

RUSSIA'S UNHOLY TRINITY:
WHY THE STATE INCREASINGLY SUPPORTS THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has undergone a religious resurgence. However, it was not until the ascension of Vladimir Putin that the government began to seize on this revival, as reflected in its increasing support for Russia's majority religion. Why has the Russian state increasingly supported the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) since the early 2000s? This senior honors thesis attempts to answer this question through a comprehensive explanatory case study. Utilizing a three-part theory, the independent variables of regime stability, political legitimacy, and Orthodox identity are hypothesized as interwoven explanations. Through the collection of over 80 instances of preferential state support, a trend of increasing support over time was established. Two conclusions emerge from this research: first, there is correlational support for all three hypotheses, with identity demonstrating the strongest relationship, and second, a micro-level explanation for inter-year fluctuations of state support is partially validated. Overall, this thesis illuminates a trend previously unnoticed by scholars and, in addition, has assessed potential explanations for increasing state support of the ROC in Russia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

During the Russian President's 2012 address to the Federal Assembly, Vladimir Putin said that, "in order to revive national consciousness, we need to link historical eras and get back to understanding the simple truth that Russia did not begin in 1917, or even in 1991, but rather, that we have a common, continuous history spanning over one thousand years" ("Address To the Federal Assembly" 2012). This statement was significant and marked a cultural transition in Russia, whereby the Kremlin began to officially resurrect the ideas and values of its pre-Soviet past in order to construct a unified and Russo-centric future for the federation. Prior to this, the government looked to its strongest cultural and social organization, the Russian Orthodox Church (hereafter ROC), for a conservative, traditional, and nationalistic value-system. Beginning in 2012, the invocation and institutionalization of such values has become much more pervasive. To understand this evolution, one must look at the relationship between church and state. Since the turn of the century, the Russian government has increasingly preferentially supported the church and this study seeks to understand and explain the reasoning behind such actions.

This chapter will establish the necessity for researching increasing state support of the ROC and will subsequently provide a brief history of this institution and its relationship with the Russian state. Why has the Russian state increasingly supported the Russian Orthodox Church since the early 2000s? The goal of this study is to explore this question and delve into the explanations for why, and detail the methods through which, increasing state support for the ROC has occurred. This question has emerged due to Russia's gravitation toward religion

following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which endured state atheism while simultaneously maintaining levels of religiosity and religion-state cooperation. Russia's religious resurgence is not unique; countries around the world have seen notable spikes in religion, which has surprised many scholars who, in the previous century, touted secularization. It has become apparent that the "West" has come into conflict with the value systems and ideologies of Russia, as it characterizes itself as neither East nor West. The embrace of conservatism, traditionalism, and Russo-centrism depends on Russia's rich history and culture, which are rooted in Orthodox Christianity; this is because of the embeddedness of religion into the state and nation during tsarism. As Russians have seemingly returned to religion, the Orthodox Church has received preferential treatment. This phenomenon is interesting in and of itself, and the fact that such support has increased since 2000 reinforces the necessity of further research into this relationship.

This study is separated into five chapters, each of which provides a crucial component required in answering and explaining the question under consideration. Chapter 1 begins with an introduction to the study and provides a historical background to contextualize the research. In covering over 1,000 years of history, only the most relevant events will be discussed. Chapter 2 outlines the scholarly landscape through a review of the literature, highlighting relevant studies, theories, and discoveries to provide a basis of understanding around the research undertaken herein. In addition, Chapter 2 will put forward a theory and detail the research design of this study. Chapter 3 presents the results and findings of the research conducted and summarizes the trends uncovered. Chapter 4 seeks to explain the trends in Chapter 3 and, in so doing, revisits the hypotheses posited in Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 5 contains the conclusions, limitations, and implications of this study and also suggests a path for future research.

In answering why the state has increasingly supported the Russian Orthodox Church, three independent variables will be posited as explanations. These variables, stability, legitimacy, and identity, are what I refer to as Russia's "Unholy Trinity", as they seek to explain unequal state treatment of the dominant religious institution in Russia; a country that has constitutionally protected religious equality. Through the course of this research, it was discovered that there is some support for the stability and legitimacy hypotheses, and strong support for the identity hypothesis. Separately, due to fluctuations discovered in increasing state support, a micro-level explanation will be provided in Chapter 4 to establish a theoretical basis for these occurrences. Overall, the findings and analysis included have furthered the scholarly landscape by demonstrating a clear trend not previously established, while also assessing and partially validating the explanations for this trend.

Background

The Christianization of *Kieven Rus'*, the preceding proto-state to present-day Russia, occurred in 988 when Prince Vladimir converted to Orthodox Christianity. It was in this year that Russia was forever changed; religion became a crucial component of society and its subjects, who are decedents of today's Russians, adopted the belief system of their ruler. Orthodox Christianity is inseparable from Russia and "Russianness", establishing a long history of religious importance in the tsarist period that included forced conversion as the empire expanded, state atheism under the Soviet Union, during which the church was a tool of the state, and most recently, the post-Soviet period; a time of religious revival and Orthodox power. This section will briefly touch upon these three periods in order to provide the historical context required to

analyze the events of the 21st century. Russian history is vast and complex, though, at every turn, the Russian Orthodox Church has played a crucial role.

Tsar and God: From Symphonia to Subservience

Eastern Orthodoxy is a large sect of Christianity that emerged out of the Great Schism of 1054. When Russia adopted the Orthodox denomination, its followers fell under the authority of the Constantinople Patriarch. It was not until 1589 that the Metropolitanate of Moscow was promoted to the Patriarchate of Moscow, marking a highly significant transition for Russian Orthodoxy. Russia became home to the only Patriarchate whose ruler was Orthodox (Marsh 2013, 20) and, following the fall of Constantinople in 1453 (Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia; see “Russian Orthodox” in References), Moscow was treated as the “Third Rome”; since Russia was the only Orthodox power, it was thought of as the capital of the “Orthodox World”, and the tsar heir to Byzantium (Marsh 2013 21). The concept of Russia as the center of Orthodoxy has been invoked by Vladimir Putin as a way to reestablish Russian identity and its importance, which will be touched upon in later chapters. With a holy and powerful Russia, Orthodoxy was further cemented into the identity of the state through the use of the term *symphonia*, or harmony, to describe the church-state relationship. Essentially, this meant that the tsar ruled over the secular sphere, while the church was the gatekeeper for all that was spiritual, religious, and godly (Ibid.). However, in 1721, this relationship changed. Tsar Peter the Great demoted the status of the church by disbanding the Patriarchate and giving the state full control of a restructured and subordinate Orthodox institution; this was due to the tsar’s Westernization reforms whereby many institutions were changed or eliminated (Ibid., 22).

To ensure the subservience of the Russian Orthodox Church, the tsar created the Holy Synod, which existed until 1918. Interestingly, the establishment of a state church led to an overall increase in dogmatism, which was problematic given the great expansion of the Russian Empire and incorporation of non-Orthodox subjects (Ibid.). Most notably, the large number of Muslims under Russian governance led to campaigns of forced conversion. However, Catherine the Great changed the harsh laws and policies of the empire, leading to religious toleration (in spite of open practice, the Russian Orthodox Church was still the state religion and enjoyed the benefits of such status). The evolution of the ROC under tsarism is important for understanding the revitalization of religion since the 1990s because of the invocation of tsaristic/Orthodox themes. For example, Tsar Nicholas I adopted the idea of the triad: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality in 1832. Developed by his education minister, this slogan became the official mantra of Nicholas I and ideologically separated Russia from the West (Encyclopedia Britannica; see “Orthodoxy” in References). This triad has been used by Vladimir Putin to reestablish Russian identity and similarly separate Russia from the West. Moreover, Nicholas I led Russia against the Ottoman Turks in the Crimean War; a bloody conflict that was justified as the defense of Orthodox Christians living on the Russian Empire’s periphery (Kivelson and Suny 2017, 183). Vladimir Putin has resurrected this justification of “protecting” ethnic Russians in Ukraine by invading and occupying Crimea and supporting separatists in the Donbas.

The Russian Orthodox Church maintained itself as a crucial partner after Nicholas I, though as dissent and discontent increased during the late 19th century, tsarism was forced to reform itself until it was forcibly dissolved in 1917. With the abolition of its partner, the ROC came under immense scrutiny not only because it was a bastion of the “Old Guard”, but also due to religion having no place in the public sphere as per Marxism-Leninism.

The Church Under Soviet Control: An Unlikely Partner

In 1918 the Bolsheviks established their atheistic state through the passage of the decree “On the Separation of the Church and State and the Schools from the Church” (Marsh 2013, 23). It should be noted that religion was never eliminated under the Soviet Union, though Marx’s anti-religious ideas were embraced by the state. With this being the case, Russian Orthodoxy, along with the other confessions, were suppressed and targeted. Churches were seized, clergy were arrested, and believers could not openly practice (Ibid.). The Russian Orthodox Church represented an unwanted hierarchy within a new proletariat-centric society. Whereas Vladimir Lenin was successful in creating state atheism, Josef Stalin sought to completely destroy the church and was almost successful in doing so. The broader Stalinist repression and purges had a gruesome and long-lasting impact on Russian history. Within the context of the ROC, religion and its institutions were persecuted, leading to the degradation of Orthodoxy (Ibid.). There was, however, a significant warming between church and state as a result of the outbreak of World War II. Stalin looked to the Russian Orthodox Church as a beacon on patriotism and nationalism, and so Patriarch Sergi called for Russians to fight against Nazism. This cooperation marked a reestablishment of the church-state relationship, though markedly different; the state would take advantage of the church and the church would comply (Walters 1986, 139).

Following the death of Stalin in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev led de-Stalinist reforms that allowed for increased freedoms in many areas, though religion not being one. Instead, Khrushchev promoted atheism and in 1958, thousands of churches were abruptly forced to cease activity; a component of his anti-religious campaign (Marsh 2013, 24). The war against religion was largely maintained until Gorbachev, but the Soviet government still recognized the power of religion and the usefulness of the ROC as a tool of the state. With the reforms of Mikhail

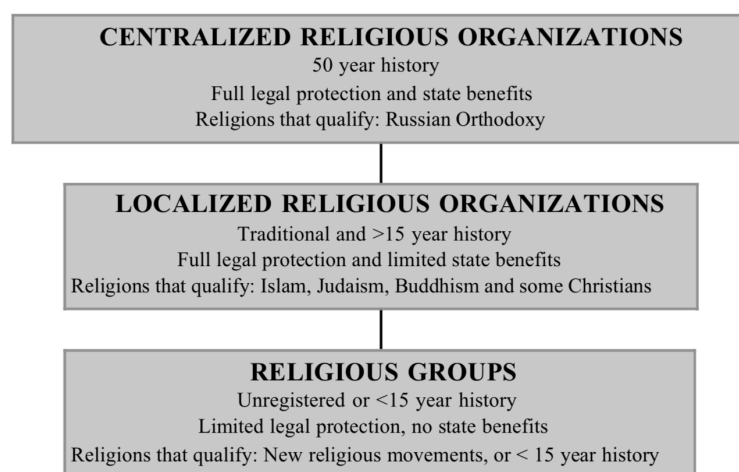
Gorbachev, religion became an accepted aspect of Soviet life, leading to the law on freedom of conscience in 1988 (Ibid., 25). Unsurprisingly, the ROC praised *perestroika* and the Patriarch lauded Gorbachev (Ibid.). The 1988 law became the basis for the 1990 law on “Freedom of Conscience and Religious Belief”, which provided “religious equality for the first time in Russian history, including the establishment of a secular state and a true separation of church and state” (Ibid., 26). The increasing freedom of religion meant that the Russian Orthodox Church could resume its activities from before the Soviet era, but now had to compete on equal footing. In the following year, the Soviet Union was dissolved, and the ensuing chaos led to true democracy that maintained religious freedom and equality until the last year of the century.

An Attempt at Religious Freedom: The Russian Federation under Yeltsin

The 1993 Constitution established Russia as a secular state. In accordance with no preferred religion, President Yeltsin did not allow an attempt to push for the incorporation of the “traditional religions”, thus maintaining religious equality. However, with the regional autonomy afforded under the democratic federation, some provinces were able to restrict religion (Ibid., 28). A significant development occurred in 1997, when the Federal Assembly once again attempted to establish “traditional religions”. After first vetoing the bill, President Yeltsin apparently had a change of heart, leading to a law that would distinguish between religions. Scholars have argued that the 1997 law was the first step in establishing Russian Orthodoxy as the preferred religion post-dissolution (Ibid., 28-29). This law implemented a structure in which the ROC has a “privileged status at the top as a centralized religious organization similar to its pre-revolutionary position as the center of Russian religious life with full legal protection and special state benefits” (Koesel 2009, 66). Subordinate to the ROC are “localized religious

organizations”, which include Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, and other Christian denominations, which non-coincidentally are Russia’s other “traditional religions”. The lowest status level is reserved for non-traditional religions. For a visual representation of this hierarchy, see Figure 1.0 below.

Figure 1.0: A Hierarchy of Religions in Russia (Ibid., 67)



The 1997 law provided the Russian government with significant authority regarding religious organizations, thus limiting the influence of religion on the political sphere (Sarkissian 2015, 92). Changes to the religious sphere were minor leading into the 21st century, however, in 1999, Boris Yeltsin resigned from the presidency, elevating Vladimir Putin as Acting President. The election of Putin in 2000 catalyzed a complete transformation for the Russian Federation. The devolution of democratic institutions, combined with overwhelmingly high approval ratings derived from a fast-growing economy, enabled President Putin to cement power (Kivelson and Suny 2017, 369-370). Since 2000, the Russian government has passed legislation that has limited

religions liberties, though, in practice, this has generally only impacted non-Orthodox institutions.

The 2002 Law on Countering Extremist Activity has been used to censor the media and its 2006 amendment altered the language to make it vague, which has negatively impacted religious institutions. Scholar Ani Sarkissian says the new definition of extremism “c[an] be interpreted by the government as justification for persecuting any faith that contradict[s] the teachings of the ROC as inciting religious hostility” (Sarkissian 2015, 94). It is important to mention that this law is not included in the study because it does not clearly preferentially support the ROC; however, it is a crucial piece of legislation regarding religion in Russia that many argue as having unevenly benefited the ROC. Also, in 2006, the Duma passed what is known as the NGO law (the Law on Public Associations), which has given the government expanded power over non-governmental organizations, including religious organizations (Ibid., 95).

The brief history outlined in this section is meant to demonstrate the significance of the Russian Orthodox Church to Russia, and of Russia to its church, as well as connect three pivotal periods to the timeframe under consideration, Putin’s Russia. Since the birth of Orthodoxy in *Rus*’, to be Russian is to be Orthodox. This study is an attempt to explain the actions of the state as it pertains to the ROC since the turn of the century. Increasing preferential state support for the Russian Orthodox has largely remained unexplored, thus requiring research into a significant trend that has both domestic and international implications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORY, AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Literature Review

The unequivocal dominance of institutionalized religion throughout the world has both empowered and threatened regimes. The religion-state relationship in Russia was institutionalized during tsarism, conflicted during the Soviet period given the preponderance of state atheism and, since the dissolution of the USSR, has undergone a resurrected cooperation. The Secularization Thesis asserts that religion will decline as humanity modernizes, and additionally characterizes religion as the root of many of the world's ills. However, scholars have come to the realization that religion is no longer declining, thus calling into question the validity of the Secularization Thesis and providing a reestablished basis for studying the phenomenon that is religion (Toft, Philpott, & Shah 2011). The overall resurgence of religion around the world, and specifically in Russia, has necessitated further examination.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union on December 26, 1991, the ROC has experienced a significant transformation from religious competition to what is now characterized as unofficial state-sponsorship ("2015 Annual Report" 2018, 73). The influence and power of Russia's majority religious institution is well researched but lacks a deep analysis into the motivations behind why, and mechanisms through which, the state has increasingly supported its religious hegemon. As such, this study will build upon the scholarly landscape by uncovering the trend of increasing preferential state support and providing explanations for the trend's occurrence; both of which have not been undertaken in previous scholarship.

