

The Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)¹ is a highly visible institution in Russia, and arguably the most prominent and influential religious or cultural body. The Orthodox Church figures prominently in various discussions as the driving force behind Russia's post-Soviet renewal and recovery. Surveys show that Russians trust the Orthodox Church more than any other public institution, including law courts, trade unions, mass media, the military, the police and the government.² Estimates of the number of self-identified Orthodox adherents range from 50 million, which amounts to slightly more than one third of Russia's population, to 70 million, or roughly one half of the population.³ A leading newspaper consistently ranks Patriarch Aleksii II, head of the Moscow Patriarchate, the governing body of the Orthodox Church, in the top fifteen of the country's most influential political figures.⁴ These indicators confirm that the Orthodox Church has a significant role in Russia's post-Soviet development. This is widely accepted by commentators both within and without the Orthodox Church, and within and without Russia.⁵

Russian nationalism has been a prominent feature of Russian polity and society since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. James Billington, a long-standing observer of Russian culture and society, noted that 'nationalistic views of Russian identity' were increasingly popular in the 2000s and 'offered ideological cement for a new autocracy should Russia's fragile democratic institutions break down or social violence break out'.⁶ An understanding of the place of Russian Orthodoxy in nationalistic interpretations of Russia's trajectory is essential to appreciate both political and public discussions on the country's post-Soviet path.

The diverse groups that constitute the xenophobic nationalist right almost always have one common feature: they draw on Russia's traditional faith, Russian Orthodoxy, for added legitimacy.⁷ Regardless of where on the political spectrum they lie, nationalists seek the rehabilitation of Orthodox spirituality in the life of their country and view Orthodoxy as a unique faith with a universal role. The Orthodox Church is highly visible

in extreme nationalist's rhetoric, myths and imagery. It is not possible within the confines of this article to explore the religious roots of Russian nationalism; suffice it to say that nationalists draw heavily, in some cases primarily, on Orthodoxy for support of their platforms.

This article will focus on the response of Patriarch Aleksii II to extreme nationalism in the Russian Orthodox Church. It will also consider the implications of extreme nationalism for the exploitation of Russian Orthodoxy by xenophobic figures and movements. There is support from elements within the Church, including some prelates, for maintaining an intimate link between Orthodoxy and a narrowly defined, exclusive national identity. This article will examine three instances in which the Patriarch has made concessions to the right wing of the Church: the controversy surrounding an address to rabbis in New York City in 1991; his response to the xenophobic rhetoric of a high-profile Church dignitary; and his silencing of liberal Orthodox clergy. These cases demonstrate the Patriarch's reluctance to oppose nationalists' attempts to appropriate Orthodoxy in order to supplement extremist ideologies. This article will also consider the reasons for these concessions and conclude with a brief analysis of the implications of this response for the Orthodox Church's position in post-Soviet Russia.

Aleksandr Verkhovsky, a foremost authority on religion and nationalism in Russia, has argued that the ideological tendency against liberalism and modernism in the Orthodox Church is best described as 'Russian Orthodox fundamentalism', rather than nationalism, as it draws on nostalgia for a mythologised past based on the Orthodox monarchy of pre-revolutionary Russia.⁸ Given that the complexities of defining fundamentalism are no less than of defining extreme nationalism, this article will employ the descriptor 'extreme nationalism' to refer to an unquestioning and aggressive loyalty to the idealised Orthodox nation, which is against liberalism, modernism, pluralism and individualism and other tendencies often associated in Russia with 'the West'.

Extreme Nationalism in the Orthodox Church

'Your Prophets are Our Prophets'

The strength of extreme nationalism in the Russian Orthodox Church became clear after Patriarch Aleksii II delivered a speech to rabbis in New York City in November 1991, one month before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The speech was entitled '*Vashi proroki – nashi proroki*' ('Your Prophets are Our Prophets'), which gives a good indication of the speech's tenor. The Patriarch acknowledged the common heritage of Christianity and Judaism, stating that the unity of Jews and Christians has a spiritual foundation conducive to close cooperation. He cited celebrated Orthodox prelates and Russian religious philosophers who denounced anti-Semitism. Significantly, the Patriarch noted in his speech that an 'anti-Semitic mood' had emerged in Russia which was 'widespread among extremists and rightist chauvinistic groups'. The Patriarch vowed to fight anti-Semitism so that 'our Jewish brothers and sisters' can live in security and peace.⁹

