an immediate cessation of the fratricidal war and the military pressure on Ukraine.¹⁶ In early April 2022 hundreds of clergymen of the UOC-MP backed an appeal and petition, stated that they could not remain in canonical subordination to the Moscow Patriarchate. The appeal charged Patriarch Kirill with committing moral crimes, blessing Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine in violation of Christian moral norms and the ROC’s own regulatory documents.¹⁷ It also called for the establishment of an International Ecclesiastical Tribunal to denounce Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine, to scripturally and theologically assess Patriarch Kirill’s public statements on the war and depending on the review, to bring him to justice and ‘deprive him of the right to hold the patriarchal throne’. The appeal also called for a pan-Orthodox doctrinal assessment of the ‘Russian World’ ideology which concurrently was rejected as non-Orthodox in an international declaration signed by more than 1500 Orthodox clerics and theologians, who defined it as a ‘form of Orthodox ethno-phyletist religious fundamentalism, totalitarian in character’,

underpinning support for the war against Ukraine among significant part of the Moscow Patriarchate's hierarchy.¹⁸

In May 2022 a council of the UOC-MP declared its complete independence and autonomy from the Moscow Patriarchate, generally in protest of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and specifically, in response to Patriarch Kirill's support for the aggression, with the council's resolutions explicitly stating its condemnation of the war and disapproval of patriarch's pro-war stance.¹⁹ The council marked a new phase in Ukraine's ecclesial crisis whose other symptoms included the shifting ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the Russian-occupied areas of the country. As doubts continued to surround the loyalties of the newly self-announced autocephalous church clergy, a series of enacted and proposed Ukrainian government legislative measures targeted individual clergymen and the ecclesial body as a whole, deepening further the dilemmas and polemics regarding religious freedom and securitization in war-time Ukraine.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine may have received high-profile clerical support from Metropolitan Korniliy, Primate of the Russian Orthodox Old-Rite Church²⁰ but clergymen who vocally opposed the military incursion have been subjected to intimidation, prosecution and defrocking (Jenkins 2022; Katamadze 2023). In the Moscow Patriarchate-aligned dioceses outside Russia, critiques of the Moscow Patriarchate's pro-war stance were articulated in open letters and statements such as the those of Metropolitan John of Dubna (Archbishop of the Orthodox Churches of Russian Tradition in Western Europe)²¹ and Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (Cleven 2022). A Russian Orthodox parish in Amsterdam was the first to announce its departure from the patriarchate (over its promotion of the invasion of Ukraine) to affiliate with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Heneghan 2022). The head of the Lithuanian Orthodox Church, Archbishop

Innokentiy, similarly strongly condemned Russia's war on Ukraine and announced that his ecclesial body was determined to seek more independence from the Moscow Patriarchate²² (a Lithuanian Orthodox exarchate under the Ecumenical Patriarchate was established in February 2024.²³ Despite condemning the invasion of Ukraine and voicing disagreements with some of Patriarch Kirill's war-related statements²⁴, the Primate of the Estonian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Eugene, was still eventually ordered to leave the country, accused of consistent vindication and support of the Russian military aggression.²⁵

Critique and denunciations of the Moscow Patriarchate's advocacy of militarism was also growing in the wider Orthodox ecclesiastical sphere, as manifested, among others, by the public pronouncement of the then Archbishop Chrysostomos II of the autocephalous Orthodox Church of Cyprus.²⁶ The formal statement of the bishops of the Orthodox Church of Finland (an autonomous archdiocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople), headed by Archbishop Leo, similarly forcefully denounced the invasion of Ukraine.²⁷ The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew, denounced the invasion on theological and ecclesial grounds, while addressing also the ideological and historical notions exploited to justify the Russian military campaigns in Ukraine as a 'blatant violation of any notion of international law and legality'²⁸ The patriarch asserted that a war between Orthodox Christians is 'absolutely unacceptable'²⁹, emphasizing that the Russian state and church 'cooperated in the crime of aggression and shared the responsibility for the resulting crimes', hence inter-religious dialogue needs to focus on ways to 'neutralize the capacity of leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate to undermine unity and to theologially legitimize criminal behaviour.'³⁰ Patriarch Bartholomew highlighted the role of the ROC-promoted 'Russian World' ideology as a vital "instrument of

legitimization of Russian expansionism' in which the church's alliance with the state, made faith 'the backbone of the ideology' of Kremlin's regime.³¹