Religion-State Relationship

Institutionalized religions and states engage in a bidirectional relationship through which politics and governance become interwoven with religion, leading to religion influencing politics and/or politics influencing religion. This relationship is present in all regime types and transcends political ideology. The religion-state relationship has significant implications; the ways in which the state interacts with religion is a well-explored topic and has undergone significant debate¹. Scholars Moen and Gustafson (1992) examine how religions influence states and find that “God’s law” can supersede that of the state, which leads to a contestation over sovereignty and legitimacy. Moreover, states use a variety of mechanisms to retain their power, such as: the establishment of a state religion, control over some or all religions, or the prohibition of religion. This book utilizes a collection of essays to analyze the religion-state relationship across Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the twenty-first century. Moen and Gustafson (1992) provide an interesting historical narrative that outlines the variation in religion-state relationships, taking the forms of cooptation, integration, dependency, and elimination. It is noted that ‘dominant’ states use dependency and integration because it provides legitimacy for the government (Moen & Gustafson 1992, 8), which will be further discussed in the next section of this review, as it is highly relevant to Russia. A more recent book by Toft et al. (2011) discusses religion’s overall resurgence and role in politics. These scholars assert that society is living in “God’s century” and provide an in-depth explanation for why religion has become so influential. Through their research, they have determined that democratization and technological

¹ Scholar Samuel T. Huntington (1996), in his groundbreaking and provocative book *The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking the World Order*, discusses how culture will become humanity’s primary divider. Huntington (1996) provides an outline of the many problems society will face in the 21st century and posits that religion will act as a cohesive solution to those impacted by instability and disaffection. Although Huntington’s (1996) assumptions incur many challenges that call his assertions into question (Grim and Finke 2007), they highlight the inevitable conflict between different cultures, and therefore religions, which has certainly led to many macro and micro-level conflicts.

advances, among other factors, have empowered religion and intensified religiosity, thus leading to agenda-pushing, politically active religious institutions. From Toft et al.'s (2011) findings, it is evident that majority religious institutions have become more aggressive, which puts pressure on states to appease the majority religious community. This book is a substantial contribution to the field of scholarship, though it must be built upon in order to confirm the assertions made and assess individual country-cases more closely.

Scholar Anna Grzymala-Busse (2015) explores how “the Church” influences policy and politics. She provides an in-depth analysis of the role of religion in politics and challenges well-known conventions of church-state relations. However, by looking at just six Christian-majority democracies, the implications of Grzymala-Busse’s (2015) study are limited. Given that religious institutions are highly variable, her findings may not be applicable to non-Western Christian-majority democratic countries. This book provides a well-rounded exposé into how the Church’s exploitation of “moral authority” influences policy, which is a crucial relationship that demonstrates a significant motivating factor driving the religion-state relationship (Grzymala-Busse 2015, 8). However, further study is required in order to find a similar parallel across regimes types and religions, such as in Russia.

Looking more specifically at the country of interest, a study by Aleksandr Verkhovsky (2002) analyzes the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in cultivating values and ideologies, such as xenophobia, antiwesternism, and nationalism, that align with the state. Verkhovsky (2002) points to the preferential treatment of the ROC and how radical and fundamentalist elements of the church have become empowered since the fall of the Soviet Union. These findings are significant and highlight the implications of increased religious autonomy, but this study does not analyze this relationship from the state’s point of view; in fact none of the studies

in this review have sought to explain the role of the state in Russia. Overall, additional scholarship is required to shed light on the relationship between church and state and if factors, such as stability, have influenced Russia's decision to unequally support the Russian Orthodox Church.

Religion and Regime Stability

Given that religions and regimes compete for authority within states (Moen & Gustafson, 1992), a relationship with the majority religion can enhance the base of support thus providing legitimacy (Gill 2008; Toft, Philpott, and Shah 2011), but may also cultivate opposition. Religion can effectively unify a people around a national identity, and, in return, the majority religion may receive benefits and/or special status. It is important to note that, in a 2006 study by Bruce Gilly, it was determined that religion does not, on average, correlate to the determinants of state stability, though he concedes that such universal factors only account for two-thirds of variation, and that the final one-third is significant and can explain the cases in outlier countries like China. This provides the possibility that Russia is a state in which religion does in fact contribute to state legitimacy; this is a pillar of my theory and will be expanded upon in the next chapter. Scholar Jonathan Fox (2018), like many others in the field, recognizes this mutually beneficial relationship and discusses how states can use religion to their advantage. Fox (2018) also recognizes the ability of religion to legitimize opposition movements, which consequentially drives states to acquire the approval of the dominant religion. He utilizes Mark Juergensmeyer's (1993, 2008) argument about legitimization and rightly points out its limitations, presenting a study by an opponent of Juergensmeyer². Fox (2018) also notes that religion's utility in

² Scholar Charles Taylor (2007) presents an argument about the dominance of secularization and modernization, and how this prevalence has deemed religion incapable of domineering the state.

supporting a regime is most effective when the population is religious. Additionally, legitimization tends to require the one invoking it to be an adherent to the religion, which brings us to Russia and its history of Orthodox-supported leaders. Scholar Marcel H. Van Herpen (2015) discusses how the Religious Legitimization Theory was crucial for the Russian Empire and justified many of its actions throughout history. The role of the ROC in the Russian Empire is central to understanding post-Soviet Russia. According to Van Herpen (2015), there are three pillars of post-Soviet legitimization: 1) ‘Sovereign democracy’, which means that the state determines its definition of democracy and enables autocratic regimes to establish a ‘pseudo-democratic façade’; 2) a ‘power vertical’, which is essentially a top-down authoritarian government; and 3) Orthodoxy (57-58). My study will focus on Orthodoxy because the underlying ideologies, beliefs, and culture can be argued as drivers of regime stability.

Scholar Ani Sarkissian (2009) finds that the reestablishment of churches in post-Communist countries can lead to a mutually beneficial relationship in which the church provides legitimacy and stability for regimes and, in return, receives legal, political, and financial subsidies. Moreover, she finds that ‘insecure’ regimes with the support of majority religious group can receive ‘popular legitimacy’; my study builds upon this finding by detailing this relationship since 2002. In her 2015 book “The Varieties of Religious Repression”, Sarkissian thoroughly discusses religion in Russia and how the Russian Orthodox Church has worked with the state in order to resurrect itself. This, by extension, has bolstered Putin’s regime, and is the primary reason behind the Russian state’s favoritism and inequitable distribution of resources. Sarkissian (2015) supplements this argument by pointing to specific laws, policies, rhetoric and funding, demonstrating the extent of state support, which my study will do as well. Overall, Sarkissian’s contributions are crucial in understanding state support of religion in Russia,

however she does not provide an explanation as to why state support has increased over time; this is the crux of my study. According to an article by Jekatyerina Dunajeva & Karrie J. Koesel (2017), Vladimir Putin has aligned himself with the ROC because he sees it as an opportunity to unite Russians. However, these scholars do not take the argument one step further to suggest that Putin's strategy to stabilize the country and maintain power is due in part to the overwhelming support of institutions like the church. In a separate piece, scholar Karrie Koesel (2017) analyzes religion and the state in Russia and China and proposes a religion-regime theory based on subnational cooperation in which both sides can maintain power and ensure their survival. This 'interest-based theory' is significant and forms a pillar of my theory. Moreover, Koesel's (2017) findings suggest that when religions work with regimes, they are effectively promoting it, thus strengthening authoritarian power, which underscores the importance of understanding how religion can be a tool for legitimacy and authoritarian vitality.

Religion Supporting Autocratic Behavior?

Religion is a significant force in state-building and can play a democratizing or counterdemocratizing role (Toft et al. 2011, 107). The process of democratization is well-researched and scholar Charles Tilly is a leader in the field. His 2007 book discusses democracy and the processes required for democratization, along with the conditions that can foster the converse of these concepts. His analysis of Russia as a case of de-democratization is highly relevant and useful for the purposes of my study. Tilly (2007) traces the structural change of the Russian state and how Vladimir Putin has successfully increased state capacity while moving away from democracy; trends which the author recognizes as correlational. This book is a significant piece of scholarship because of its detailed treatment of the concepts and how they

are effectuated in reality. However, Tilly's (2007) analysis of Russia does not take into account the ideological underpinnings of Russia's politics and governance, which has become more autocratic through the invocation of Russia's unique form of democracy; a 'sovereign democracy' that is derived from its monarchical history and strong religion-state relationship.

Thomas Ambrosio (2009) takes a less conventional approach in attempting to understand Russia's authoritarian rise. He argues that international factors have played a significant role in Russia's ability to prevent democratization and presents five strategies that have driven its insusceptibility. The strategy of insulation rises above the other four, in that it has prevented the cultivation of democracy domestically. However, for the purposes of my study, the strategy of redefinition and alternative rhetoric is crucial. The author does not specifically mention Russia's utilization of the Russian Orthodox Church to advance narratives favorable to its domestic and international goals, though he does discuss the state's attempt to justify its departure from Western systems and institutions through invoking the country's self-proclaimed unique cultural and religious history. This is highly significant because Russia has effectively used "soft" measures such as culture, history and ideology to justify its authoritarian leanings, thus leading to the possibility that the state has increasingly supported the ROC in order to justify its form of "democracy".

Scholar John Anderson (2007) analyzes how the Russian Orthodox Church and Vladimir Putin share similar ideals regarding state institutions, the interpretation of laws, and how Russian society should function. Anderson (2007) does not explicitly state that these shared ideas have driven the country away from democracy, though it can be reasonably inferred, thus necessitating further exploration into the church-state relationship and if there is a correlation between state support of religion and regime stability in Russia. Broadly speaking, it seems that

most scholarship has not incorporated the ever-important factor of state support of religion in attempting to understand Russia's authoritarian trajectory; my study will build upon the field of scholarship by delving into this factor.

Political Theology

The state requires a level of commitment and common understanding that can conflict with the precepts or teachings of religion, thus leading to competing authorities. According to Toft et al. (2011), Political Theology is the “set of ideas that a religious actor holds about what is legitimate political authority” (27). Scholar Nicholas Wolterstorff (2012) discusses how Political Theology exists as the marriage between religious authority and political authority. His book takes a theological approach and advocates for political self-determinism, a phenomenon that the author believes to inherently exist in religion. The idea that theology informs the political sphere is a crucial underpinning of Wolterstorff's (2012) argument and is highly relevant to Russia given the drift towards traditionalism and conservatism since the fall of the Soviet Union. Although this book does provide an analytical narrative that explores these important ideas, the author criticizes modern liberal democracies for not adhering to absolute religious freedom, which overlooks the importance of other state-given freedoms and rights. In addition, the biases in this book partially limit the conclusions drawn, though its overall discussion on religion and the state is important and useful in furthering the understanding of Political Theology.

A more Russo-centric article explores the reemergence of Orthodoxy in Russia and how this has led to the development of what scholar Julia Sudo (2005) terms ‘Russian Nationalist Orthodox Theology’, which is essentially the perversion of religion and nationalism into a politicized dogmatic ideology. This Russian approach to Political Theology has not been

thoroughly assessed outside of Sudo's (2005) study and, while its findings are important, the field of scholarship must work towards validating or refuting the conclusions, since they are dated. Understanding the implications of Political Theology in the specific context of the Russian Federation is particularly useful given the country's multi-faceted evolution. Future scholarship should look to the significant influence the Russian Orthodox Church wields on the country's politics and culture and how the Russian state under Vladimir Putin has embraced its majority religion, leading to a fascinating relationship that must undergo further research in order to understand Russia's broader evolution at home and abroad. In order for scholarship to move forward, it is crucial to scrutinize the motivations behind Russia's increasing religious favoritism and further examine the mechanisms through which state support for religion is carried out, so as to elucidate the explanations behind such actions.

Through this examination of the scholarly landscape, it is evident that additional research is required in order to assess the relationship between religion and the state in Russia. More specifically, there seems to be a gap in the literature with regards to research explaining the Russian government's increasing support for the ROC. Many scholars analyze religion and the state separately, though only a few studies have sought to understand the ways in which the state and church have empowered themselves through this mutually beneficial relationship. Most strikingly, it appears that no studies have explored if factors such as regime stabilization, legitimacy, and identity are explanations for increasing state-support of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is the basis of my study.

Theory: Why the Russian State Increasingly Supports the Russian Orthodox Church

In order to move towards an empirical study of the Russian state and its relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church, one must conceptualize the building blocks that have formed these institutions and the theoretical framework by which this relationship is acted upon. Two concepts, religion and the state, must be defined to fully unpack the theory that will be laid out below. What is religion? This amorphous concept is many things. To define it concisely, religion is a set of shared beliefs and values by which a self-identifying group of people approach and live life. A religion should not be conflated with what is often referred to as “the religious” or religiosity. The former is a term used to define those who subscribe to a religion and the latter is one’s individual level of commitment to and/or belief in a religion. For the purpose of this study, religion refers to institutionalized religion, which is the organizational and hierarchical structure through which the underlying beliefs, practices, laws, culture, etc. are carried out and governed. Moreover, when I refer to the ROC, I am referring to the religious institution that is governed and administered by the Moscow Patriarchate, and serves as the organization and structure of Russia’s religious majority, Russian Orthodoxy. Such distinctions are important because religion as a belief system can influence individuals, but as an institution, can influence and lobby governments and interest groups due to its ability to organize.

The second concept, the “state” (or polity), refers to a political organization that has a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence in a given geographic location. This term will be used to refer to the country of interest, the Russian Federation, as it constitutes a state. Although I will be referring to the state, it should be noted that Russia is a complex country with an undemocratic regime that has complete control over the state. This blurs the lines between regime and state, since Vladimir Putin has consolidated power, establishing his regime as

inseparable from the state. Nonetheless, this study will distinguish between the state, regime, and political leaders.

The Russian Federation was a democratic polity following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As will be described in the following chapter, there were many factors that led this young democracy to become increasingly authoritarian and autocratic in the early years of the twenty-first century. Simultaneously, the Russian Orthodox Church, which was suppressed during state atheism, has enjoyed a resurgence. How do religion and the state fit together in Russia? To answer this question, history can serve as a guide. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Russian Empire had a state religion for centuries. The ROC functioned as an arm of the state and was employed as a national unifier by the tsars. As the empire expanded, the Russian Orthodox Church was tasked with integrating the new non-Russian and non-Christian subjects. Now, as with almost all aspects of tsarism, religion was excluded from the Bolshevik plan to spread Marxism-Leninism and the subsequent sovietization.

Looking to the current Russian state, the Russian Orthodox Church has a strong relationship with Vladimir Putin, who has led the country since 1999 (with a brief hiatus from 2008-2012 when Dmitry Medvedev and Putin exchanged roles so as to not violate the Constitution). Putinism, the term used to describe the ideological basis by which its namesake governs, has been researched extensively and scholars provide a variety of explanations as to how it came to be, ranging from Vladimir Putin's experience in the KGB to his admiration for Russian philosopher Ivan Ilyin. Putinism is pervasive and informs every aspect of Russia's domestic and international policies and actions. However, for Putinism to be relevant and effectuated, Vladimir Putin needs to maintain power and influence. Russia has gone from

extreme instability to relative stability since the fall of the USSR, and this stabilization may provide insight into why the state increasingly supports its majority religion.

As discussed in the literature, religion and the state compete for authority (Moen & Gustafson, 1992). A relationship with the majority religion can enhance the base of support and legitimize the state (Gill 2008; Toft, Philpott, and Shah, 2011), which is clearly present in Russia. The touting of Orthodoxy as a symbol of national identity in Russia is strikingly similar to the efforts by Russian tsars to curry favor amongst the people. The Russian Orthodox Church receives benefits and special status from the state, which calls into question the possible motivations and justifications for doing so. As Stark and Bainbridge (1985) maintain, religion is an effective state-building tool. With the uncertainty and instability following Vladimir Putin's ascension, it is fascinating how one man has been capable of consolidating and maintaining power. Is there a relationship between regime stability and state support of religion? There is reason to believe that, since the ROC was and is such a significant aspect of Russian culture and life, with an overwhelming majority of the country's population identifying with this belief system, that when a regime is faced with instability, it will look to the majority religious institution because of its ability to organize people, streamline messages and ideas, and cultivate trust and loyalty. The inherent advantages afforded to religious institutions can be extremely valuable to struggling regimes, which brings us to the first and central hypothesis:

H1: As political stability fluctuates, the Russian government will increasingly support the Russian Orthodox Church.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the former republics saw different levels of democratization. Aside from the Baltic states, the former republics are non-democratic and/or

transitioning. As these countries have moved away from democracy, I argue that religion has played a crucial role in autocratic consolidation and legitimacy. Religious support not only benefits the regime (as described above, it can create legitimacy and validate the autocratic tendencies of the government) but will also allow the supported religion more autonomy and influence. Vladimir Putin has utilized laws and policies, based in the non-democratic nature of Russia's values and political culture, to de-democratize.