The speech was not published in the official Orthodox Church press, presumably because the Moscow Patriarchate knew that this gesture of conciliation would be censured by some elements in the Church. The speech was printed in the papers *Evreiskaia gazeta* (*Jewish Gazette*) and *Moskovskie novosti* (*Moscow News*). The Patriarch's speech prompted an outcry from ecclesiastical conservatives, especially from the monastic community. A number of monasteries refused to commemorate the Patriarch in the usual place in the litany.¹⁰ Numerous open letters were sent to the Patriarch and the media condemning the speech. The most significant of these was published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (*Soviet Russia*), a large-circulation conservative daily. Its signatories claimed the speech proved that the Patriarch was being manipulated and controlled by 'certain powers' which sought to undermine the interests of Russia and her Church. The letter criticized the Patriarch's ecumenical sympathies, warned that such moves would cause a schism in the Church and urged him to disassociate himself and the Church from the 'scandalous' speech.¹¹

The open letter was signed by leading figures of the nationalist wing of the Church, including editors of Orthodox publications and representatives of the *Soiuz pravoslavnikh bratstv* (Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods), a lay organization. The Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods was formed in October 1990, at the initiative of Patriarch Aleksii II, to unite laity and to coordinate lay missionary, educational and charitable work.¹² The Patriarch was appointed its honorary patron. A large number of lay organisations all across the country were soon united under the umbrella of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods. Shortly after its inception, extreme nationalist organisations came to dominate the lay Union, some of them claiming that the last Tsar and his family were victims of Jewish ritual murder, condemning ecumenism as heresy, calling for the defense of Russia from Catholic and Protestant expansionism and opposing any attempts at Church reform. One such organisation is the Union of Christian Regeneration. The masthead of its newspaper *Russkoe voskresenie* (*Russian resurrection*) depicts an Orthodox cross alongside a swastika and Hitler's profile.

At the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods' third congress in mid-1992, the Patriarch was censured for his speech in New York City and prelates involved in ecumenical projects were condemned as Judeo-masons. There was no response to this from the Church's leadership. One year later, at the Union's fourth congress, the Union expressed loyalty to the Patriarch, a reconciliation that Pospelovsky regards as an achievement 'at the expense of his [the Patriarch's] total silence on controversial subjects and his failure to censure the extremists in the church'.¹³ According to Leonid Simonovich, leader of the Union since August 2000, the Union has since condemned the Patriarch on only two occasions, one of them when the Patriarch censured an attack on a synagogue in Moscow and likened it to an assault on a house of God.¹⁴ This instance further demonstrates the anti-Semitic character of the Union's leadership. In the mid-1990s the Moscow Patriarchate attempted to purge the Union's leadership of extremist elements, but it remained dominated by xenophobic tendencies and an active and highly visible participant in extreme nationalistic circles. As the most prominent lay organisation in the country, the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods influences the way the Orthodox Church is perceived within and without the Orthodox Church, and within and without Russia.

The controversy surrounding Patriarch Aleksii II's speech 'Your Prophets are Our Prophets' happened soon after his election as Patriarch on 7 June 1990. At the time, he was renowned for his commitment to inter-denominational cooperation and was Chairman of the Conference of European Churches, a fellowship of Orthodox and Protestant churches across Europe dedicated to ecumenism. He was regarded the moderate candidate for the post.¹⁵ Despite Aleksii's involvement in ecumenical projects, early in his leadership, and in the Orthodox Church's post-Soviet life, the Patriarch realised the limits of tolerance and the extent of extreme nationalist sympathies within the Church. The backlash against moves to strengthen Jewish-Orthodox relations was a turning point for Patriarch Aleksii II. He has not delivered such an overt statement of conciliation since, nor has he ignored the reactionary wing of the Church.

Metropolitan Ioann of St Petersburg and Ladoga

Metropolitan Ioann emerged as a leading figure for extremist forces in Russia. He was a high-profile Church dignitary and occupied important posts in the hierarchy. Ioann, who died aged 68 in November 1995, was a permanent member of the Holy Synod and became Metropolitan of St Petersburg and Ladoga after Aleksii II vacated the position upon his election as Patriarch.