The Moscow Patriarchate's endorsement of the Russian military campaigns in Ukraine became the center of attention and enquiry also in the framework of the ecumenical movement, international relations and diplomacy. Early after the invasion the then acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Fr Ioan Sauca, implored Patriarch Kirill to intervene with the Russian authorities to halt the war³² but patriarch responded that the military confrontation was triggered by NATO's eastward expansion and Western 'large-scale geopolitical strategy' to weaken Russia and provoke Russian-Ukrainian animosity.³³ Amid calls to suspend ROC WCC membership over its legitimization of the war on Ukraine, at the 11th WCC General Assembly in June 2022 its Central Committee issued a formal statement which deplored 'the illegal and unjustifiable war inflicted on the people and sovereign state of Ukraine', rejected 'any misuse of religious language and authority to justify armed aggression' and urged 'dialogue and negotiations to secure a sustainable peace'.³⁴ Concurrently the United Kingdom (later followed by some other countries) sanctioned Patriarch Kirill over his public support for the invasion of Ukraine.³⁵

During a WCC delegation meeting with Patriarch Kirill in Moscow in October 2022³⁶ he claimed that his war-justification pronouncements have been used selectively and out of context. The patriarch agreed with the WCC delegation that war cannot be holy but maintained that self-defence and self-sacrifice for the lives of the others need to be regarded as a different issue. He affirmed the peace-making and dialogue-oriented role of the church in avoiding conflict and violence; indeed in earlier wartime sermons he had invoked the peace-bringing and -sustaining role of a unified Orthodox church in internecine war-beset Ukraine.³⁷ However, in

another sermon he clarified that this peace-and justice-bringing process could be achieved only through spiritual unification in the ‘Russian World’, while those who are not striving after such unity in Holy Russia will need to be persuaded by God’s power.³⁸ The principal message of the patriarch’s homilies and public statements was thus not implicitly or explicitly pacific; their clear intention was to formulate a new religio-military ideology suited to the ongoing Russian incursion and occupation of Ukrainian territories.

This intention is evident in sermons from the time of the ideological build-up to the invasion like the one in which, replicating earlier attempted formulations of Orthodox positions on just war and military martyrdom on the basis of John 15:13 (Stoyanov 2014: 186-187, 214, 221), Patriarch Kirill employs the gospel text to conceptualize a Christian military piety focused on the ‘holy feat’ of self-sacrifice on the battlefield.³⁹ But he developed the concept of John 15:13-based Orthodox military ethos further, exhorting soldiers to bravely fulfil their fighting duties, conscious of the scriptural promise that if they gave their life for the motherland and their friends, they ‘will be with God in His Kingdom, His glory, His eternal life’. In another war-time sermon the patriarch declared in another sermon that when soldiers pursuing their vocation fulfil their oath and duty, sacrifice themselves for others, they will have accomplished an act equivalent to sacrifice which ‘washes away all the sins’ they may have committed beforehand.⁴⁰

These statements display some continuities but also some drastic ruptures from earlier versions of attempts to formulate scripturally-based Eastern Orthodox warfare ideologies. They combine the notions of military battlefield martyrdom (which was largely rejected by the Byzantine Orthodox Church) and remission of sins granted in exchange for military service, a concept and practice not accepted or attested in historical Eastern Orthodox cultures (texts and commentaries in Stoyanov 2014: 178-180, 183-187). Forcing another ‘innovation’, Patriarch

Kirill has made a ‘Prayer for Holy Rus’ (beseeching God to grant war victory) mandatory at church services and priests who have refused to read it or have used ‘peace’ instead of ‘victory’ have faced punishment, defrocking and court proceedings.⁴¹

In still another radical move, Patriarch Kirill employed the notion of *katechon* (restraining force) in the framework of the Russian ongoing military campaign in explicitly apocalyptic terms, first, in a reference to the historic Roman Empire and/or the Church⁴² and then to present-day Russia.⁴³ Patriarch Kirill’s second oration called upon the ROC hierarchs to act as the core of the spiritual resistance to the powers of the Antichrist, inspire the military and mobilize to join the fight against the global evil, the ‘Antichrist movement’, in a struggle which would decide the future of the world. The apocalyptic rhetoric furnishes further evidence of the Moscow Patriarchate’s alignment with the fundamentalist, apocalyptic trends in Russian Orthodoxy, while advancing a justification of the invasion of Ukraine as a self-defence military operation (Perrie 2023).