According to Graeme Gill (2015), many studies have determined that the historical authoritarianism in Russia was legitimized by religion during tsarism and saw striking similarities during the Soviet period. Gill does mention the problem of causality. Is Russia an authoritarian political system because of its political culture, or is its political culture informed by the state being authoritarian? I argue this is very much a two-way street. Values that align with a system of government will likely become legitimized by the people, however, a repressive and authoritarian state can impose certain beliefs and values that create a culture in support of the state. Nonetheless, Russia certainly has a proclivity towards strong leaders who embody authoritarianism and I argue that the Putin and Medvedev regimes have been legitimized, in part, because of its increasing support for the Russian Orthodox Church. I contend that the ROC's long history of supporting autocrats and legitimizing authoritarian actions is central to the Russian state's support of Orthodoxy today. This theory is an extension of the first hypothesis, as the unraveling of democracy can lead to regime instability, in which the state will require popular legitimacy, which brings us to the second hypothesis:

H2: As legitimacy for the Russian government fluctuates, state support of the Russian Orthodox Church will increase over time.

Russians were allowed to freely practice their religions following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The new Russian Constitution provided unabridged religious freedom, though, over time, such freedoms have become limited to certain groups. The ROC has enjoyed hegemony due to the laws and policies that have established a religious hierarchy. As described above, the state's support of the majority religion can be advantageous. According to Anna Grzymala-Busse (2012), a revived majority may experience state support because the religious population will strengthen the regime's base of support. Extending off of the first hypothesis, state-sponsorship establishes a relationship in which the state can claim "moral authority", though this can only be attainable if enough of the populous adheres to the supported religion. In Russia, this seems to be the case. A religious revival is expected to drive what I refer to as Religion-State Opportunism, thus bringing us to the third and final hypothesis:

H3: As the number of Russians who identify as Orthodox increases, state support for the ROC will increase as well.

These three hypotheses seek to explain why the Russian state has increasingly supported the Russian Orthodox Church and through this study, scholars will be able to move towards an understanding of this complex relationship which has led to a variety of domestic and international implications.

Research Design

For the purposes of conducting this examination of religion and the state, I use an explanatory case study of Russia's support for the ROC. This study was conducted qualitatively and data regarding preferential state support for the ROC was collected. Although such a study

would benefit from alternative research designs, given the limited time period, an explanatory case-study approach has been deemed most efficient and effective. The scope of the study is 2002-2018 and the level of analysis is country-year. The operationalization of my dependent and independent variables is described below.

Dependent Variable: *State Support*

State support is defined as, *the degree to which a government provides the majority religion with institutional, fiscal, or political advantages not afforded to, or limited to a lesser degree than, the minority religion*. In order to properly measure the dependent variable, I have separated state support into three types of subsidies (mechanisms of support): 1) Institutional subsidies are laws, policies or actions that provide an advantage/subsidy or special recognition to the majority religion (i.e. Constitution, legislation, actions or policies by government actors/institutions); 2) fiscal subsidies are financial advantages (i.e. funding, tax exemptions); and 3) political subsidies include government access, privileges, and discourse.

This operationalization enables my study to measure state support uniformly and objectively, thus establishing a valid and reliable research design. The dependent variable will be measured as follows. For additional information, please see the Appendix.

Measurement for State Support

0. *No Support*: The state does not provide the majority religion with subsidies or support beyond what is provided to other religions.
1. *Low Support*: The state unofficially works with the majority religion to provide benefits or advantages that are not given to other religions (ex. Policy consultations/lobbying, rhetoric/public discourse, etc.)

2. *Medium Support*: The state officially provides the majority religion with benefits or advantages not given to other religions.
(ex. Legislation/state policies, tax exemptions/funding, preferred access to public institutions)
3. *High Support*: The state officially and actively works to provide advantages to the majority religion and limits subsidies for other religions.
(ex. Discrimination, prevention, limitations in the form of funding, permits, access)

Independent Variables:

Regime Stability

Regime stability or Political stability is defined and measured using the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project reports. Their methodology refers to Political Stability or Absence of Terrorism as "capturing perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism" (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010, 4). In addition, I utilize the World Bank's annual measure of GDP growth as a measure of instability.

Legitimacy

Legitimacy is defined as the ability of a government and its leaders to attain popular support in which there is no widespread contestation to the power and authority of the state. This study measures legitimacy of the Russian government through opinion polling from the Levada Center and Interfax Religion. The first opinion poll is public trust for the Russian Orthodox Church, which is compared to increasing state support. The second is a polling of whether or not Russia is moving in the right direction, which I have established as a basic measurement for government legitimacy.

Identity

Identity is defined as an individual's identification with the ROC and the common culture, norms, and values that are associated with being a member of this group. This study uses polling and rhetorical analysis to measure identification with the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia.

Methodology

This study encompasses a qualitative theory-testing research design that utilizes archival records, studies, articles, and news sources to examine the outlined theory above as to why the Russian state supports the Russian Orthodox Church. Given that this is a new theory, having undergone no previous empirical research, testing the theory constructed is crucial in order to move towards qualitative research, and will entertain alternative explanations. For more information, please see the data collection and coding procedure in the introduction of the Appendix. Upon completion of data collection and case coding, I compiled a series of graphs to represent the trends in order to determine if the hypothesized explanations for state-support of the majority in Russia are supported.

Since the early 2000's the Russian state has increasingly supported the Russian Orthodox Church through a variety of mechanisms. This support has come at the expense of Russia's other religious institutions, essentially establishing Orthodoxy as the state religion. In order to understand why the Russian state has acted in this way, I will provide three interwoven explanations to unpack the trend of increasing preferential state support over time. This is a macro-level explanation and will be supplemented with an event-driven micro-level analysis for a major instance related to state support. The macro and micro lenses of explanation allow for a

more complete understanding of the Russian state's support for the ROC, and how both parties have mutually benefited from this trend. The goal of the following chapter is to unpack the data and detail the trends in order to move towards providing an explanation for the Russian government's actions.

CHAPTER 3

PREFERENTIAL STATE SUPPORT OF THE ROC SINCE 2000

The reconstruction of Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union required significant institutional, cultural, financial, and political transformation. The tenure and slow decline of Boris Yeltsin, which elevated the little-known Vladimir Putin to the national and global stage, catalyzed legislative and political actions that secured rights and freedoms for the Federation's religions. The Constitution of the Russia Federation explicitly says in Article 14 that, "1. The Russian Federation is a secular state. No religion may be established as a state or obligatory one" and "2. Religious associations shall be separated from the State and shall be equal before the law" ("The Constitution of the Russian Federation") This article, like many that address religion and its establishment across constitutions, is vague and open to interpretation. However, it does, separate "church" and "state". Despite this, within the first few years of Vladimir Putin's first presidential term, the ROC began to receive additional benefits from the state not enjoyed by other religious institutions. As previously mentioned, preferential state support of the ROC is deeply rooted in Russia's history. Over 80 instances were recorded during the data collection period of this study, demonstrating that the Russian government has effectively circumvented its Constitution by supporting one religious institution, the ROC, to a greater extent than other religious institutions. The equality of religious institutions in Russia is maintained under the law, though, in practice, it is routinely ignored. The narrative laid out below is a collection of primary and secondary sources which seek to demonstrate the state's increasing preferential treatment of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the fascinating trends within and across the mechanisms of support over time.

Through the assessment and analysis of state support for religious institutions, there are three distinct but interwoven classifications of preferential state support: institutional, fiscal, and political. The measurement for these support types, which was detailed in the previous chapter, is broken out into four categories: no support, low support, medium support, and high support. Again, for the purposes of this study, state support refers to preferential actions, opportunities, access, discourse, etc. Instances of preferential state support are only classified and included as findings if they represent treatment not afforded to other religious institutions. This distinction is important given the overwhelming state support and preferential treatment of Russia's "traditional" religious (Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) since 2000, though this departs from the scope of this study, which is solely focused on preferential state support of the Russian Orthodox Church³. According to the 2018 annual report by the USCIRF, the Russian state treats the ROC as a "de facto state church" ("2018 Annual Report" 2018, 73). Moreover, this report further states that such "favoritism has fostered a climate of hostility toward other religions" and amounts to "sponsorship" (Ibid.). Crucial to Russia's preferential state support is the institutional mechanism, which includes laws, policies, and government or sponsored institutional actions that provide an advantage or special recognition. The second mechanism, fiscal and/or financial support, is pervasive. The federal, oblast, and local levels experience a varying degree of financial support for the ROC as agencies and government-sponsored organizations or corporations provide funding and exemptions. The third and final aspect is political support, which is conceptualized as government access, unofficial or official privileges, and discourse that is preferential to the Russian Orthodox Church. Separately, these mechanisms of support have had a significant impact on the ROC, Russian government, and Russian people,

³ For additional information regarding preferential treatment of religions more broadly in Russia, please see the yearly Sova Center reports: <https://www.sova-center.ru/en/religion/publications/>

and collectively, preferential support of Russia's majority religion has established a clear norm within the state that exceeds individual piety.

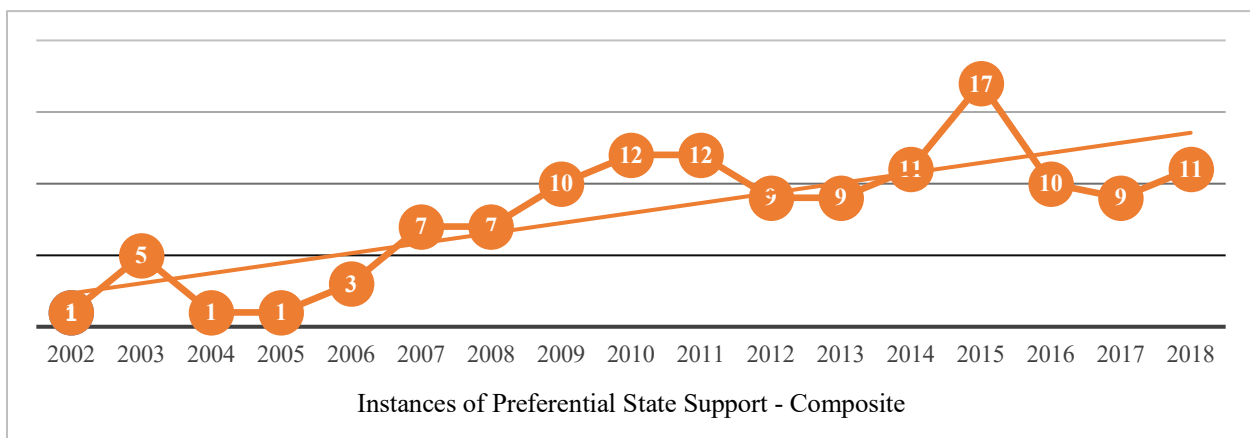
Trends in Preferential State Support

When analyzing the Russian government's support for the Russian Orthodox Church, it has become apparent that there is an increase in each type of preferential treatment over time (institutional, fiscal, political), and thus, an overall increase in support, demonstrated by the composite measure of the three support mechanisms. As reflected in the composite⁴ figure below, there are peaks and troughs since 2002, though an overall increase over time. In addition, the latest year recorded, 2018, shows a clear upward trend. I will address the possible explanations behind the overall and mechanism-specific trends, along with why the state has increased its preferential support of the ROC during this time period in Chapter 4. Figure 3.0, which is a composite graph composed of the three variables per annum, shows relatively little activity until 2007. The spike in 2003 is a result of three institutional and two political instances of state support. An upward trend in 2006 culminates in two consecutive years of significant state support, followed by a three-point increase, which results in stagnation from 2009-2011. It is important to note that the increase in state support from 2006-2008 coincides with the last two years of Vladimir Putin's second presidential term. The increase from 2008-2009, and

⁴ The composite measure adds each instance according to its corresponding level of support (Low = 1, Medium = 2, High = 3) in a given year. There are instances that are coded as a combination of support types (i.e. Political/Fiscal, Institutional/Political/Fiscal). In these cases, the composite does not double or triple count scores. Rather, the instance maintains a score as if it was recorded under a single type of state support but is noted as encompassing more than one type. For the support specific graphs (institutional, fiscal, political), all instances are counted in the total score per year. If an instance of support in a given year is both political and fiscal in nature, then the score is not halved in their respective individual support-type graphs. In such a case, as occurs in 2007 with a political/fiscal instance of medium intensity, the political support data and graph will include a score of two for this instance, as will the fiscal support data and graph. In addition, instances not contained to a single year (i.e. cooperation agreements) are added to the total score of all successive years the agreement is maintained in order to reflect continuities of state support.

subsequent stagnation from 2009-2011, were during the first presidential term of Dmitry Medvedev. The last year of Medvedev's term, 2011-2012, saw a three-point decrease in overall preferential state support of the ROC. Vladimir Putin began his third presidential term in 2012, and 2012-2013 was a year of stagnant state support. The following two years, 2014 and 2015, are particularly interesting. There was a two-point increase in 2014, and a six-point increase in 2015; this is the largest single year increase and 2015 also saw the most single-year instances of state support in the dataset. Upon review of the composite graph, there is a clear upward trend beginning in 2013. However, 2016 and 2017 each saw decreases in overall state support. The most significant decline year-to-year was present following 2015, during which a seven-point decrease occurred. This was followed by a one-point decrease in 2017, in which state support fell back to the levels seen in 2012 and 2013. The final year under analysis, 2018, saw a two-point increase from the prior year, and is consistent with the upward trend seen in 2014. For a complete representation of recorded instances, see Figure 3.0 below.

Figure 3.0



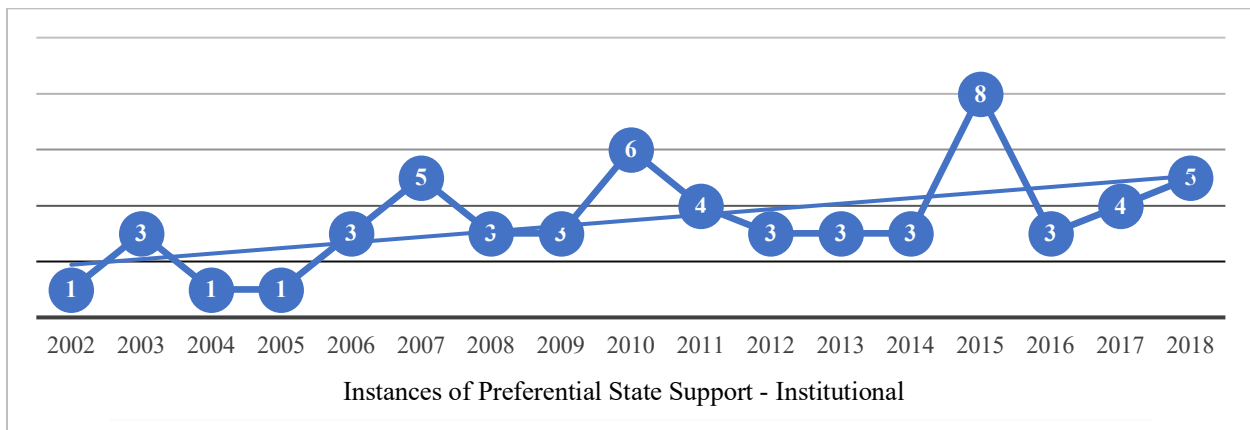
In order to further understand preferential state support of the Russian Orthodox Church, I have constructed graphs based on the movement in mechanism-specific support. The Russian state uses a variety of different mechanisms to support the ROC; many of which are single-instance events that utilize one mechanism, whereas others are multi-instance events over the course of many years. A full reporting of instances can be found in section two of this chapter or the Appendix. Below are three graphs (Figure 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3) to illustrate both the overall increase in preferential state support within each “type” and the inter-mechanism fluctuations. The support instance fluctuations are of particular importance given the similarities and differences across mechanisms and in comparison to the overall composite measure.

The graphs below (Figure 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3) are a year-by-year instance report for institutional, fiscal, and political state support of the ROC. With regards to institutional support, there were relatively few instances from 2002-2005, with a slight two-point increase in 2003. Compared to the other two mechanisms, there are more instances (institutional) during this three-year period. There were no instances of fiscal/financial state support during this period and two instances of political support contained to 2003. All three mechanisms saw an increase in state support after 2006, though this upward trend does not follow a similar path across all three support types. In order to address these disparities, I will outline the trajectory of instances for each individual mechanism in the paragraphs below.