Metropolitan Ioann published more than two dozen articles in nationalist newspapers like *Den'* (Day, later *Zavtra* [Tomorrow]) and *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, in which he was a regular contributor to the insert *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Rus'). In his articles Ioann frequently referred to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the infamous forgery that is the most well-known work of modern anti-Semitism. Ioann lent legitimacy to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which was reprinted in large editions in Russia in the early-mid 1990s. After noting the controversy surrounding this forgery, Ioann wrote: 'whether *The Protocols* are genuine or not, the 80 years that have gone by since their publication provide abundant material for reflection, because world history, as if obeying the command of an invisible dictator, has submissively pursued its capricious course in astonishingly detailed correspondence with the plans set forth in their pages'.¹⁶ Ioann continued to quote extensively from *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to demonstrate that the Jewish conspiracies described within were being played out in Russia. Though

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion have long been popular with extreme nationalist Orthodox figures, this was the first public defense of this work by a prelate. The fact that anti-Semitic literature, including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, can be purchased from kiosks in some Orthodox churches in Russia indicates receptiveness to Ioann's views.

Catholicism and Protestantism were also attacked in Metropolitan Ioann's numerous articles. He wrote: 'Russia's enemies repeatedly devised cunning plans to enslave her... It was felt that the most reliable ways of doing this was to deprive Russia of her religious distinctiveness and the sacred traditions of her Orthodox faith, "dissolving" them in Western Catholicism'.¹⁷ The 'West' is a standard enemy in extreme nationalists' fulminations. The West is perceived to be the source of licentiousness, individualism and depravity, and Western Christianity is regarded one transmitter of these ills.

The links between Metropolitan Ioann and leading representatives of the extreme nationalist movement were overt. *Sovetskaia Rossiia* reported that at a meeting to discuss Ioann's regular contribution to the newspaper there were present the leaders of the National Salvation Front, a prominent coalition of nationalists and hard-line communists, and the chief editors of *Den'* and *Sovremennik*, two of the most prominent extremist newspapers.¹⁸ In his obituary, the editors of *Sovetskaia Rossiia* predicted that Ioann's words '...would return to us again many times... With their inextinguishable force of love and faith, they will overthrow Russia's enemies and inspire Russians to heroic deeds'.¹⁹ Since Ioann's death in 1995, extremists have called for his canonisation. Responsibility for a grenade attack on the US Embassy in Moscow in 1999, part of a campaign against western targets to protest NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, was claimed by an extremist group *Skif* (Scythian), founded in honour of Metropolitan Ioann.²⁰ The extreme nationalist Oleg Platonov cited Ioann as the inspiration for his book *Holy Rus'*, in which he praises Josef Stalin for executing some 80,000 Jewish Bolsheviks allegedly plotting to impose Jewish control over Russia. Platonov's publications include *The Riddle of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1999) and *The Illicit Secret: Judaism and Masons against Christian Civilisation* (1998).²¹

Patriarch Aleksii II did not condemn the works of Metropolitan Ioann. The chief rabbi of Moscow appealed to the Patriarch to discipline him, to no avail.²² There was no official denouncement of Ioann's publications invoking *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* or of his prominence in extremist media. The Patriarch did instruct the head of the Church's Publications Department not to print any more of Ioann's work in the official Church press, but this was in an unofficial memorandum.²³ This demonstrates that the Patriarch was sufficiently aware of the tenor of Ioann's articles and of his mediums to be concerned about how his xenophobic views would affect the image of the Patriarchate. But Aleksii did not publicly distance the Church from his viewpoints.

Liberal Clergy

The disciplining of liberal clergy is another example of Patriarch Aleksii II's concessions to the Church's right wing. There is a significant movement for *perestroika*, or reconstruction, in the Russian Orthodox Church. Liberal clergy openly oppose nationalist elements in the Church and promote Orthodoxy on the basis of outreach, openness and ecumenical dialogue. Inspired by the priest Alexander Men', murdered in September 1990, liberal clergy emphasize the importance of theological education, grassroots work in parishes and the strengthening of relations with non-Orthodox religions and denominations. Their congregations, mostly in St Petersburg and Moscow, are generally large and characterised by younger, more intellectual worshipers.²⁴

The Patriarch has silenced some of the most high-profile liberal priests. Father Georgii Kochetkov, for example, is well known for his evangelism and widely regarded as the leading representative of the liberal 'movement' within the Church. He is committed to making Orthodox theology more accessible and is known for the large number of adults that have come to the church as a result of his ministry. His initiatives have included the reading of the gospel and other parts of the liturgy in Russian, rather than in Old Church Slavonic (which cannot be understood by the average church-goer) without the permission of the Patriarch. The Patriarch responded by moving Kochetkov to a smaller parish which could not accommodate his congregation.