The Moscow Patriarchate’s religious justification of Russian military campaigns in Ukraine, the anti-war clerical protests and initiatives across the ROC canonical territory, the deepening ecclesial crises in Ukraine, the defensive just war rhetoric and appeals by the newly autocephalous OCU⁴⁴ have had serious repercussions beyond the Eastern Orthodox world, especially regarding the ongoing just war and just peace reappraisals in Protestant and Catholic thinking. Symptomatically, in an early peace initiative Pope Francis communicated to Patriarch Kirill his views on the need for new Christian approaches to current military conflicts and the applicability of inherited just war criteria.⁴⁵ Disputes are bound to continue whether Russia’s invasion of Ukraine represents the first religious war of the 21st century (Leustan, 2023) or whether religion was largely employed as a rhetorical device for the war-justification and

sacralization of the new ‘Russian imperial project’ (Voyk 2022). The roles of the Moscow Patriarchate and Patriarch Kirill in providing the theological and ideological war-justification continue to be scrutinized and further appeals have demanded a comprehensive church document condemning the war in Ukraine and the ROC’s sanctioning and bestowal of ‘divine approval upon violence, war and aggression’.⁴⁶

This unfolding polemic and the ongoing ecclesial crises across the ‘canonical territories’ of the ROC and Ukrainian Orthodoxy represent the current most serious challenge to Eastern Orthodox traditional and modern stances on war and peace. The newly published Orthodox social doctrine document (commissioned and coordinated by the Ecumenical Patriarchate- Hart and Chryssavgis 2020), with its chapter on war and violence, offers a timely and important corrective to the ideologies of warfare and militarism evolving in post-Soviet Russian Orthodoxy. Other recent new perspectives on the problematic in the context of the theology of just peace (Semegnish, Chehadeh and Simion 2012), just peace-making and Christian realism (Hamalis 2018) and Orthodox social ethics and just peace-making (LeMasters 2010) similarly provide a possible blueprint for the involvement of the Eastern Orthodox churches and clerics in peace negotiations, peace-building and reconciliation in Ukraine. The *longue-durée* Eastern Orthodox experience in generating and sustaining diverse Christian patterns of peace-making (Stoyanov 2019; Smytsnyuk 2023) certainly could be mobilized in such possible conflict-resolution endeavours or in the frameworks of the shifting variables of evolving post-secular conflicts ((Uzlaner and Stoeckl 2020).

Based at SOAS, Yuri Stoyanov’s current assignments include visiting professorships at several universities in Europe and Asia; his past assignments include Oxford, British Academy and Wingate fellowships, and Directorship of the British Academy Kenyon Institute in Jerusalem. He has published widely on the interaction between Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the fields of ideologies of warfare and peace, sacred space, heterodoxy and apocalypticism and

their current manifestations His publications include *The Other God* (Yale UP, London & New York, 2000), *Defenders and Enemies of the True Cross* (Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, Vienna, 2011), *Fighting the Final Battle. Christian Ideologies of Apocalyptic Warfare* (Yale UP, forthcoming) as well as chapters, articles and anthologies of sources on Eastern Orthodox theologies of war and peace.

Email address: ys3@soas.ac.uk

REFERENCES

Adamsky, Dmitry. 2019. *Russian Nuclear Orthodoxy: Religion, Politics, and Strategy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Adamsky, Dmitry. 2020. 'Christ-Loving Warriors: Ecclesiastical Dimension of the Russian Military Campaign in Syria', *Problems of Post-Communism*, Volume 67:6: 433-445

Admiraal, Beth. 2009. 'A Religion for the Nation or a Nation for the Religion? Putin's Third Way for Russia,' In *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia*, edited by Marlene Laruelle, 203-218. London: Routledge.

Bacon, Edwin. 2002. 'Church and State in Contemporary Russia: Conflicting Discourses,' In *Russia After Communism*, edited by Rick Fawn and Stephen White, 97-116. London: Frank Cass.

Bartholomew I. 2003. *Cosmic Grace – Humble Prayer: The Ecological Vision of the Green Patriarch Bartholomew*, edited by John Chryssavgis, Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans.

Blitt, Robert C. 2011. 'Russia's 'Orthodox' Foreign Policy: The Growing Influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Shaping Russia's Policies Abroad.' *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, 33/2: 363-460.