Institutional state support increased by two points in both 2006 and 2007, leading to a six-year high of five instances. During 2008, the instances dropped by two points and remained constant in 2009. The increase in this mechanism resumed in 2010 to six instances, though decreased in 2011 and 2012. State support remained at three instances from 2012-2014. In 2015, the single largest increase in institutional support (five instances) was recorded. This is tied for the

largest year-to-year increase, as reflected in the five-point increase recorded for 2009's political support (see Figure 3.3). 2015 was also the year of highest overall instances for institutional state support (eight instances). The following year saw a precipitous decrease of six points to three instances, which is tied with 2016's political support for the single largest year-to-year decrease. Since 2016, there has been a steady increase of one instance per year. The last year of recorded instances, 2018, has returned to the 2007 high of five. Overall, preferential institutional state support for the ROC saw upward movement in 2003, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2015, 2017, and 2018, and downward movement in 2004, 2008, 2011, 2012, and 2016. Stagnant levels of this mechanism were observed in 2004-2005, 2008-2009, and 2012-2014. For a graphical representation, please see Figure 3.1 below.

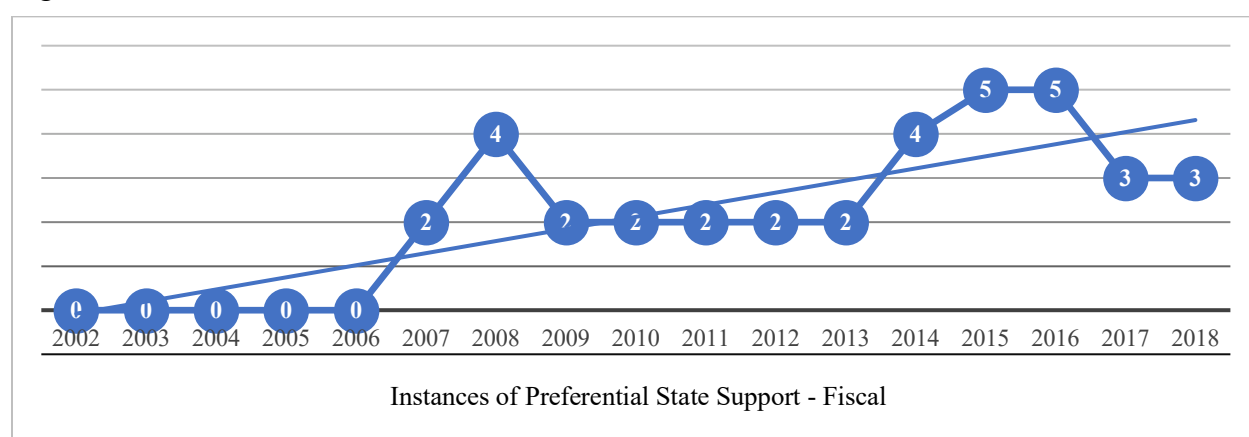
Figure 3.1



The second mechanism recorded, fiscal or financial state support, is the most stabilized of the three. From 2002-2006, there were zero instances of this support type. However, there was a two-point increase in both 2007 and 2008, leading to a seven year high of four instances. Fiscal support dropped by two points in 2009 and remained stagnant until 2014, during which it returned

to the 2008 level of four instances. Fiscal state support increased to five in 2015, and remained at this level in 2016, which is the highest level of fiscal instances throughout the sixteen-year period. In 2017, instances of state support decreased to three, which was also maintained in 2018. Overall, preferential fiscal state support of the ROC saw upward movement in 2007, 2008, 2014, and 2015, and downward movement in 2009 and 2017. For a graphical representation, see Figure 3.2.

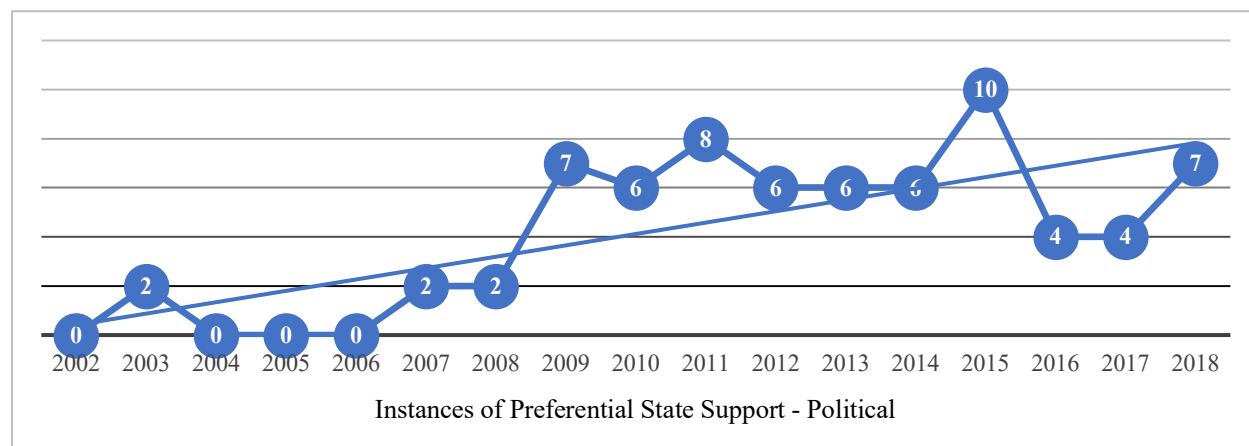
Figure 3.2



Political state support was the most erratic of the three mechanisms, though saw a strong increase over time. There were no instances of political support from 2002-2006 except for two instances in 2003. 2007 began an upward trend that did not peak until 2015. 2007 and 2008 had recordings of two instances each. In 2009, instances increased to seven, which was the largest year-to-year increase (five) for this mechanism. There was a one-point decrease in 2010 and a two-point increase in 2011 to eight instances. Political state support decreased in 2012 to six instances and maintained this level through 2014. 2015 was the highest year of instances for this support type, with a recording of ten. The following year saw a six-point decrease to four instances, which is the largest for this mechanism and largest across all three mechanisms. 2017 remained at four

instance and 2018 saw a three-point increase to seven. Overall, upward movement was observed in 2003, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2015, and 2018, whereas downward movement was observed in 2004, 2010, 2012, and 2016. For a graphical representation, see Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3



Across the three different mechanisms, the largest disparity between highest and lowest yearly instances of state support was present in the recording of political instances; a low of zero in 2002, 2004, 2005, and 2006 versus a high of ten instances in 2015. Institutional state support is significant given that it is the only mechanism that saw some level of state support during each year under review. In addition, this support type saw increasing peaks (3, 5, 6, 8) and stabilized troughs (1, 3, 3, 3). For fiscal state support, there is less volatility, though still an increase in the peaks over time (4, 5). Also present are increasing troughs (0, 2, 3) and significant stagnation in state support compared to the other two mechanisms; two five-year periods (2002-2006 and 2009-2013) maintain levels of zero and two instances, respectively. Political support similarly sees increasing peaks (2, 7, 8, 10), though the troughs do not follow an increasing trend over time. From 2002-2015, the troughs trend as follows: 0, 6, 6, 6. In 2016-2017, the trough decreases to 4.

Overall, from 2002-2018, the cumulative number of instances per mechanism, which represents the most amount of state support of the ROC, was found in political preferential treatment. The lowest cumulative number of instances during the term under observation was fiscal support. The hierarchy of support mechanisms utilized by the Russian state to preferentially support the Russian Orthodox Church is as follows: political, institutional, and fiscal. Within each type of support, there are commonalities in the specific techniques used by the state. For example, the state has, in three separate instances and years, either agreed to seek the consent or required approval of the ROC beforehand; treatment not afforded to other religious institutions. Another technique is the establishment of working or cooperation groups between government entities and the ROC; there are four recorded agreements that have been in place since 2003, 2006, 2007, and 2009, respectively. In six instances, the state has provided financial support to the ROC; funding is allocated directly from the state, through state-sponsored NGOs, state corporations, or advocating for citizens to support. The final technique that has repeatedly been utilized over time is the transfer of property. The trends outlined in this section are a result of the individual recorded instances of state support per year and are expanded upon below.

Yearly Instances of Preferential State Support

The first two years of President Putin's term were not marked by many significant developments in regard to preferential state support of the Russian Orthodox Church. The single instance of such support within this timeframe occurred in 2002 in which the Council of Europe criticized Russian officials of preferential treatment. Religious organizations faced pressure from Russian officials to seek the approval of the ROC for their activities ("Two Assembly" 2002). This institutional support demonstrates preferential treatment; such a mechanism of state support is

pervasive and increasingly utilized over time. In 2003, there were two recordings of preferential institutional support. The first of which is the formation of a working group between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ROC. This partnership is still in place today and meets regularly⁵ (Curanović 2013). Secondly, a criminal case was brought against two people who vandalized an art exhibit that the Moscow Patriarchate and Russian Orthodox believers (including the assailants) viewed as anti-religious. The exhibition, titled "Caution, Religion!", allowed attendees to insert their face into a representation of an icon, which also included a carved hammer and sickle. One of the accused vandals, Mikhail Lyukshin said, "Our actions are not crime-based and no hooliganism. We did not commit illegal actions. On the contrary, the exhibition organizers are violators of the law. We tried to prevent the crime" (PIA 2003). The case was thrown out by the Zamoskvoretsky District Court of Moscow and a new criminal case was brought against the organizers of the exhibit for "expressing religious hatred" (PIA 2003). This instance is categorized as institutional state support for the ROC given that no similar rulings or prosecutorial actions were taken in response to complaints made by other religious institutions. Lastly, in 2003, President Putin said that an official visit to Russia by the Pope (Bishop of Rome) required the consent of the Russian Orthodox Church. I have found no record of such privileges being extended to other religious institutions and so this represents political state support (Curanović 2007, 316).

In 2006, the ROC signed an agreement with *Rospatent* (the Federal Service for Intellectual Property, Patents and Trademarks) through which any trademark potentially relating to religious organizations would be coordinated with the Moscow Patriarchate. There are no similar agreements with other religious institutions (A. Verkovsky, O. Sibireva 2006). Separately, in the following year, the establishment of the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation strengthened the state's

⁵ It should be noted that the MoFA has signed cooperation agreements with other religious institutions, though they meet infrequently.

relationship with the ROC. This government-sponsored cultural organization promotes Russian language and culture, though, since its inception, it has become increasingly political and has overwhelmingly supported and cooperated with the ROC (Andis and Robert 2010). This state-sponsored NGO will be further discussed and explored in the next chapter as its influence and utilization by the state has had an impact across Russia's sphere of influence. Additionally, in 2007, the ROC entered into a cooperation agreement with *Rossvyazokhrankultura* (Russian Federal Service for Supervision of Legal Adherence in Mass Media, Communications and Cultural Heritage Protection). *Rossvyazokhrankultura* agreed to give "prompt attention to the ROC's applications for appropriation of religious buildings, including architectural heritage sites" (A. Verkovsky, O. Sibireva 2007). No such preferential treatment was found for other religious organizations. The year 2008, during which Dmitry Medvedev became President, saw significant state financial support to the ROC. Gorkovskii Railway, a state-controlled rail company, donated 300 million rubles for the renovation of multiple church buildings in Nizhnii Novgorod (A. Verkovsky, O. Sibireva 2008). Similarly, state-owned bank Rosneft donated 60 million rubles for construction of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church in Kursk. During this year, there were no significant donations by state corporations to other religious institutions.

In 2009, there were three instances of political preferential support. According to SOVA, the Prefecture of the Central Administrative District in Moscow "denied permission to hold a picket against potential autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church" (A. Verkovsky, O. Sibireva 2009). The Prefect's office informally referenced a letter from the Moscow Patriarchate which stated that "spiritual" events should be referred to the ROC for approval (Ibid). Additionally, two high-ranking legislators, Head of the State Duma Committee for Labor and Social Policy Andrei Isayev and Deputy Speaker of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin, had a meeting with

Patriarch Kirill. Following the meeting, Isayev said that the MPs agreed to provide their legislative plans to the Moscow Patriarchate and will “consult” with the ROC on all potentially controversial matters “in order to avoid misunderstanding” (Ibid.). Thirdly, there was a strengthening of the relationship between the ROC and the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation through a cooperation agreement. According to a *Penn Law Review* article, “the Orthodox Church enjoys a monopoly as the sole religious organization bestowed with a seat on the Foundation’s board of trustees” (Blitt 2011, 387-388). 2010 was a particularly significant year for the transfer of property to religious organizations. The Kaliningrad regional government transferred property to the ROC that was never owned by the ROC. In a separate case, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation directly involved itself in a property transfer case by urging for the completion of paperwork required in the handover of the cathedral within the Ryazan Kremlin Museum complex. For both of these instances, no such institutional preferential support was observed for other religious institutions. An example of political state support is the cooperation between the ROC and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Days of Russian Spiritual Culture project. According to a 2010 report by the SOVA Center, “the program is wholly Orthodox in orientation and directly links the Moscow Patriarchate and state to the exclusion of all other faiths existing in Russia today” (“Freedom of Conscience” 2010).

In 2011, the instances of political state support increased substantially. For example, President Medvedev called the ROC the “largest and most authoritative social institution in contemporary Russia” (“Russia’s Orthodox Soft Power” 2015) and Patriarch Kirill was provided a residence in the Kremlin (“Предстоятель Русской Церкви”). Separately, in Moscow, a government radio channel and newspaper collaborate with Metropolitan Luvenalii “on a regular basis” (“Freedom of Conscience” 2011). There were no known reports of such collaboration with

other religious institutions. Finally, in Moscow's Central Administrative Region, officials asked organizers of a picket marking the anniversary of the abolition of serfdom "to produce a written blessing [from the Russian Orthodox Church] to conduct the proposed action" (Ibid.). The report noted that the officials rationalized this request due to the picket being held close to the Church of Christ the Savior.

Although there was only one instance of preference state support of the ROC in 2012, it was unequivocally impactful and remains widely contested both in Russia and around the world. At the Church of Christ the Savior in Moscow, three women entered the church, stood upon the church's solea, and engaged in singing and dancing. The women, who are members of the feminist protest group Pussy Riot, were charged under Article 213, Part 2 of the Criminal Code, which refers to hooliganism, "committed by a group of persons by previous concert, or by an organised group, or connected with resistance to a representative of authority or to any other person who fulfills the duty of protecting the public order or who suppresses violation of public order" ("The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation"). According to the Criminal Code, this crime is punishable by a fine, compulsory labor, or deprivation of liberty (incarceration). The women were not offered bail and thus imprisoned for the entire six months prior to their trial. Khamovnicheskii District Court found the women guilty and sentenced them to two years in prison ("Freedom of Conscience" 2012). According to the SOVA Center, the indictment and verdict included ecclesiastical rhetoric, such as the term 'blasphemy', and cited the canons of church councils. One of the women appealed and won, leading to a two-year probation. The other two women served 21 out of the 24 months of their prison terms (Ivashkiv and Zabyelina 2017). In the aftermath of this significant series of events, the State Duma introduced a law to protect religious believers from offense. Passed in 2013, this law allows the state to prosecute "actions expressing obvious

disrespect toward society and committed to abuse of religious feelings of believers” (The Moscow Times 2013).

Additionally, in 2013, President Putin discussed in a speech the necessity and historical significance of religious values in Russia, and specifically mentioned the ROC, while excluding all other religious organizations (“Meeting of the Valdai” 2013). Another example of preferential political support was present in the “Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation”. This document, originating from the Office of the President of the Russia Federation, specifically mentions support and interaction with the ROC and refers to other religious institutions as “other main confessions” (“Concept of the Foreign” 2013). In 2014, *The Moscow Times* reported that the state provided about two billion rubles to the ROC for “spiritual enlightenment centers”. Moreover, in the “Bases of State Cultural Policy”, President Putin mentioned how “Orthodoxy has played a special role in shaping Russia's value system” (МИНИСТЕРСТВО КУЛЬТУРЫ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ).