In response to numerous appeals from powerful members of the Orthodox Church hierarchy and from traditionalist clergy to review Father Kochetkov's preaching and publications Patriarch Aleksii II ordered the formation of a Theological Commission. Ominously, many members of the commission published a collection of essays condemning Kochetkov, so that, according to one frequent commentator on Church affairs, 'their prejudice was obvious to anyone who could read'.²⁵ In March 2001, the Commission reported that Kochetkov's teachings were 'non-Orthodox' and his publications were 'subjected to the influence of rationalism' and, they wrote, displayed a 'charismaticism characteristic of various Protestant denominations'.²⁶ It could be concluded that this judgment was inspired by Kochetkov's emphasis on the role of the parish for educational and charitable work and his reluctance to accept unquestioningly the Church hierarchy's decrees. Father Kochetkov was labeled a schismatic and banned from ministry.

There is a sharp contrast between Patriarch Aleksii II's disciplining of liberal priests and his weak response to extreme nationalists. Just as the Patriarch did not denounce extremism within the Church, so he also did not denounce attacks on liberal priests and their parishioners. For example, a gang of monks wrecked Kochetkov's theological school, ransacking the library and throwing icons out of the window.²⁷ There was no official statement from the Patriarchate about this. In 2005, fifteen years after Alexander Men's death, it was reported: 'Anti-Men pamphlets are still sometimes distributed in churches and it is difficult to publish anything in his defense in official Orthodox magazines and newspapers'.²⁸ The bias against Men, an exemplar of intellectual, open and tolerant Orthodoxy, indicates a lack of reception within the Orthodox Church to ecumenism and openness and more generally to the agenda of the liberal wing of the Church.

The attempts to silence liberal clergy are construed as another concession to the right-wing of the church, who regard liberal priests as heretics. The Patriarch's response to Kochetkov contrasts with his treatment of another high-profile former dissident priest, Father Dmitri Dudko, who died in June 2004. Dudko became the 'spiritual advisor' of *Zavtra*, an extreme right-wing newspaper. In one article he suggested canonising Stalin,

claiming: ‘Stalin was given to us by God; he created such a powerful state that cannot be destroyed completely, however hard they try’. He also said: ‘The time has now come to rehabilitate Stalin. The entire nation, ripped off and deceived, now is sighing: if Stalin were here there would not be such a disaster’.²⁹ The Patriarchate largely ignored Dudko’s views.

Reasons for Compromise

The controversy surrounding Patriarch Aleksii II’s address to rabbis in New York City, the Patriarch’s response to the xenophobic rhetoric of a high-profile Church dignitary and his disciplining of liberal clergy demonstrate that the Patriarch has been pulled by two opposing forces within the Church. This has ultimately resulted in concessions to the Church’s right wing. It has been established that the Patriarch has done little to discipline extremist prelates and clergy. This article will now identify three reasons for his reluctance to distance the Orthodox Church from extreme nationalism.

Strength of Conservative Forces

One reason the Patriarch has made concessions to the right wing is the strength of conservative forces in the Church. The controversy following the Patriarch’s speech clearly demonstrated the presence of xenophobic tendencies within the Church. The condemnation by influential Orthodox figures indicated the presence of anti-Semitism, the hostility toward non-Orthodox faiths and the lack of support for ecumenism.

The passage of restrictive federal religious legislation in October 1997 was widely regarded as a victory for conservative forces, both in the Orthodox Church and in the Russian political arena. The law recognised Russian Orthodoxy as the traditional faith of Russia, along with the religions of Islam, Judaism and Buddhism, but omitted any reference to Protestantism and Catholicism. It also imposed restrictions on the activities of some religious minorities by establishing a discriminatory registration system.³⁰ Widespread opposition to the presence of the Catholic Church in Russia and Ukraine is evidence of the xenophobic elements in the Orthodox Church. In January 2005 Patriarch Aleksii II emphasised that the Vatican’s religious expansion on the territory of the former Soviet Union gives no basis for hope for an improvement in Orthodox-Catholic

relations.³¹ This occurred despite the fact that joint worship has been conducted between the late Roman Catholic Pope, John Paul II, and the Ecumenical Patriarch. In 2001 the Ukrainian branch of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods organised protests against the Pope's visit to Ukraine, approvingly cited on the Moscow Patriarchate's official web site.³²