Cleven, Thoralf. 2022. 'Metropolit Mark zum Krieg in der Ukraine: „Ich traue den Bildern nicht mehr“', May 29, 2022, *Hannoversche Allgemeine*,

<https://www.haz.de/politik/russisch-orthodoxe-kirche-warum-sind-gebete-munition-metropolit-mark->

[WHWA3PWSKBC2ZJE57NARAHHCY4.html?fbclid=IwAR1hZ_8TcJnJd6gIKHbz7HBersHr80H1Kdp-k6R6TNMaXFpe8fJcHylUVE](https://www.haz.de/politik/russisch-orthodoxe-kirche-warum-sind-gebete-munition-metropolit-mark-WHWA3PWSKBC2ZJE57NARAHHCY4.html?fbclid=IwAR1hZ_8TcJnJd6gIKHbz7HBersHr80H1Kdp-k6R6TNMaXFpe8fJcHylUVE)

Coman, Viorel. 2023. 'Critical Analysis of the Moscow Patriarchate Vision on the Russian–Ukrainian Military Conflict: Russkiy Mir and Just War', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 76 (2023) 332–344.

Chawryło, Katarzyna. 2015. *The Altar and Throne Alliance. The Russian Orthodox Church vs. the Government in Russia*. Warsaw: Centre for Eastern Studies.

Curanović, Alicja. 2012. *The Religious Factor in Russia's Foreign Policy*. London: Routledge.

Curanović, Alicja. 2015. *The Guardians of Traditional Values: Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church in the Quest for Status*. Washington DC: Transatlantic Academy.

Curanović, Alicja. 2019. 'Conventional Wisdom and Contemporary Russian Messianism. A Critical Verification', *Vestnik MGIMO-Universiteta* 64:1: 28-44.

Curanović, Alicja. 2021. *The Sense of Mission in Russian Foreign Policy. Destined for Greatness!* London: Routledge.

Curanović, Alicja. 2024. 'Mission Narrative in Russian Foreign Policy. The Comparative Perspective,' In *Exploring Russia's Exceptionalism in International Politics*, edited by Raymond Taras, 33-53. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

Duncan, Peter J. S. 2000. *Russian Messianism: Third Rome, Revolution, Communism and After*. London: Routledge.

Engström, Maria. 2014. 'Contemporary Russian Messianism and New Russian Foreign Policy', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 35:3 (2014): 356-379

Garrard, John and Carol Garrard. 2008. *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hamalis, Perry T. 2018. 'Just Peacemaking and Christian Realism: Possibilities for Moving Beyond the Impasse in Orthodox Christian War Ethics', In *Orthodox Christian Perspectives on War*, edited by in Perry T. Hamalis and Valerie A. Karras, 335-361. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018.

Hart, David B. and John Chryssavgis (eds). 2020. *For the Life of the World: Towards A Social Ethos of the Orthodox Church*, Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press;

<https://www.goarch.org/social-ethos?fbclid=IwAR2RSPrgYRhPfAgT9p2iIQkd9wqtOYJ74Gtjnpmyq9xYdxshwqr6U1FJFiY>

Heneghan, Tom. 2022. 'Russian Orthodox Parishes in Europe Pressured from Both Sides as War Rages in Ukraine', *Religion News Service*, March 14, 2022,

<https://religionnews.com/2022/03/14/russian-orthodox-parishes-in-europe-pressured-from-both-sides-as-war-rages-in-ukraine/>

Hovorun, Cyril. 2022. 'Russian Church and Ukrainian War.' *The Expository Times*, 134/1:1-10.

Hovorun, Cyril. 2023. 'Can "Ecumenism as Usual" Be Possible in the Wake of the War in Ukraine?', *Ecumenical Trends* 52:5: 25–31

Jenkins, Jack .2022. ‘Russian Priest Speaks out Against War in Ukraine despite threats’, *Washington Post*, April 8, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2022/04/08/russia-ukraine-war-priest-police/>

Katamadze, Maria. 2023 ‘Anti-war Russian Clergy Face Punishment’, *Deutsche Welle*, October 15, 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/like-partisans-anti-war-russian-clergy-face-punishment/a-67103511>

Knorre, Boris, 2016. ‘The Culture of War and Militarization within Political Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet Region’, *Transcultural Studies* 12: 15-38.

Knorre, Boris and Aleksei Zygmunt, 2020. “‘Militant Piety’ in 21st-Century Orthodox Christianity: Return to Classical Traditions or Formation of a New Theology of War?’, *Religions* 11:2.

Knox, Zoe. 2005. *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Russia after Communism*, Routledge: London, 2005.

Knox, Zoe and Anastasia Mitrofanova. 2014. ‘The Russian Orthodox Church.’ In *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Lucian Leustean, 38-66, London: Routledge.