During the televised celebration commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Soviet Union’s victory in the Great Patriotic War in 2015, Defense Minister Shoygu made the sign of the cross while passing through the Kremlin gates (“Something Truly” 2015). Another example of preferential political treatment was the firing of the Novosibirsk State Opera and Ballet Theater director by the Ministry of Culture following the ROC’s criticism of a production (“Siberian Opera Runs” 2015). In the Kaluga region Ministry of Health, an order by the acting governor “compelled employees of organizations under its jurisdiction to donate funds to the local diocese for the erection of a memorial to St Lavrenty, and to report to the Ministry on ‘work completed’” (“Freedom of Conscience” 2015). Similarly, employees of the Petersburg ‘Contact’ Rehabilitation Center for Minors in Difficult Life Circumstances, “under the jurisdiction of the city’s Committee

for Youth Policy, were required to participate in a religious procession in honor of the move of St Alexander Nevsky's relics" (Ibid.). The day of the religious procession, which was not a working day, was declared so. Employees were required to attend "in order to accompany juveniles to a city event" (Ibid.). Also in 2015, authorities in at least two regions, Kaluga and Tula, would not register divorces on July 8th, which is the day when Orthodox Christians celebrate the feast of Saints Peter and Fevronia, who are 'patrons of marriage'. On every other day of the year it is possible for citizens in these regions to register a divorce (Ibid.). The final instance of 2015 was financial in nature. Russian state-owned bank VTB began allowing donations to the ROC's '200 Churches' fund. There is no such fund established by a state-owned financial institution for other religions (*The Moscow Times* 2015).

In 2016, a Kremlin-funded Russian Orthodox church was consecrated in Paris (Lichfield 2016). The land on which the church sits was purchased by the Russian government ("Russian Patriarchate" 2016). There are no known instances of federally funded places of worship for other religions outside of Russia. In 2017, Putin supported the handover of St. Isaacs Cathedral in Saint Petersburg to the Moscow Patriarchate. This was highly controversial given that the church is owned by the city and designated a museum. It has held religious services since 1990, and in the wake of public outcry, the transfer was not completed ("Putin Indicates" 2017). In 2018, President Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, condemned "intervention" in church affairs and denounced the decision by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to proceed with autocephaly (separation) of the Ukraine Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate ("Kremlin Blasts" 2018; "Kremlin Shares" 2018). This has led to the merging in December of previously ecumenically unrecognized Ukrainian Orthodox Churches into a now-recognized Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

The Moscow Patriarchate did not recognize Constantinople's decision, thus leading to the Moscow-Constantinople Schism. Finally, in 2018, the Ministry of Defense began building a church for the armed forces, where it will train military priests ("Russia's New Military" 2018). No plans have been announced for additional places of worship specifically designated for the armed forces and military chaplaincy.

The individual instances of preferential state support for the Russian Orthodox Church per year have conclusively demonstrated an overall increase in such support over time. In the next chapter, I will provide explanations for this phenomenon both overall, and within each type of preferential state support.

CHAPTER 4

EXPLANATIONS FOR INCREASING PREFERENTIAL STATE SUPPORT

Macro-Level Explanations for State Support of the ROC*Stability*

The Russian state was fragile during the 1990's, thus requiring newly elected President Vladimir Putin to take actions that would guide Russia towards stability. With the Russian economy in precipitous decline, Putin and his government needed a mechanism to decrease public unrest, or at least distract the populous from the country's dire economic situation. Given that the ROC is a crucial component of Russian society, it wields significant power over public opinion and the public sphere in general; according to Vladimir Putin, "Orthodoxy has always had a special role in shaping our statehood, our culture, our morals (Higgins 2007). Given the history of the ROC as Russia's dominant spiritual and social institution, I argue that the Russian government has seized on the opportunity to utilize a soft stabilizer in the form of religion.

When assessing Russia's economic situation since the turn of the century, it is apparent that there has been an overall decline. Figure 4.0 shows the annual percentage of GDP growth since 2000, clearly demonstrating a slowdown of economic growth in many years, along with significant negative GDP growth in 2009 and 2015; years that interestingly saw increases in state support for the ROC. With preferential state support of the ROC increasing over time, and GDP growth decreasing over time, it is important to reconcile this correlation. It is not apparent that decreasing GDP growth is directly related to increasing state support; rather, I argue that the decrease in economic growth has a compounding effect on the stability of Russia's government that requires the implementation of mechanisms to soften the distressing nature of the economy.

Figure 4.0: World Bank

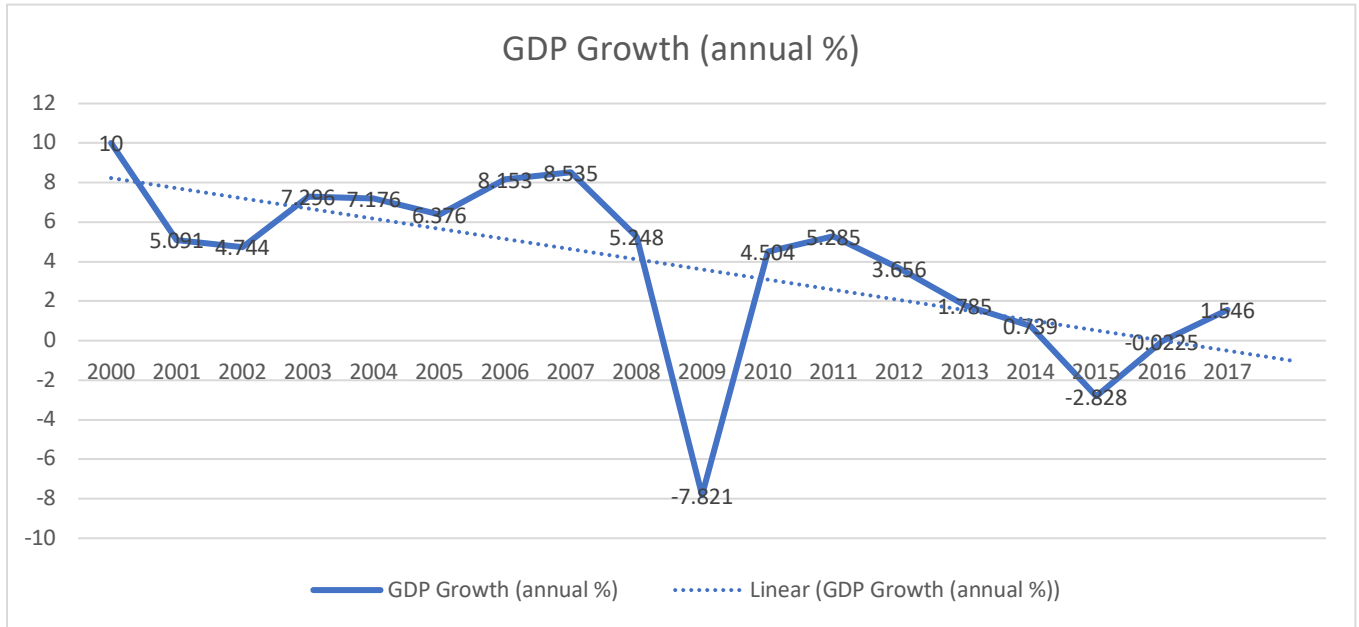
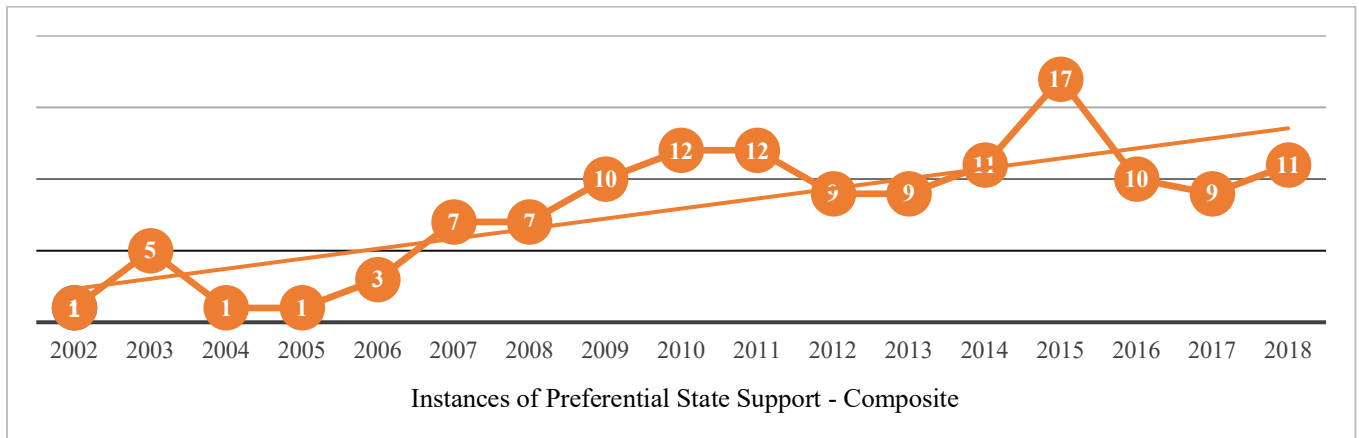


Figure 4.1



According to Smyth and Soboleva (2014), economic well-being is strongly related to support of the regime (259). A softening of regime support leads to the need for new strategies (Ibid., 260). This has taken the form of 1) presenting Putin as the “strong man” who can return Russia to glory and 2) social values and traditions, which are rooted in religion (Ibid). The second strategy is particularly relevant given that the ROC is the primary and leading social

organization through which Russian society derives its values, traditions, and spirituality. When cross-examining the decline in GDP growth and the composite measure of increase in preferential state support of the ROC (Figure 4.1), there are significant negative correlations. With relative stability in GDP growth from 2002-2008, state support is similarly stable until 2007, during which there is a precipitous increase. Given that the economy is not in decline, the stability argument following economic decline does not come into effect until 2009. In looking at Figures 4.0 and 4.1, GDP is negatively correlated with the increase in preferential state support. In addition, as GDP growth recovers, state support does increase, though it tapers off and stabilizes. It should be noted that the GDP decline from 2011-2013 is not negatively correlated with state support. During the same time period, state support is decreasing and then stagnant. However, from 2014-2015, during which GDP growth declines below zero, state support of the ROC increases significantly. Finally, as GDP growth increases from 2016-2017, state support of the ROC decreases. The stability argument deriving from economic decline is not fully supported, though there are periods during the timeframe under consideration that are negatively correlated, thus establishing a basis for the possibility that the decline in Russia's economy has led the state to look to religion in order to act as a stabilizer.

When looking at the three mechanisms of state support (political, institutional, and fiscal), there are no mentionable correlations for the institutional and fiscal support-types. However, there are significant negative correlations for political instances of state support. As reflected in Figures 4.3 and 4.4, 2009 and 2015-2017 show such correlations. This mechanism is likely utilized by the state given its public and overt nature. Political support of the ROC demonstrates the state's commitment to the church and thus acts as a way for the Russian

President and state to increase the power and influence of the church, which has a monopoly on Russian society’s beliefs and values.

Figure 4.2: World Bank

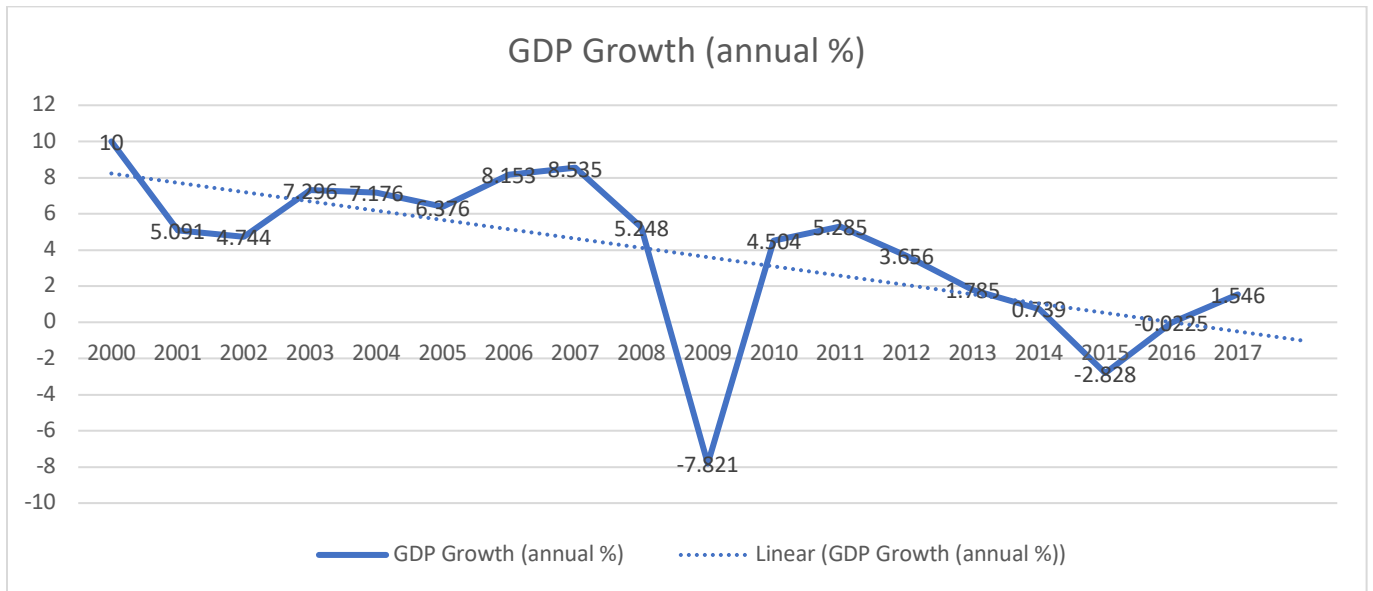
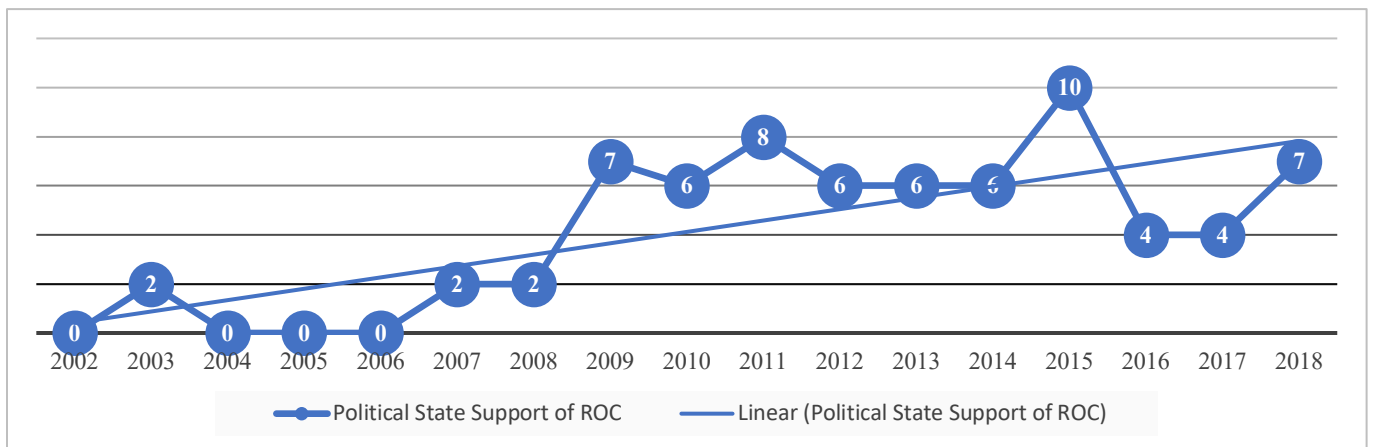


Figure 4.3



To demonstrate the relationship between stability and state support of the ROC, I have included the World Bank’s estimate of political stability and absence of violence/terrorism

(Figure 4.5). The overall increase in stability positively correlates with the increase in preferential state support of the ROC over time (Figure 4.6). I contend that the Russian state has enjoyed increasing stability because of its increasing support of the Russian Orthodox Church. Again, this stability is not a direct result of state support. Instead, the state preferentially supports the church because of its inherent stabilizing characteristics, such as legitimacy, unity, and identity, all of which contribute to the overall stability of the Russian state. With regard to Hypothesis 1 presented in the theory section of Chapter 2, the fluctuations in stability lead to increasing preferential state support, which then leads to an increase in stability. It should be noted that the inverse of the stability explanation put forward is possible; increasing stability has led to increasing state support of the ROC. However, this is less likely due to the great efforts taken by the state to preferentially support the church. The Russian government has allowed the ROC to grow in numbers and power through the legal and institutional frameworks established since the late 1990's.