The high-profile of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods is a further indication of the strength of conservative forces in the Church. Verkhovsky has argued that whilst some elements in the 'Russian Orthodox nationalist movement' may be independent of the Moscow Patriarchate, 'as the most active part of the Russian Orthodox Church, they are able to capitalize on the authority of the Church and the respect it commands and, in that fashion, to strengthen their ideological influence on society'.³³ The visibility of extreme nationalists groups which invoke Russian Orthodoxy for added legitimacy cannot fail to influence the leadership of the Orthodox Church.

Nationalist Schism

A second reason Patriarch Aleksii II did not denounce extreme nationalism in the 1990s was the fear of a split in the Russian Orthodox Church. There was a concern that Orthodox prelates, clergy and believers would defect to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), a schismatic Orthodox jurisdiction. The ROCA is an émigré Church that was established to oppose the Moscow Patriarchate's capitulation to the communist regime. It entered Russia in 1990, at the first opportunity to do so. The leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad is generally more conservative than the Moscow Patriarchate; their governing body strongly condemned the aforementioned speech to rabbis in New York City, for example. Metropolitan Ioann expressed sympathy for the Church Abroad and hinted that, if Patriarch Aleksii II were to put pressure on him, he would defect to the schismatic church.³⁴ Because he was a leading figure for the radical right, he would have been followed. As long as Aleksii did not denounce declarations of extreme nationalism by the likes of Ioann and some of the Orthodox Brotherhoods, there was little cause for their supporters to defect to rival Orthodox churches.

In late 2003, there was a break-through in relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Council of Bishops, the governing body of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. They both committed to improving relations with the ultimate aim of unifying the two churches. A joint commission was established for this purpose. Patriarch Alekii II recognised that the most critical issue facing the commission is the number of clergy that joined the Church Abroad after being banned from ministry or defrocked by the Moscow Patriarchate. The status of parishes established by interdicted clergy in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan under the auspices of the Church Abroad is problematic.³⁵ The ROCA may no longer be a chief rival for the Moscow Patriarchate, but the problems of past antagonisms demonstrate the tendency for Orthodox clergy and believers to view more conservative jurisdictions as alternative churches.

The fear of schism is compounded by developments in neighbouring Ukraine. The Moscow Patriarchate oversees approximately two-thirds of the Orthodox congregations in Ukraine. There is concern that the election of a western-orientated president, Viktor Yushchenko, will intensify campaigns for the Ecumenical Patriarch to recognise an independent Ukrainian church.³⁶ Moves to break away from Moscow offend traditionalists within the Church and Russian nationalists outside the Church. Both see these attempts as a challenge to claims that Russia has a messianic mission and that Moscow has a special place in the Orthodox world. Moreover, to Russian nationalists, 'pro-western' also means 'pro-Catholic' or 'pro-Protestant' and consequently 'anti-Orthodox'. This assumption is behind many nationalists' turn to more vehement formulations of an Orthodox national identity that is suspicious of – and frequently hostile toward – other religious traditions.

Mainstream Support

Patriarch Aleksii II's concessions to the nationalistic wing of the Russian Orthodox Church are not operating in a vacuum. A third reason for his concessions is that there is a great deal of support in government circles, the mainstream media and the cultural arena for the linkage of religious (Orthodox) identity and national (Russian) identity.

A measure of the success of attempts to appropriate Orthodoxy for extremist causes is the degree to which religious themes have been co-opted by mainstream nationalist political figures. Both Vladimir Zhirinovskii, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), and Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), call for the defense of the Orthodox Church and for an end to the activities of nontraditional faiths which, according to nationalists and conservatives, threaten Orthodoxy's rightful role as defender of Russian culture and tradition. This is indicative of the KPRF's broader tendency to emphasise nationalist and patriotic themes above traditional communist platforms (just one example of the redundancy of the conventional left-right political spectrum in post-Soviet Russia). Metropolitan Ioann's writings found their echo in the national political arena through the high profile of Zhirinovskii.³⁷ In a 1995 interview Ziuganov spoke of his frequent contact with Ioann.³⁸ Though in these two cases, this is the opportunistic appropriation of tradition because of the political utility of appeals to nationalism, it nevertheless points to the perceived relevance of Orthodoxy to a (narrowly defined and exclusive) Russian identity.