Kurki, Pär Gustafsson, 2024. *Apostles of Violence: The Russian Orthodox Church's Role in Russian Militarism*, Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency.

LeMasters, Philip. 2010. ‘A Dynamic Praxis of Peace: Orthodox Social Ethics and Just Peacemaking’, *Revista Teologica*, 4:1: 69–82.

Leustean, Lucian N. 2023. ‘Is Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine still a Religious War?’, *London School of Economics*, February 8, 2023, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2023/02/is-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-still-a-religious-war/>

Lewis, Charlie. 2020. 'Contemporary Russian Messianism under Putin and Russian Foreign Policy in Ukraine and Syria', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 98:3: 531-559

McGlynn, Jade. 2021. *Defender of the Faiths? How the Russian Government Uses Religious Diplomacy*. London: The Henry Jackson Society.

Østbø, Jardar. 2016. *The New Third Rome: Readings of a Russian Nationalist Myth*. Stuttgart: Ibidem.

Papkova, Irina, 2011. *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics*. Washington/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Payne, Daniel P. 2010. 'Spiritual Security, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Russian Foreign Ministry: Collaboration or Cooptation?,' *Journal of Church and State*, 52:4: 712-727

Perrie, Maureen. 2023. 'Apocalypse Delayed: Patriarch Kirill on Restraining the Antichrist in Ukraine', *Public Orthodoxy*, January 23, 2023,
<https://publicorthodoxy.org/2023/01/23/apocalypse-delayed-restraining-antichrist/>

Petro, Nicolai. 2015. 'Russia's Orthodox Soft Power', *Carnegie Council for International Affairs*, March 2015, http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/articles_papers_reports/727

Semegnish Asfaw, Alexios Chehadeh and Marian Gh. Simion. (eds.). 2012. *Just Peace: Orthodox Perspectives*, Geneva: WWC Publications and Ayer, MA: Institute for Peace Studies in Eastern Christianity.

Shchipkov, Aleksand. 2022. 'Derusifikatsiia i teologicheskaia voina', *Radonezh*, May 16. 2022,
<https://radonezh.ru/2022/05/16/aleksandr-shchipkov-derusifikaciya-i-teologicheskaya-voyna>

- Shnirelman, Victor. 2019. 'Russian Neoconservatism and Apocalyptic Imperialism,' In *Contemporary Russian Conservatism: Problems, Paradoxes and Dangers*, edited by Mikhail Suslov and Dmitry Uzlaner, 347–378. Leiden: Brill.
- Smytsnyuk, Pavlo. 2023. 'The War in Ukraine as a Challenge for Religious Communities: Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Prospects for Peacemaking', *Studia UBB - Theologia Catholica Latina*, 68:1: 26-70.
- Stoeckl, Kristina. 2014. *The Russian Orthodox Church and Human Rights*. New York: Routledge.
- Stoeckl, Kristina. 2016. 'The Russian Orthodox Church as Moral Norm Entrepreneur.' *Religion, State and Society*, 44:2:132-151.
- Stoeckl, Kristina. 2020. 'Three Models of Church-State Relations in Contemporary Russia.' In *Constitutions and Religion, Research Handbooks in Comparative Constitutional Law Series*, edited by Susanna Mancini, 237–251. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Stoeckl, Kristina. 2020a. *Russian Orthodoxy and Secularism*. Leiden: Brill.
- Stoeckl, Kristina. 2022. 'Russia's Spiritual Security Doctrine as a Challenge to European Comprehensive Security Approaches', *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 20:4: 37-44.
- Stoyanov, Yuri. 2009. 'Norms of War in Eastern Orthodox Christianity,' In *World Religions and Norms of War*, edited by Vesselin Popovski, Gregory M. Reichberg and Nicholas Turner, 166–219. Tokyo, New York and Paris: United Nations University Press.

Stoyanov, Yuri. 2014. 'Eastern Orthodoxy and the Ethics of War', In *Religion, War and Ethics: A Sourcebook*, edited by Greg M. Reichberg and Henryk Syse, 164-235. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stoyanov, Yuri. 2019. 'Role of Religious Institutions: Peace in Eastern Orthodoxy', In *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace*, edited by A. Kulnazarova and V. Popovski, 461-477, Palgrave Macmillan: London

Suslov, Mikhail. 2024. 'Messianic Discourses and the Ideology of Putinism', in Taras, *Exploring Russia's Exceptionalism*, 82-99.