Figure 4.4: World Bank Group

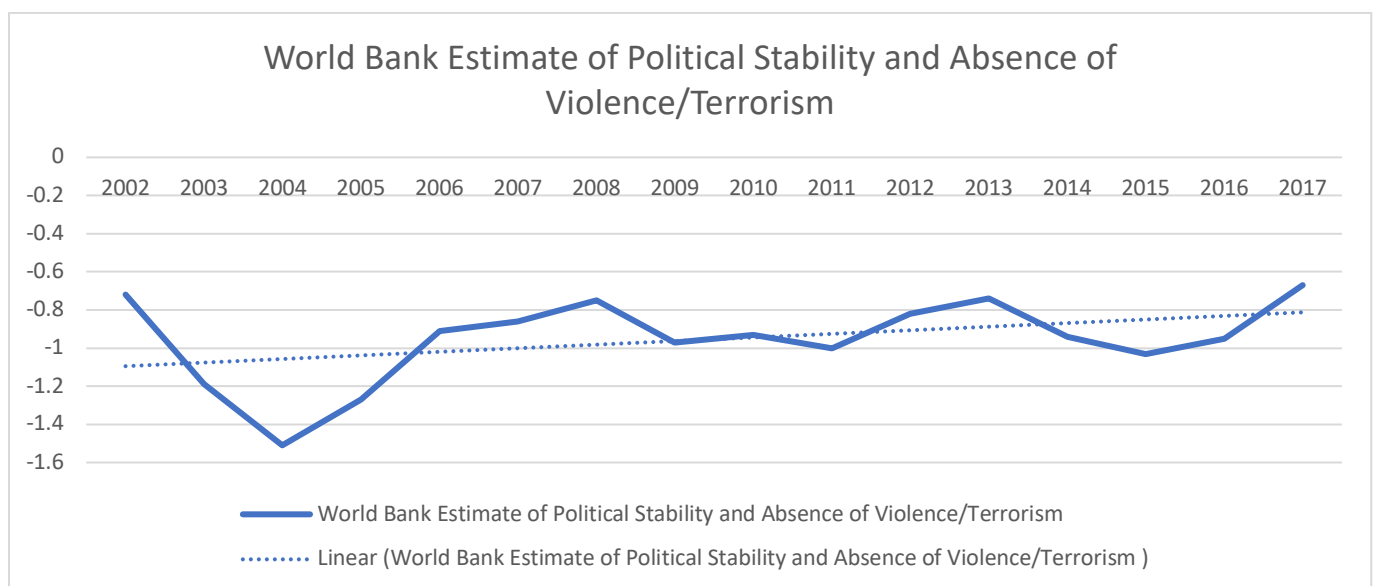
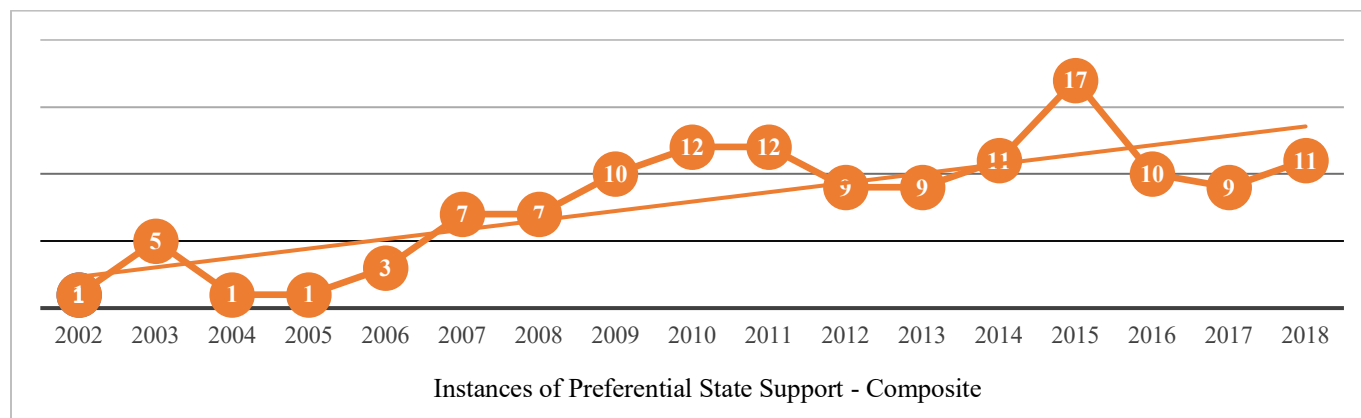


Figure 4.5



Political Legitimacy

With the little-known Vladimir Putin being elevated to the presidency in 1999, legitimacy was crucial for navigating the difficulties of Russian politics. I argue that Vladimir Putin, in conjunction with his “tandem” partner Dmitry Medvedev, have been able to build support by strengthening their personal and their government’s relationship with the ROC and by preferentially supporting the institutional church through the state. This is most clearly represented when cross-examining polling data with instances of state support as reflected Figures 4.7 and 4.8. There is a clear upward trend in the percent of Russian’s who trust the ROC. Figure 4.7 represents data from Interfax Religion, a major private news company in Russia. Given that the ROC has increasingly become an institution that Russians trust, it is reasonable to argue that the state has increasingly supported the church in order to both increase its legitimacy and base of support. According to study by Christopher Marsh (2005a), Orthodox Christians (devout and cultural) are less likely to have participated in or be open to the possibility of engaging in political activities, such as signing a petition, joining a boycott, or joining an unofficial strike (454). This is important because the passivism of Orthodox Russians can be

viewed as beneficial to the Russian state, since there is a lower likelihood of those citizens engaging in activities associated with dissent.

Figure 4.6: Interfax Religion (See “Russians Trust” or “Over Half Russians” in References)

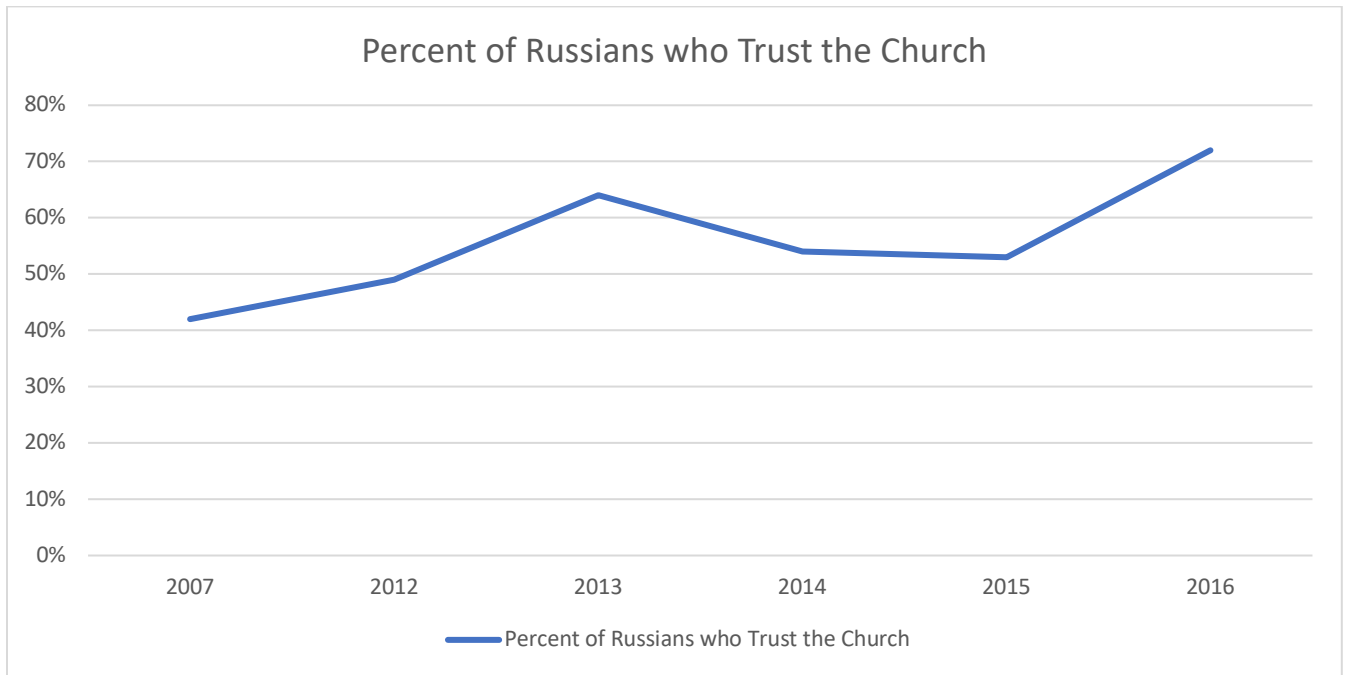
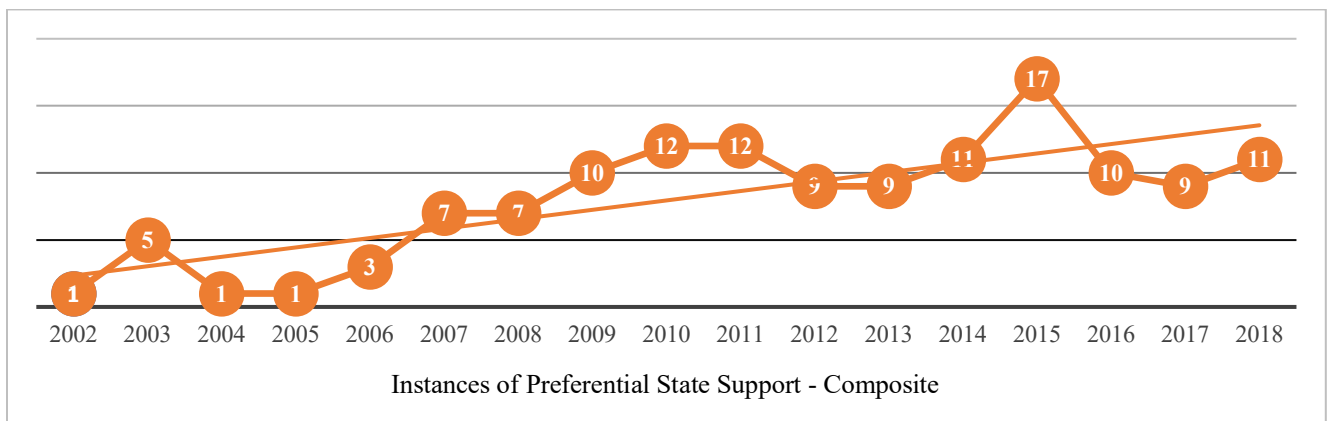


Figure 4.7



In a 2008 Interfax poll, 55% of Russians said that the President should “prefer” the ROC to other religious institutions. A more staggering statistic from the Russian Public Opinion

Research Centre (VTsIOM) found that, in 2013, 50% of Russians think that the President should be Orthodox (“50% of Russians Think” 2013). These statistics are significant and directly corroborate the political legitimization explanation for state support of the ROC. With the majority of Russians believing in preference for the ROC, it would be politically beneficial for the president to preferentially support the church. Continuing the discussion of the religion-state relationship from chapter three, Russia has sought the Russian Orthodox Church as a partner in order to claim “moral authority”; a phenomenon discussed by Gryzmala-Busse (2014). With the percentage of Russian adults who identify with the ROC increasing substantially since 1991 (31% in 1991 and 72% in 2008) according to a 2014 Pew Research study, aligning the government with the church is crucial for legitimacy. It should be noted that in separate polling from the Public Opinion Foundation in Russia, the percent of Russians who consider themselves Orthodox Christians increased from 52% in 1997 to 68% in 2014 (“Russians Return” 2014).

In addition to the Russian populace increasingly trusting the ROC, there has been an increase, though with inter-year fluctuations, in the percentage of Russians who believe the country is moving into the right direction. Figure 4.8 shows fluctuations in approval, which according to Hypothesis 2, will lead to increasing state support. When cross-examined with state support of the ROC, there is an overall positive correlation between state support and legitimacy. Russians have become more confident in the direction of their country since 2000, but this is not directly because of state support for the ROC; Russia has undergone a rebuilding that has included a religious revival, which has an impact on the morale and identity of the nation, as will be discussed in the section below.

Figure 4.8: Levada-Center

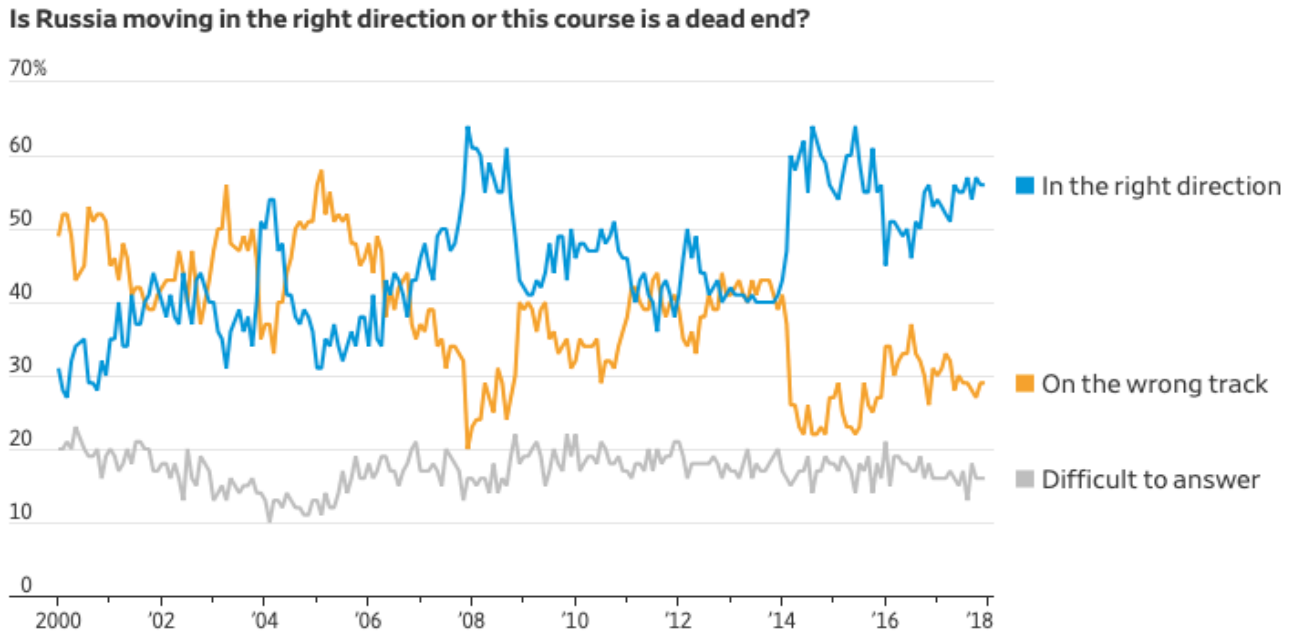
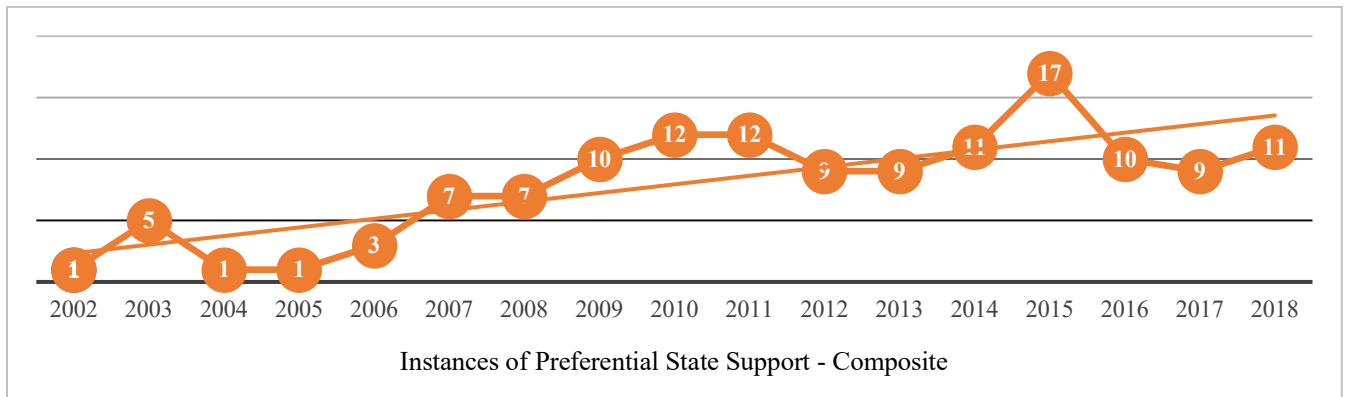


Figure 4.9



The Russian state has seen increasing approval as the state has increasingly supported the church. It should be stressed that I am not intending to attribute the preferential state support as the cause of increased approval, however; the amalgam of benefits associated with preferentially supporting the church do seem to have reaped rewards for the government and its leaders. During

the 2011-2012 mass protests, the ROC supported the government's actions to suppress demonstrators (Solodovnik 2014, 74-75). A clear instance of the ROC legitimizing Vladimir Putin was recorded in the leadup to the 2012 Presidential Election. Patriarch Kirill "advised the faithful to vote for Mr Putin in order to preserve their hard-won stability" (Reuters 2012) and also stated that the Putin presidency was a "miracle of God" (Ibid.). In addition, a 2014 Sreda survey found that 74% of Russians agreed that the "Orthodox Church is necessary for Russia" ("Three-quarters of Russians" 2014), which is one point higher than the 2012 level. This data demonstrates the importance of the ROC to the Russian people and given this importance, it is rational that the Russian government and its leaders would take advantage of the inherent coalition established around Orthodoxy. To further emphasize the political legitimacy afforded to Russia's President, a separate Sreda report found that "the respondents who voted for V. Putin are more likely to show a high level of trust in the Russian Orthodox Church and Patriarch Kirill. More than half of Russians who began "to trust the R.O.C. more" in 2012, voted for V. V. Putin" (Faith, Trust, and Elections" 2014). Political legitimacy can be derived from supporting the ROC because the ROC is a crucial component of Russian life that informs value systems and social interactions. Through polling, it is established that Russians who support the church are likely to support Vladimir Putin as well. This underscores the importance of religion in Russia and why it has become so influential, thus bringing us to the third explanation, Russian identity and the significance of Orthodoxy.