The high level of popular support for the linkage between Russian Orthodoxy and Russian nationalism is also evident in the rhetoric of Russian President Vladimir Putin. In contrast to former President Boris Yeltsin, Putin is perceived to be a committed Orthodox believer. On the tenth anniversary of Patriarch Aleksii II's election, Putin recognised the Church's 'enormous role in the spiritual unification of the Russian land after many years of life without faith, moral degradation and atheism' and acknowledged the Church's 'traditional mission as a key force in promoting social stability and moral unity around moral priorities of justice, patriotism, good works, constructive labour and family values'.³⁹ In 2004, Putin made clear the link between Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian nation despite the fact that Russia is a secular country, stating: 'Of course, our church is separated from the state. But in the people's souls everything is together'.⁴⁰

This article has outlined three instances in which Patriarch Aleksii II has demonstrated a reluctance to take a firm stance against reactionary forces, both within and outside the Russian Orthodox Church. Dmitrii Pospelovsky, a distinguished scholar on the Orthodox

Church, argued that the fear of schism is justified and that denouncement of extremists could cause a backlash and the further radicalisation of the Church.⁴¹ Given Patriarch Aleksii II's high profile and high regard, the Patriarch could throw his weight behind religious, social and political forces that seek to strengthen democracy rather than tow a middle line for fear of the defection of extremists. Whilst it is true that condemning extremist tendencies would result in a backlash against the Moscow Patriarchate, this would be no worse than the current rupture between liberal and conservative clergy and the subsequent controversy would be no greater than the polemics on the Patriarchate's political bent. In addition, there are an increasing number of believers who have left the Church as a result of its perceived intolerance toward other religions and denominations.

Patriarch Aleksii's compromises, designed to appease nationalists in and beyond the Orthodox Church, have resulted in a weak leadership that is at the mercy of factional struggles. This weakness makes the Patriarch less able to repudiate reactionary tradition and supporters. A certain amount of tension is natural in an institution operating in a radically changed, and changing, environment and indeed some tension is essential for constructive dialogue and dynamism. As Verkhovsky has observed, 'Aggressive Russian nationalism is quite widespread in Russia and it would be strange if it were not present in the ROC [Russian Orthodox Church], as in any broadly-based public association which does not explicitly require its members to renounce nationalism'.⁴² But the Patriarch has limited the extent to which liberal visions of Orthodox Church life can be expressed. This, coupled with the high profile of the Church's right wing, adds Russian Orthodoxy's weight to anti-democratic causes and may come to predominate, contributing to a climate of extremism and exclusion in post-Soviet Russia.

Endnotes

¹ Hereafter the terms 'Russian Orthodox Church' and 'Orthodox Church' are used interchangeably to refer to the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). There are other Russian Orthodox churches registered in Russia: the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church; Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia; True Orthodox Church; Russian Orthodox Free Church; and Old Believers' churches. Of these, the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) is the only jurisdiction recognised by the Eastern Orthodox leader, Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch.

² See the table in Kimmo Kääriäinen and Dmitri Furman, 'Religiosity in Russia in the 1990s' in Matti Kotiranta (ed.), *Religious Transition in Russia*, Helsinki: Kikimora Publications, 2000, p.60.

³ Mikhail Tul'skii, 'Vakhkhabyt v Rossii pobezhdauiut umerennykh musul'man?', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 19 June 2001, p.8.

⁴ See, for example, Aleksandr Komozin, '100 vedushchikh politikov Rossii v mae', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 10 June 2001, p.11.

⁵ See, for example, statements by this broad range of commentators: James H. Billington, *Russia in Search of Itself*, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Baltimore; London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, p. xv; Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov, cited in Elena Tsvileva, 'Vosstanovlenie sviatyni zaversheno', *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 6 October 2000, p.2; Irina A. Papkov, 'The Resurgence of Russian Orthodoxy and its Implications for Russian Democracy' in Christopher Marsh (ed.), *Burden or Blessing: Russian Orthodoxy and the Construction of Civil Society and Democracy*, Boston: Institute of Religion, Culture and World Affairs, Boston University, 2004, p. 38; Nicolai N. Petro, 'The Orthodox Are Coming!', *New Europe Review*, vol. 2, no.1, 2005, pp. 11-13; Julia Sudo, 'Russian Nationalist Orthodox Theology: A New Trend in the Political Life of Russia', *Political Theology*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2005, p. 67; and Russian President Vladimir Putin, Sluzhba kommunikatsii OVTsS MP, 'Prezident Rossii V.V.Putin vruchil gosudarstvennye nagrody sviashchennosluzhiteliam (16 January 2002)', at: <http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru/nr101161.htm>, accessed 24 March 2005.