Uzlaner, Dmitry and Stoeckl, Kristina. 2020. *Postsecular Conflict – Debating Tradition in Russia and the United States*. Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press

Uzlaner, Dimitry and Kristina Stoeckl. 2022. *The Moralists International: Russia in the Global Culture War*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Voyk, Dmytro. 2022. 'Religious Arguments and Political Goals Behind the Russian-Ukrainian War', *Canopy Forum*, June 23, 2022, <https://canopyforum.org/2022/06/23/religious-arguments-and-political-goals-behind-the-russian-ukranian-war/>

¹ A selection of WW2 Russian Orthodox clerical sermons and statements were assembled in *The Truth about Religion in Russia* (London: Hutchinson, 1944).

² *The Orthodox Church and Society: The Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*. (Belleville, Mich.: St. Innocent, Firebird Publishers, 2000).

³ ‘Vystuplenie Svyateishogo Patriarkha Kirilla na torsheztvennom otkrytii III Asamblei Russkogo mira,’ *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, November 3, 2009, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/print/928446.html>

⁴ ‘Patriarkh Kirill: Voennoe uchastie Rossii v Sirii dolzhno prinesti dolgozhdannyi mir’, *Komsomol’skaya Pravda*, September 30, 2015, <https://www.kp.ru/daily/26439/3310649/> Generally, on the Russian ecclesiastic involvement in the Russian military campaigns in Syria, see Adamsky 2020.

⁵ ‘Vsevolod Chaplin ob operatsii VVS RF v Sirii: Bor’ba s terrorizmom – svyashchenna’, *Ren. TV*, September 30, 2015, <https://ren.tv/news/v-mire/50886-vsevolod-chaplin-ob-operatsii-vvs-rf-v-sirii-borba-s-terrorizmom-sviashchenna>

⁶ ‘His Holiness Patriarch Kirill calls Primates of Local Orthodox Churches to Raise Their Voice in Defence of Orthodox Christians in the East of Ukraine.’ *The Russian Orthodox Church Department for External Church Relations*, August 18, 2014, <https://mospat.ru/en/news/51174/>; ‘Russkaya pravoslavnaya tserkov’ prizvala vlasti Ukrainy ostanovit’ goneniya na veruyushchikh.’ *Informatsionniy portal fonda “Russkiy mir”*, <https://russkiymir.ru/news/253084/>

⁷ ‘Patriarch Filaret to Patriarch Bartholomew: Moscow Cynically Lies about the Events in Eastern Ukraine.’ *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, September 1, 2014. https://risu.ua/en/patriarch-filaret-to-patriarch-bartholomew-moscow-cynically-lies-about-the-events-in-eastern-ukraine_n70497

⁸ ‘V Den’ zashchitnika Otechestva Svyateishiy Patriarkh Kirill vozlozhil venok k mogile Neizvestnogo soldata u Kremlevskoi steny’, February 23, 2022, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5903402.html>

⁹ ‘Obrashchenie Svyateishogo Patriarkha Kirilla k arhipastyryam, pastyryam, monashestvuyushchim i vsem vernym chadom Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi’, February 24, 2022, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5903795.html>

¹⁰ ‘Patriarshaya propoved’ v Nedelyu syropustnuyu posle Liturgii v Khrame Khrista Spasitelya’, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, March 6, 2022, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5906442.html>

¹¹ ‘Metropolitan Epifanii Called for the Protection of Ukraine from Russian Aggression’, *Orthodox Church of Ukraine*, February 22, 2022, <https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/mytropolyt-epifanij-zaklykav-do-zahystu-ukrayiny-vid-rosijskoyi-agresiyi/>

¹² ‘Appeal of His Beatitude Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine Onufriy to the faithful and the citizens of Ukraine’, February 25, 2022, *Ukrainian Orthodox Church*, <https://news.church.ua/2022/02/27/appeal-beatitude-metropolitan-kyiv-ukraine-onufriy-faithful-citizens-ukraine/?lang=en#2024-02-04>

¹³ ‘His Holiness Patriarch Kirill Calls on the Faithful to Pray for Peace and Unity of the Church’, February 27, 2022, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/en/db/text/5904398.html>

¹⁴ ‘Zvernennia Mitropolita Epifaniia (27 liutogo 2022 r.)’, *Orthodox Church of Ukraine*, February 27, 2022, <https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/zvernennya-mytropolyta-epifaniya-27-lyutogo-2022-r/>