Identity

Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev have sought to remake Russian culture to reflect its history of power and prestige. Given the historical significance of the ROC, I argue that the

growing number of those who identify as Russian Orthodox has helped accomplish this. The ROC is crucial to Russian identity because it offers a unified and Russo-specific culture. According to Burgess (2009) there are at least three features that Orthodoxy offers: “In many Russians’ minds, to be Russian is to be Orthodox; Orthodox identity provides for social harmony and unity in post-Soviet Russia; Orthodoxy gives Russians a sense of national mission”. This has been the mission of Vladimir Putin, realized through a variety of political, institutional, and fiscal measures to strengthen the country by strengthening the culture. I argue that Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Medvedev, and the United Russia party has sought to reestablish Russia’s identity in order to unite the Russian people and provide a coherent culture and value-system that supports the regime.

Beginning in 2000 with the National Security Concept, the Russian government emphasized the “spiritual renewal” of the country, with Orthodoxy as the primary vessel (Blitt 2011, 457). As reflected in the previous chapter, the Russian government has preferentially supported the ROC and has publicly stated the church’s importance to Russian society, identity and culture. Russia’s “sovereign democracy”, a term meant to distinguish Russia’s form of “democracy” from the Western definition, provides Vladimir Putin with the flexibility to use the country’s history and traditions as an excuse for establishing an illiberal democracy. The Russian government, through the United Russia (*Yedinnaya Rossiya*) party, has turned to conservative and traditionalist policies that seek to reform Russia’s culture and reestablish its identity. According to Geifman and Teper (2014), it was not until 2012 that Putin began to construct an ideology; this may be due, in part, to the low approval ratings reflected in Figure 4.8. They further note that public support required a clear message, which took the form of a conservative, national-patriotic, anti-western and Orthodox identity. The Russian Orthodox Church

unsurprisingly shares the values espoused by Vladimir Putin, thus leading Putin and United Russia to invoke Orthodoxy. These values, such as conservatism and traditionalism, have led the Russian government to implement a variety of policies that target homosexuals and abortion, along with the decriminalization of domestic violence (“European Court Blasts” 2017; Ferris-Rotman 2017; Stallard 2018). During Dmitry Medvedev’s first annual address as President to the Federal Assembly in 2008, he discussed the importance of values and traditions to Russia, essentially establishing United Russia as a conservative party (Trenin 2010, 27). Led by ‘conservative modernization’, the idea that Russia will move past its “backwardness” by embracing the values of a “traditional family, a strong state, patriotism, ‘faith in Russia,’ and great-power independence” (Ibid., 28), the state under Medvedev and Putin reformed Russian culture. The conservative ideas and values have been embraced not only by Russia’s leaders, but by the Russian Orthodox Church as well, due to its social conservatism (Ibid., 29).

In addition to the conservative values, the ROC advocates for the creation of proactive citizenship that advances the goals of the nation. With regard to the governments of Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev, the church is a useful partner because of its determination to reestablish Russia as a traditional power. The Moscow Patriarchate, in its *Basis of the Social Concept*, states that:

The patriotism of the Orthodox Christian should be active. It is manifested when he defends his fatherland against an enemy, works for the good of the motherland, cares for the good order of people’s life through, among other things, participation in the affairs of government. The Christian is called to preserve and develop national culture and people’s self-awareness (“The Basis of the Social Concept”).

Additionally, the establishment of the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation, which seeks to export ‘Russianness’, has utilized the ROC as the moral genesis and cultural foundation for the country (“Russia’s Orthodox Soft Power” 2015). The Russian Orthodox Church has become increasingly important in Russia due to the increase in identification with this religious institution, along with

the government's goal of creating a unified identity that is rooted in Russia's pre-Soviet history of power and prestige ("Mandate of Heaven" 2015).

This embrace of conservatism has benefited the state and Russian Orthodox Church due to the increasing number of Orthodox who largely identify with such values. According to a 2006 study, between 55 and 59 percent of Russian citizens and 82 percent of ethnic Russians identified as Orthodox (Filatov and Lunkin 2006, 35). It is important to note that statistics on the number of Orthodox Russians is highly variable depending on the polling, though Pew Research Center reported 72 percent in 2008 "(Russians Return" 2014). When polled for questions regarding conservative values, 80 percent of Russians were against gay marriage ("Over Half Russians" 2015), and in a later survey, 72 percent opposed the banning of abortion (Ferris-Rotman 2017). This is significant because most Russians are not observant Orthodox Christians (Filatov and Lunkin 2006, 40). Instead, cultural Orthodoxy has grown, albeit with limits, thus leading to a superficial religious revival that has enabled the reinstatement of traditional values rooted in Orthodoxy.

These three macro-level explanations (stability, political legitimacy, and identity) are possible answers for the overall increase in state support for the ROC. There is strong support for the legitimacy and identity explanations and weak support for the stability explanation. It is crucial to highlight the alternative explanations for increasing state support. It is possible that this increase is a result and not a cause of the three explanations discussed. The increasing power of the ROC could be a result of religious freedom in Russia, though this is not likely given the preferential treatment and institutional advantages afforded to the ROC. The Russian government has favored the church and enabled its rise, though the state may have increasingly supported the ROC due to the populations increasing identification with Orthodoxy and not the government's

(and Vladimir Putin's) interest in securing power. Nonetheless, the Russian state has become increasingly preferential of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has had a wide variety of implications. To fully understand this phenomenon, it is crucial to dissect the inter-year fluctuations of state support, which can provide greater insight into why the state has increasingly supported the church.

Event-Driven State Support of the ROC

In order to account for the movements in state support of the ROC, I argue that the state has increased such support following politically sensitive events that cause the population to protest, demonstrate, or lash out against the government and/or its leaders. Unfortunately, this is beyond the scope of the study, and so this event-driven explanation has not been fully developed; however, I will analyze one significant year-to-year fluctuation to establish this possible explanatory factor. The Russian Orthodox Church supports the Russian state to maintain its reciprocal relationship. Linking back to the variables above, the ROC's close relation with the state and support during such events legitimizes and stabilizes. The instance below is an event that has caused considerable political controversy in Russia, thus requiring the state to both justify its actions and react to public outcry. I contend that it is through the support of the Russian Orthodox Church that the Russian state has been, in part, capable of overcoming this controversy. With the ROC acting as a stabilizer, legitimizer, and identity-establishing social institution, the Russian government has increased its support over time in order to maximize the benefits of this mutually beneficial relationship. However, this fluctuation in state support, I argue, is a result of individual instances, thus leading to the state changing its level of support year-by-year in order to respond to the both politically sensitive events and the reactions of the

Russian population. Moreover, the fluctuations in the composite level of state support are a result of the changes in the mechanism-specific levels of state support. The event below is one of the most well-known and impactful political controversies in Russia since 2002.

Russia's Intervention in Ukraine

During the period under review, institutional state support saw small fluctuations, except for 2014-2016. These years are significant due to Russia's intervention in Ukraine, which has been highly controversial but also extremely beneficial to President Putin. The Russian government utilizes state entities to preferentially support the ROC, which has had a profound impact on the status of the church. With an influential ROC, I argue that the state and its leaders can take actions of considerable risk, knowing that the church will largely support them and thus provide moral justification. Figure 4.11 is a graphical representation of Vladimir Putin's approval rating provided by the Levada Center. Prior to the intervention in Ukraine, Vladimir Putin's approval rating hovered above 60 percent. The precipitous increase following the invasion of Crimea and war in the Donbas drove Putin's approval rating above 80 percent. Figure 4.12 shows the composite instances of state support, and there is a significant increase from 2014-2015.

Political state support also saw a sharp increase in 2015. As seen with institutional support, I argue that Russia's actions in Ukraine drove the state to significantly increase state support for the ROC as a result of the political controversy surrounding the annexation of Crimea and war in the Donbas. During an address in March of 2014, Vladimir Putin said, "Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. This is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptised. His spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy

predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus” (“Address by President” 2014). With the widespread popularity for the annexation and war in Ukraine, I contend that the significant decrease in political state support of the ROC in 2016 is rational and a result of the state enjoying the legitimacy and stability from both this event and the increasing preferential support for the church in previous years. Finally, the protests in 2017-2018 and growth of the opposition movement against Vladimir Putin necessitated an increase in state support, since the ROC provides legitimacy and a sense of identity that are crucial to Vladimir Putin and his government.

Figure 4.11: Vladimir Putin Approval Rating (“Indicators” Levada-Center)

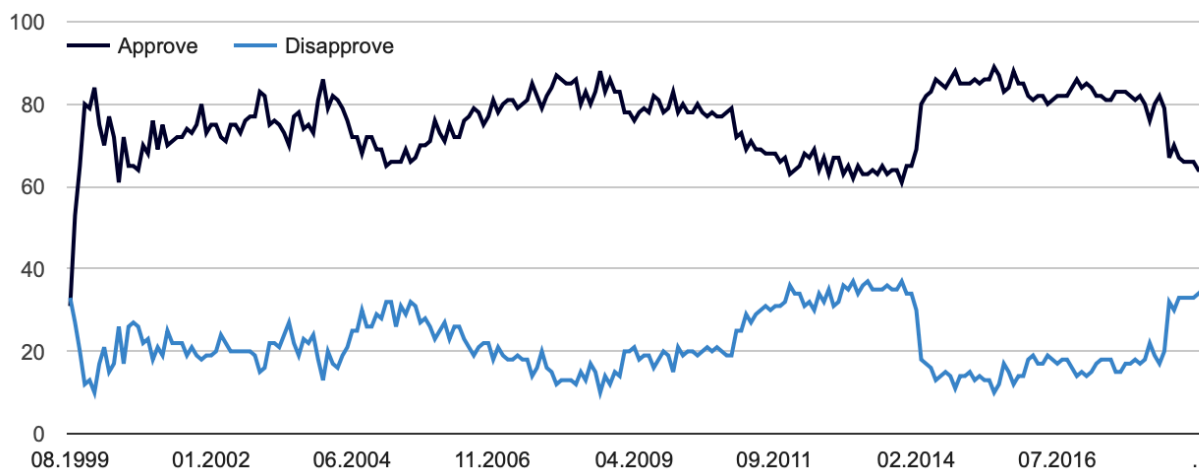
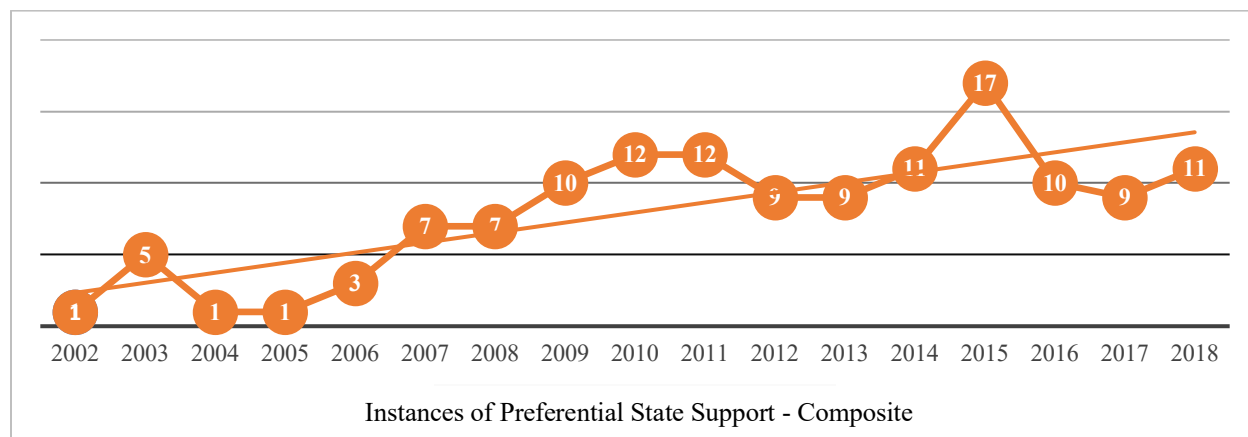


Figure 4.12



Explanatory Linkage: Identity-Legitimacy-Stability

Through its preferential state support of the Russian Orthodox Church the Russian state and, more specifically, Vladimir Putin, have been able to resurrect the culture of the Russia (identity), which is a significant contributor to the legitimacy of not only the government, but, more importantly, the leader. This culminates in regime stability, which both reinforces legitimacy and enables an expansion of identity due to the ability of the Russian state to change laws, policies, and narratives. The ROC has become empowered by the state and, in return, has lent power to the state, by establishing Vladimir Putin as Russia's "savior". The public support for President Putin and his government has maintained relatively strong, and the increasing number of Orthodox observers, in conjunction with increasing influence and power of the church, has arguably been crucial to Putin's ability to endure. As Russian scholar Mikhail Khodorkovsky (not to be confused with the exiled oligarch) said in a recent *New York Times* article,

under Mr. Putin, the state has co-opted and subsumed the church. The Kremlin has relied on the Orthodox Church as the main unifying force in the country and provides it with generous financial support. In return,

the church has been the key promoter of a “Russian world” concept that casts the Kremlin as a defender of Russians outside Russia (Khodarkovsky 2019).

This explanatory linkage is crucial for understanding why the Russian state has increasingly supported the church and, more specifically, demonstrates the interrelation of the independent variables which are crucial for detailing Russia’s gravitation towards its nationalistic, autocratic, and Orthodox past.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Over the course of the twenty-first century, the Russian Federation, primarily under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, has emerged as a world power to be reckoned with. During this time, Russia has undergone significant domestic change that is reflected in its actions at home and abroad. Central to this change is the Russian Orthodox Church; not only because it is the majority religious institution, but also due to its overwhelming social, cultural, and ideological influence. This study has sought to establish and explain the phenomenon of increasing state support for the Orthodox Church in Russia since 2000. After finding that the Russian government has indeed increasingly supported the ROC over this time period, hypotheses were developed in order to provide an explanation for such actions. Within the field of scholarship, this study bridges the gap between literature on the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian government. Although there are studies that have explored the state's support for the ROC, this study's unique contribution is providing a multi-faceted theory and analysis for increasing state support.

The macro-level trend of increasing state support was tested through three hypotheses. The first theorized that fluctuations in stability would lead to increasing state support. Correlational support for this facet of the theory was found. During many, but not all, years of decreasing stability, there were subsequent increases in state support. Over time, as state support increases, stability increases, which highlights the possibility that the relationship between state support and stability is more nuanced than what was hypothesized in this study, thus necessitating further research, which will be discussed below. The second hypothesis posited that the fluctuations in legitimacy lead to increasing state support. Through data collection, it was

discovered that decreasing legitimacy is, in most instances, negatively correlated to increases in state support. Moreover, the overall increase in legitimacy is also positively correlated with the overall increase in state support. Such findings lead to the conclusion that legitimacy is, in fact, related to state support. However, the correlational evidence, as such, would greatly benefit from additional research. The third and final facet hypothesized that, as the number of those who identify with the ROC increases, state support will increase as well. It was found that the increases in Russian who identify as Orthodox are positively correlated to increases in state support. This hypothesis has realized the strongest conclusion and is supported by the ideological, cultural, and political polling that demonstrates the increase in Orthodox identity leading to increasing state support. The theory put forward by this study has demonstrated correlational support for all three hypotheses and, for the third hypothesis, has found strong evidential and moderate causal support.