⁶ Billington, *Russia in Search of Itself*, pp. 67-68.

⁷ Some strands of neo-paganism and Eurasianism are notable exceptions to this general rule.

⁸ Aleksandr Verkhovsky, 'The Role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Nationalist, Xenophobic and Antiwestern Tendencies in Russia Today: Not Nationalism, but Fundamentalism', *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 30, no. 4, 2002, p. 334.

⁹ 'Vashi proroki – nashi proroki', *Rech; patriarkha Aleksii II k ravvinam g. N'iu Iorka 13 noiabria 1991 goda i eres' zhidovstvuiushchikh*, USA: Pallada, 1992, pp. 8-11.

¹⁰ Alla Snegina and Evgenii Strel'chik, 'Gde pliaska, tam i diabol', *Segodnia*, 6 October 1999, p.6.

¹¹ K. Dushenov et al, 'Molim Vas - Prislushaites!!', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 18 February 1993, p.3.

¹² Oxana Antic, 'Revival of Orthodox Brotherhoods in Russia', *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report*, 1, no. 11, 1992, p. 62.

¹³ Dimitry V. Pospelovsky, 'The Russian Orthodox Church in the Postcommunist CIS' in Michael Bourdeaux (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, New York, London: M.E. Sharpe, 1995, p. 62.

¹⁴ The other instance was when Patriarch Aleksii II stated that the introduction of individual tax numbers should not concern believers despite fears that it would impose the number of the Antichrist (666) on them. Stella Rock, "'Militant Piety': Fundamentalist Tendencies in the Russian Orthodox Brotherhood Movement', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, 22, no. 3, 2002.

¹⁵ The other chief contender, Metropolitan Filaret, has since established a rival Orthodox jurisdiction, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kiev Patriarchate). For an overview of Patriarch Aleksii II's activities in international ecumenical organisations, see DECR Communications Service, 'Aleksii II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia: A Biographical Note' at: http://www.mospat.ru/text/e_holiness/id/178.html, accessed 25 March 2005.

¹⁶ Mitropolit Ioann, "'Ia ne politik, Ia - pastyr'", *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 11 June 1993, p.3. For discussion of the authorship of Ioann's articles, see Dimitry V. Pospelovsky, *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia*, Crestwood (NY): St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998, p. 373 and Wendy Slater, 'A Modern-Day Saint? Metropolitan Ioann and the Postsoviet Russian Orthodox Church', *Religion, State and Society*, 28, no. 4, 2000, p. 317.

¹⁷ Ioann, 'Bitvy za Rossiuu', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 20 February 1993, pp. 1, 4. For further discussion of 'target oppressors' for extreme nationalists, see Julia Sudo, 'Russian Nationalist Orthodox Theology: A New Trend in the Political Life of Russia', *Political Theology*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2005, pp. 76-79.

¹⁸ 'Redaktsiia posetil, metropolit Ioann', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 11 June 1993, p.3.

¹⁹ Redaktsiia gazety *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 'Pamiati mudrogo druga', *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 4 November 1995, p.3

²⁰ JAC, 'Group Claims Responsibility for US Embassy Shooting', *RFE/RL Newslines*, 31 March 1999.

²¹ Billington, *Russia in Search of Itself*, p. 86.

²² John B. Dunlop, 'The Russian Orthodox Church as an "Empire-Saving" Institution' in Michael Bourdeaux (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, New York, London: M.E. Sharpe, 1995, p.34.

²³ Pospelovsky, 'The Russian Orthodox Church in the Postcommunist CIS', p.72, n.47.

²⁴ For further discussion of liberal clergy and laity in the Orthodox Church see Zoe Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Russia after Communism*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005, pp. 91-99.