¹⁵ ‘Propovid Blazhenniishogo Mitropolita Kiyvskogo i vsiei Ukraini Epifaniia u drugu nedili Velikogo postu’, *Orthodox Church of Ukraine*, March 20, 2022, <https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/osud-i-proklyattya-nemyloserdna-kara-vid-vsevysnogo-ochikuyut-na-dushogubiv-i-vbyvts-bo-vony-polyubyly-zlo-i-temryavu-mytropolyt-epifanij/>

¹⁶ ‘Obrashchenie svyashchennosluzhitelei russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi s pryzvom k primireniyu i prekrashcheniyu voiny’, https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yOGuXjdFQ1A3BQaEEQr744cwDzmSQ1qePaaBi4z6q3w/viewform?edit_requested=true

¹⁷ Text reproduced in https://risu.ua/en/international-ecclesiastical-tribunal-for-cyрил---almost-200-priests-of-the-uoc-mp-demand_n128244; <https://hrwf.eu/ukraine-russia-hundreds-of-priests-of-the-moscow-patriarchate-in-ukraine-condemn-the-role-of-russian-patriarch-kirill-in-the-war/>

¹⁸ Co-published by the Orthodox Christian Studies Centre at Fordham University and the Volos Academy for Theological Studies: *Public Orthodoxy*, March 13, 2022, <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2022/03/13/a-declaration-on-the-russian-world-russkii-mir-teaching/> The declaration provoked a response from the First Deputy Chairperson of Moscow Patriarchate’s Synodal Department for relations with Society and the Media (Shchipkov 2022).

¹⁹ ‘Resolutions of the Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of May 27, 2022’, *Ukrainian Orthodox Church*, <https://news.church.ua/2022/05/28/resolutions-council-ukrainian-orthodox-church-may-27-2022/?lang=en#2024-02-04>

²⁰ ‘Mitropolit Korniliy nazval spetsoperatsiyu na Ukraine ispytaniem tverdosti dukha i very’, March 6, 2022, <https://lenta.ru/news/2022/03/06/kornilii/>

²¹ ‘Open Letter to His Holiness Kyril, Patriarch of Moscow’, *Archdiocese of Orthodox Churches of Russian Tradition in Western Europe*, March 9, 2022, <https://archeveche.eu/en/open-letter-to-his-holiness-kyril-patriarch-of-moscow/>

²² ‘Lithuanian Orthodox Church Condemns Russia’s War on Ukraine’, *Lithuanian Radio and Television*, March 18, 2022, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1647975/lithuanian-orthodox-church-condemns-russia-s-war-on-ukraine>

²³ ‘Lithuania’s New Orthodox Community Receives State Recognition’, *Lithuanian Radio and Television*, February 8, 2024, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/2191317/lithuania-s-new-orthodox-community-receives-state-recognition>

²⁴ ‘Head of Russian Orthodox Church in Estonia Condemns Ukraine Invasion’, *ERR News. Estonian Public Broadcasting*, October 12, 2022, <https://news.err.ee/1608747838/head-of-russian-orthodox-church-in-estonia-condemns-ukraine-invasion>

²⁵ ‘Russian Orthodox Church Leader Metropolitan Eugene leaving Estonia Tuesday’, *ERR News. Estonian Public Broadcasting*, February 5, 2024, <https://news.err.ee/1609244574/russian-orthodox-church-leader-metropolitan-eugene-leaving-estonia-tuesday>

²⁶ ‘Cyprus Orthodox Church Head Says 'No Excuse' for Ukraine War’, April 12, 2022, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220412-cyprus-orthodox-church-head-says-no-excuse-for-ukraine-war>

²⁷ ‘The Orthodox Church of Finland (EP) has Reacted Quickly and Effectively to the War in Ukraine’, March 9, 2022, *Orthodox Parish of Helsinki*, <https://www.hos.fi/en/the-orthodox-church-of-finland-ep-has-reacted-quickly-and-effectively-to-the-war-in-ukraine/>

²⁸ ‘The Ecumenical Patriarch Condemns the Unprovoked Russian Invasion of Ukraine and Expresses His Solidarity to the Suffering Ukrainian People’, February 24, 2022, *Ecumenical Patriarchate*, <https://ec-patr.org/the-ecumenical-patriarch-condemns-the-unprovoked-russian-invasion-of-ukraine-and-expresses-his-solidarity-to-the-suffering-ukrainian-people/>

²⁹ ‘Patriarch Bartholomew Says Inter-Orthodox war is "Absolutely Unacceptable", *La Croix international*, March 31, 2022, <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/patriarch-bartholomew-says-inter-orthodox-war-is-absolutely-unacceptable/15876>