Following data collection, it was discovered that there are inter-year fluctuations of state support, thus necessitating a possible explanation for what I refer to as the micro-level. In analyzing the micro-level, an event-driven approach was put forward to explain the fluctuations in state support, and the instance of Russia's intervention in Ukraine was the event examined. In the years preceding Russia's actions in Ukraine, Vladimir Putin's approval rating was in the mid-to-low 60's, which was significantly lower than previous years. This provides context for the political situation faced by President Putin. Following the intervention in Ukraine, Vladimir Putin's approval increased significantly. State support of the ROC increased in 2014 and then saw the single largest year-to-year increase in 2015. The event-driven theory explains this correlation as Putin utilizing the ROC as a moral justifier and legitimizer, which is clearly demonstrated through both his and his government's invocation of Orthodox rhetoric and history

when discussing the conflict. The case of Ukraine provides a useful instance through which the micro-level event-driven theory could be explored, though, in order to fully validate it, additional research is required.

In conducting this study, there were impediments and notable shortcomings that should be mentioned. Given that this study was time-constrained, there were instances of state support not included due to the inability to access such data and/or not coming across the instances. Moreover, relying on variables, measurements, and datasets from other scholarship was limiting because such factors were not fully within the conceptualization of this study's variables, though they did suffice. The availability of resources and information was an impediment to conducting this study as well. Access to polling data from Russia is limited, and such polls are met with a certain level of uncertainty due to the strong influence of the government. Overall, the primary limitation was time. Given such constraints, a qualitative exploratory case-study was conducted because it allowed for flexibility and ease, in addition to this researcher's limited experience with quantitative methods and designs.

As mentioned in the introduction to his study, this topic is of considerable importance both to Russia domestically and to the world at large. The conclusions of this study demonstrate the possible explanations behind the Russian state's increasing support for the Russian Orthodox Church, but there are larger and more significant implications of this research that must be discussed. The power and influence of the ROC has increased as Vladimir Putin's authoritarian control has expanded. With United Russia and Vladimir Putin's aligned goals of promoting a traditional, conservative, and Orthodox culture in Russia, there have been many instances of state repression targeting those who promote contrary ideas. This is a dangerous precedent and has most famously manifested itself in the Pussy Riot arrests. This attempt at free expression, which

was directly targeted at Putin's relationship with the ROC, led to the arrest and imprisonment of the demonstrators. The charges and sentencing were a very harsh reading of the law and verdicts of a similar nature have been made against those who express anti-Orthodox sentiments. The pursuit of activists or, in some cases, ordinary citizens who criticize the church, is dangerous and has become more common in recent years. Under Vladimir Putin, it has become illegal to offend the feelings of believers; many of the most notable cases were included in the data as instances of preferential state support. In 2010, the United Russia party announced that Orthodoxy was central to Russia's modernization ("United Russia" 2010). It is no surprise that the United Russia party, Vladimir Putin, and the Russian Orthodox Church would work together given their shared vision for Russia. The invocation of Orthodoxy by the state is not concerning as a tool for unification around a common history; however, the fact that it has been perverted in order to restrict the freedoms of non-Orthodox Russians is deeply unsettling. Moreover, the xenophobic, homophobic, and patriarchic aspects of Orthodoxy have been used by the state and its leaders to embark on campaigns of reforms that are stripping many Russians of their rights (Galeotti and Bowen 2014). Shielded as protecting "family values" (MacFarrquhar 2018), the Kremlin and ROC are working together to remake Russian culture in the image of its pre-Soviet past.

The history of Russia as a great empire is one that Vladimir Putin has striven to resurrect. In doing so, Russia has become more traditional, conservative, authoritarian, and aggressive. A crucial implication of this study is a deeper understanding of the justifications for Russia's foreign policy actions. For example, Russia has partly justified its support of the Assad regime in Syria as protecting Christians (Nasr 2017). As mentioned in Chapter 4, Putin and the Russian government have similarly justified the annexation of Ukraine and war in the Donbas as protecting ethnic Russians, along with mentioning the common history shared. This is not an

attempt to lambaste the church or religion as causing Russia to take such actions; rather, I seek to demonstrate how Vladimir Putin has shrouded his true goals in Orthodoxy, so as to legitimize Russia's incursions in the eyes of the faithful. The background of Chapter 1 discussed how after the fall of Constantinople, Moscow, and therefore Russia, become the center of the Orthodox world. With moral authority on Putin's side, Russia has become a strong world power. Whether or not it is an attempt to rebuild Russia into an empire, the measures Putin has taken at home are also being implemented abroad, which presents far-reaching implications that necessitate additional research. I encourage scholars to conduct additional research in order to further the understanding and implications of Russia's increasing support for the ROC, and the broader church-state relationship in Russia. Looking outside of Russia, this study further emphasizes the importance of analyzing religion and the state. The theory constructed and tested in this study does not solely pertain to Russia. Other countries may very well be utilizing their religious hegemon as a stabilizer, legitimizer, and identity-constructer, and so I implore scholars to apply my theoretical framework to assess similar cases such as, Egypt, Myanmar, and Indonesia, among others.

To build upon this study, future scholarship should create a more detailed and original conceptualization of the three independent variables. The limitations of this study were such that a fully-developed original conceptualization was not feasible. Similarly, a quantitative study would be highly beneficial given that it can provide more validity and reliability, thus making the conclusions more concrete and significant. For such a study to be conducted, it would be beneficial to include additional instances of preferential state support, which should be supplemented by field work in Russia to collect first-person accounts. In addition, it would be useful to conduct surveys of both Russian citizens and Orthodox Russians since the third-party

surveys utilized in this study could be more precise in their line of questioning. Finally, future research should consider alternative explanations for the phenomenon observed, such as additional economic factors, democratization, religiosity, nationalism, and subnational autonomy, among others.

The increase in preferential state support of the Russian Orthodox Church has impacted Russia in many ways, and this, in and of itself, is significant. What is even more remarkable, at least to this researcher, is the impact of Russia's support for the ROC abroad. The church has arguably become the most powerful social institution in Russia, and its attempt to export its values, in conjunction with Putin's imperial ambitions, has already wrecked considerable havoc in Syria and Ukraine. Given the ability for this relationship to grow, further mutually beneficial incidents like the two mentioned are not unlikely. The Russian state needs its church and the church can only expand if it maintains itself as a useful partner. This study has introduced possible explanations for increasing preferential state support for the Orthodox Church, and, given that this is a relatively unexplored phenomenon, the research herein represents a small contribution to the field of scholarship that will hopefully see an increased interest and exploration, with the ultimate goal of elucidating the ever-important relationship between church and state in Russia.

APPENDIX

Introduction

The table below contains the data collected from a variety of online sources, varying from scholarly articles, news outlets, and NGO reports, among others. In selecting sources to include in this study, I utilized the conceptualization and measurement defined in the research design (Chapter 2). If an instance of preferential state support was designated as such, the instance was then ranked (high, medium, low) according to my conceptualization of each support level within the respective support mechanism. After collecting the totality of instances in the dataset, I scored each instance to correspond to a code number, as reflected in the table. The score for each instance was then tallied to create a yearly total, as seen in the Scoring Table below. After coding and compiling total instances for each year, I created graphs to represent the mechanism-specific and composite measures. For further information regarding the scoring of instances and/or conceptualization and measurement, see the Research Design section of Chapter 2.

Table 1: Instances of Preferential State Support of the ROC

Source	Year	Type	High	Medium	Low	Code #
Council of Europe	2002	Institutional – ”ending...local officials’ preferential treatment of the Russian Orthodox Church, and in particular their insisting in certain districts that religious organisations obtain prior agreement for their activities from the Russian Orthodox Church”			X	1
Curanović (2007)	2003	Political - President Putin stated that an official visit		X		2

		of the Pope to Russia could take place only with the consent of the ROC				
New Eastern Europe	2003-	Institutional – The MOFA and ROC form a working group for cooperation. Still in place today			X	1
RIA	2003	Institutional – A case against two people who vandalized an art exhibit that the ROC and believers viewed as anti-religious was thrown out as the court did not find it to constitute hooliganism. A criminal case was then opened up against the organizers of the exhibit for expressing religious hatred.		X		2
SOVA	2006-	Institutional – “ROC signed an agreement with <i>Rospatent</i> (the Federal Service for Intellectual Property, Patents and Trademarks), whereby approval for any trademark potentially relating to religious associations should be coordinated with the Patriarchate... <i>Rospatent</i> does not have similar agreements with other religious institutions”		X		2+1
Andis and Robert (2010)	2007-	Political/Fiscal – Establishment of <i>Russkiy Mir</i> Foundation. This organization is government-sponsored and seeks to promote the Russian language and culture. They cooperate with the ROC		X		2+2+1
SOVA	2007	Institutional – “On August 17, 2007, the Russian Federal Service for Supervision of Legal		X		2

		Adherence in Mass Media, Communications and Cultural Heritage Protection (Rossvyazokhrankultura) signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Russian Orthodox Church. Rossvyazokhrankultura agreed to give prompt attention to the ROC's applications for appropriation of religious buildings, including architectural heritage sites. The Head of Rossvyazokhrankultura, Boris Boyarskov, noted the exemplary care taken by the Russian Orthodox Church to protect federal heritage”				
SOVA	2008	Fiscal – Government-controlled Rosneft donates 60 million rubles for construction of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church in Kursk			X	1+2+2+1
SOVA	2008	Fiscal – Government-controlled Gorkovskii Railway donated 300 million rubles for the renovation of multiple Church buildings in Nizhnii Novgorod			X	1
SOVA	2009	Political – “the Prefecture of the Central Administrative District in Moscow denied permission to hold a picket against potential autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. While the denial was explained by formal reasons, informally the Prefect's office quoted a			X	1+2+2+1

		letter they had received from the Moscow Patriarchy saying that the organizers of any "spiritual" events should first be referred to the Patriarchy for approval”				
SOVA	2009	Political –" Deputy Secretary of the United Russia General Council Presidium, Head of the State Duma Committee for Labor and Social Policy Andrei Isayev and Secretary of the United Russia General Council Presidium, Deputy Speaker of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin met with Patriarch Kirill. According to Isayev, MPs agreed to send their lawmaking plans to the Patriarchy and consult with the Church in advance on all controversial matters "in order to avoid misunderstanding”		X		2
Penn Law Review	2009-	Political – Russkiy Mir and ROC sign cooperation agreement. “At present, the Orthodox Church enjoys a monopoly as the sole religious organization bestowed with a seat on the Foundation’s board of trustees. Metropolitan Hilarion, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations, represents the Church in this capacity” (387-388).		X		2
SOVA	2010	Institutional –Kaliningrad regional government		X		2+2+2+1+2

		transfer of property (never owned by ROC) to ROC				
SOVA	2010	Institutional – Ministry of Culture urges the finalization of paperwork necessary for property handover to ROC (cathedral within Ryazan Kremlin Museum complex)			X	1
Penn Law Review	2010	Political – “One of the specific projects coming out of the ROC-MOFA working group is the Days of Russian Spiritual Culture. This program, part of a broader “Days of Russia” PR initiative launched by the Russian government, is operated with support from Russia’s MOFA, the Ministry of Culture, and the ROC, among others...the program is wholly Orthodox in orientation and directly links the Moscow Patriarchate and state to the exclusion of all other faiths existing in Russia today. More accurately, a program organizer describes the overriding intent of the Days of Russian Spiritual Culture exhibit to generate “positive public opinion” about the reunification of the ROC and the ROCOR, and highlight the revival of Orthodoxy and the restoration of its holy sites in Russia”		X		2
Carnegie Council	2011	Political – President Medvedev calls the ROC the “the largest and most authoritative social			X	1+2+2+1+2

		institution in contemporary Russia”				
ROC	2011	Political – Patriarch Kirill was offered a residence in the Kremlin by President Medvedev		X		2
SOVA	2011	Political – “Metropolitan Iuvenalii (Poiarkov) of Krutitsk and Kolomenskoe named a television channel, a Moscow regional government radio channel and the regional government newspaper Orthodox Moscow Region (Pravoslavnoe Podmoskov’e) amongst the PR sponsors of his eparchy, collaboration with whom is happening ‘on a regular basis’. There were no reports of similar collaboration between representatives of other religious organizations”			X	1
SOVA	2011	Institutional – “Officials in Moscow’s central administrative region, appealed to for permission to hold a picket marking the anniversary of the abolition of serfdom in Russia, asked the organizers ‘to produce a written blessing [from the Russian Orthodox Church] to conduct the proposed action’. Their rationale was that the picket was to be held at the statue of Alexander II, which is located close to the Church of Christ the Savior”			X	1

SOVA	2012	Political – The arrest and incarceration of Pussy Riot members		X		2+2+2+1+2
Kremlin.ru	2013	Political – During a speech, President Putin discusses the necessity and historical significance of religious values in Russia. Specifically mentions the ROC.			X	1+2+2+1+2
MFA of RF	2013	Political—In the “Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation”, the document specifically points out is support and interaction with the ROC, while also including the “other main confessions”			X	1
The Moscow Times	2014	Fiscal – State funding (\$2 bil rubles) for “spiritual enlightenment centers”		X		2+2+2+1+2
Ministry of Culture	2014	Political – In the “Bases of State Cultural Policy”, President Putin mentions how “Orthodoxy has played a special role in shaping Russia's value system”		X		2
Russia Insider	2015	Political – Defense Minister made the sign of the Cross before the beginning of the celebrations		X		2+2+2+1+2
Radio Free Europe	2015	Political – Ministry of Culture fires director of Novosibirsk State Opera and Ballet Theater after ROC criticized a production		X		2
SOVA	2015	Fiscal/Political/Institutional – “By order of the acting governor, the Kaluga region Ministry of Health		X		2

		compelled employees of organizations under its jurisdiction to donate funds to the local diocese for the erection of a memorial to St Lavrenty, and to report to the Ministry on ‘work completed’. The acting governor himself, Anatoly Artamonov, called for members of the regional government to donate ‘as much as civic duty demands’ towards the saint’s memorial”				
SOVA	2015	Institutional – “Employees of the Petersburg ‘Contact’ Rehabilitation Center for Minors in Difficult Life Circumstances, under the jurisdiction of the city’s Committee for Youth Policy, were required to participate in a religious procession in honor of the move of St Alexander Nevsky’s relics. In accordance with the official order, the day of the religious procession – a Saturday – was declared a working day, and employees were required to be at the procession of the cross ‘in order to accompany juveniles to a city event’”			X	1
SOVA	2015	Institutional – “In at least two regions, Kaluga and Tula, the authorities decided not to register divorces on 8 July, when Orthodox Christians celebrate the feast of Saints Peter and Fevronia, honored as patrons of		X		2

		marriage. This ban only applies to the feast day – on every other day of the year it is possible to get divorced”				
Moscow Times	2015-	Fiscal – Russian state-owned bank VTB allows people to donate to the ROC’s ‘200 Churches’ fund			X	1
Independent	2016	Fiscal –Kremlin-funded Church in Paris		X		2+2+2+1+1+2
TASS	2017	Institutional – Putin supports handover of St. Isaacs to ROC			X	1+2+2+1+1+2
TASS TASS 2	2018	Political – Kremlin and Putin condemning “intervention” in Church affairs			X	1+2+2+1+1+2
Moscow Times	2018	Political/Institutional – The Ministry of Defense is building a church for the armed forces, where it will train military priests		X		2

Table 2: Scoring Table

Year	Political	Fiscal	Institutional	Year Total	Continuities (skip year indicated)	TOTAL
2002			1 (low)	1		1
2003	1 (medium)		2 (low, medium)	5 = 2+1+2	1 (institutional)	5
2004						1
2005						1
2006			2 (medium)	2	2 (institutional)	3
2007	1 (medium)		1 (medium)	4 = 2+2	2 (P/F)	7
2008		2 (low)		2		7
2009	3 (2 medium, 1 low)			5 = 2+2+1	2 (political)	10
2010	1 (medium)		2 (low, medium)	5		12
2011	3 (2 low, 1 medium)		1 (low)	5 = 1+1+2+1		12
2012	1 (medium)			2		9
2013	2 (low)			2 = 1+1		9
2014	1 (medium)	1 (medium)		4 = 2+2		11
2015	2 (medium)	1 (low)	2 (low, medium)	10 = 2+2+2+1+1+2	1 (fiscal)	17
2016		1 (medium)		2		10
2017			1 (low)	1		9
2018	1 (low)		1 (medium; P/I)	3		11

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