²⁵ Maksim Shevchenko, 'Kochetkova budut obsuzhdat' po-tserkovnomu (14 March 2001)', *Nezavisimaia gazeta Online* at: http://www.religion.ng.ru/printed/pravoslav/2001-03-14/4_kochetkov.html, accessed 15 March 2001. There was also controversy surrounding the attempts of conservative Orthodox media to influence the Commission, particularly on Orthodox Internet sites such as strana.ru, vesti.ru and pravoslavie.ru.

²⁶ For the Commission's full report see Komissii. 'Reziime zakliucheniia komissii po Bogoslovskim izyskaniiam sviashchennika Georgiia Kochetkova (15 November 2000)', *Nezavisimaia gazeta online* at: http://religion.ng.ru/pravoslav/2001-03-28/4_kochetkov.html, accessed 4 April 2001.

²⁷ Dimitry V. Pospelovsky, *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia*, Crestwood (New York): St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998, p. 390.

²⁸ Dasha Demourova, 'Father Alexander Men: An Unorthodox Priest', *Russian Life*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2005, p. 16. Extreme nationalists also rail against Men because of his Jewish origins.

²⁹ Cited in Aleksandr Soldatov, 'Nesydimyi za predatel'stvo (pamiati o. Dimitriia Dudko)', *Moskovskie novosti*, no. 24, 2 July 2004, at: <http://www.mn.ru/issue.php?2004-24-30>, accessed 25 March 2005.

³⁰ For analysis of the law's provisions and its implications for religious pluralism see Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church: Religion in Russia after Communism*, pp. 2-4; 167-172. For the full text see Rossiiskaia Federatsiia Federal'nyi zakon, 'O svobode sovesti i o religioznykh ob'edineniakh', *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, 1 October 1997, pp. 2-3.

³¹ Brian Murphy, 'Russian Patriarch: Vatican Must Renounce Eastern Expansion to Clear Way for Pope', Associated Press, 11 January 2005 at: <http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews/0501b.html#08>, accessed 31 January 2005. This opposition is driven by concerns over the growth of Eastern Rite Catholic churches in Ukraine and Catholic proselytism in traditional Orthodox areas.

³² DECR Communications Service, 'The Russian Orthodox Church Today', at http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru/today_eng.htm, accessed 8 February 2001.

³³ Alexander Verkhovsky, 'Who is the Enemy Now? Islamophobia and antisemitism among Russian Orthodox nationalists before and after September 11', *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2004, pp. 128-129.

³⁴ See Pospelovsky, 'The Russian Orthodox Church in the Postcommunist CIS' p.74, n.63.

³⁵ Sluzhba kommunikatsii OVTsS MP, 'Sviateishii Patriarkh Aleksii vstretilcia s gruppoi radiozhurnalstov dlia traditsionnoi zapisi Rozhdestvenskogo poslaniiia i otvetil na ikh voprosy' at: <http://www.mospat.ru/text/news/id/8359.html>, accessed 1 January 2005.

³⁶ The Ukrainian branch of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods opposed Viktor Yushchenko's candidacy in the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections, warning that his election would be a victory for anti-Orthodox forces and result in Catholic expansionism in Ukraine.

³⁷ This point is made in Billington, *Russia in Search of Itself*, p. 52

³⁸ Ziuganov also referred to the KPRF's 'respect' for Orthodoxy, the need to protect the Church from foreign interlopers, and Orthodoxy and the Russian Idea. O. Nikolsky. 'The Path of Goodness and Righteousness (*Pravda Rossii*, 5 October 1995, p.2)', *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 97, no. 41 (1995), pp.4-5. The interview was first printed in *Pravoslavnaia Moskva (Orthodox Moscow)*.

³⁹ Reuters, 'Putin Lauds Church Role as Patriarch Marks 10 years', *Johnson's Russia List* (#4359), 9 June 2000.

⁴⁰ Cited in Beth M. Admiraal, 'Failing Freedom: Parties, Elites and the Uncertainty of Religious Life in Russia' in Christopher Marsh (ed.), *Burden or Blessing: Russian Orthodoxy and the Construction of Civil Society and Democracy*, Boston: Institute of Religion, Culture and World Affairs, Boston University, 2004, p. 18.

⁴¹ Pospelovsky, *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia*, pp. 376-377.

⁴² Verkhovsky, 'The Role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Nationalist, Xenophobic and Antiwestern Tendencies in Russia Today: Not Nationalism, but Fundamentalism', p. 333.