³⁰ ‘Ecumenical Patriarch: Russian Church Shares Blame for “Crimes” in Ukraine, *Reuters*, March 22, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ecumenical-patriarch-russian-church-shares-blame-crimes-ukraine-2023-03-22>

³¹ ‘Speech by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Abu Dhabi’, *RISU. Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, December 22, 2022, https://risu.ua/en/speech-by-ecumenical-patriarch-bartholomew-in-abu-dhabi_n134828. For the Moscow Patriarchate’s polemical response, see ‘Comments by DECR Communication Service on Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople’s speech at World Policy Conference (Abu Dhabi, 9 December 2022)’, *The Russian Orthodox Church Department for External Church Relations*, February 3, 2023, <https://mospat.ru/en/news/90022/>

³² ‘WCC Acting General Secretary to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow: “Raise up Your Voice so That the War Can be Stopped’, *World Council of Churches*, March 2, 2022, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/wcc-acting-general-secretary-to-patriarch-kirill-of-moscow-raise-up-your-voice-so-that-the-war-can-be-stopped>

³³ ‘Response by H. H. Patriarch Kirill of Moscow to Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca’, *World Council of Churches*, March 10, 2022, <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/response-by-hh-patriarch-kirill-of-moscow-to-rev-prof-dr-ioan-sauca>

³⁴ ‘WCC Central Committee Statement on the War in Ukraine’, *World Council of Churches*, June 18, 2022, <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-central-committee-statement-on-the-war-in-ukraine> (the ROC WCC membership was retained; on the WCC General Assembly debates and decisions, see Hovorun 2023).

³⁵ ‘Consolidated List of Financial Sanctions Targets in the UK’, *Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation HM Treasury*, June 16, 2022, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65c2535612d5f1000d375136/Russia.pdf>

³⁶ ‘WCC Communique: His Holiness Patriarch Kirill Meets with WCC Acting General Secretary’, *World Council of Churches*, October 19, 2022, <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-communique-his-holiness-patriarch-kirill-meets-with-wcc-acting-general-secretary>

³⁷ ‘Patriarshaya propoved' v prazdnik Blagoveshcheniya Presvyatoi Bogoroditsy posle Liturgii v Khrame Khrista Spasitelya’, April 7, 2022, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5915151.html>

³⁸ ‘Patriarshya propoved' v den' pamiati svyatiteley Moskovskikh posle Liturgii v Uspenskom sobore Moskovskogo Kremlya’, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, October 18, 2022, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5968673.html>

³⁹ ‘Patriarshee slovo posle Liturgii po sluchayu pervoi godovshchiny osvyashcheniya glavnogo khrama Vooruzhennykh sil RF’, June 13, 2021, http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5819726.html?fbclid=IwAR1dqQR9tMNF_ikcD8_MudGpT8D367ZQ4LcuF4TIrwBF7ISo8oS-n8O30S8

⁴⁰ ‘Patriarshaya propoved' v Nedelyu 15-iu po Pyatidesiatnitse posle Liturgii v Aleksandro-Neviskom skitu’, September 25, 2022, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5962628.html>

⁴¹ ‘Thousands back priest in Ukraine stand’, *Church Times*, January 9, 2024, <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2024/19-january/news/world/thousands-back-priest-in-ukraine-stand>

⁴² ‘Patriarshaya propoved' v prazdnik Blagoveshcheniya’.

⁴³ ‘Svyateishii Patriarkh Kirill: Ot budushchego nashego Otechestva i nashei Tserkvi zavisit, v polnom smysle slova, budushchee mira’, *Official Site of the Moscow Patriarchate*, November 20, 2022, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5978803.html>

⁴⁴ ‘Metropolitan Augustine: Church Blesses the Faithful to Defend their Land’, *Union of Orthodox Journalists*, January 24, 2023, <https://spzh.news/en/news/72071-metropolitan-augustine-church-blesses-the-faithful-to-defend-their-land>

⁴⁵ 'Pope to Russian Patriarch: "Church uses language of Jesus, not of politics"', March 16, 2022, *Vatican News*, <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-03/pope-francis-calls-patriarch-kirill-orthodox-patriarch-ukraine.html>

⁴⁶ 'Open Letter: War in Ukraine and the Russian Church', *The Orthodox Christian Studies Center of Fordham University, Public Orthodoxy*, February 20, 2024, <https://publicorthodoxy.org/good-reads/open-letter-ukraine-war/>