

Ukrainische Kultur im Schraubstock des Krieges:
Geschichte, Wort, Bild

Institut für Slavische Philologie
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Vorwort

Alle, die an der Herausgabe dieses Bandes beteiligt waren, hätten sich nichts sehnlicher gewünscht, als dass nach der russischen Aggression wieder Frieden in der ganzen Ukraine herrscht. Leider ist derzeit kein Ende des Krieges in Sicht, so dass unser Band nicht in einer Zeit des Friedens erscheinen kann.

Davon unberührt bleibt aber das Ziel, dem die Beiträge aller Beteiligten dienen sollten, unverändert bestehen: Sie wollen zeigen, dass sich die ukrainische Kultur nicht im Schraubstock des Krieges einklemmen, stoppen oder gar paralysieren ließ, sondern dass diese Kultur ganz im Gegenteil ihr Engagement intensivieren und ihre Widerstandskraft eindrucksvoll zum Ausdruck bringen konnte.

Der brutale Krieg, der in den letzten zehn Jahren zur ukrainischen Realität geworden ist, stellt eine große Herausforderung für die politische, soziale und kulturelle Integrität der Ukraine dar. Der Krieg verschärft existentielle Probleme, ruft Gefühle der Hoffnungslosigkeit, Angst und Enttäuschung hervor, zerstört physisch das kulturelle Erbe der Ukraine (einschließlich dessen, was unter dem Schutz der UNESCO steht) und raubt dem ukrainischen Volk das Leben vieler seiner besten Vertreterinnen und Vertreter. Der Krieg gibt aber auch einen Impuls zur nationalen Einheit, zur Konsolidierung, zur Neubewertung kultureller Phänomene und zur Eigenständigkeit der eigenen Kultur sowie zum Ausbau und zum Schutz einer demokratischen Gesellschaft. Letztlich fördert der Krieg trotz aller Herausforderungen und Zerstörungen auch die Entwicklung von Neuem. Die Antwort der Kultur auf die Herausforderungen des Krieges erfordert jedoch dabei übermenschliche Anstrengungen – sowohl von aktiven Künstlerinnen und Künstlern als auch von einfachen Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainern. Oft sind solche Anstrengungen tragisch.

In der Monographie wird der Hauptfokus auf Transformationen im Bereich der Kultur und in weltanschaulichen Bereichen nach dem Kriegsbeginn (ab 2014 oder seit dem Großangriff Russlands auf die Ukraine) gelegt. Es werden Versuche unternommen zu beschreiben, zu reflektieren und zu analysieren, welche konkrete Reaktionen es heute

in verschiedenen Bereichen der materiellen und geistigen Kultur gibt, wie sich die Kunst verändert und transformiert, wie die Sprache und ihr Kommunikationsumfeld darauf reagieren, welche Antworten die Volkskunst darauf gibt und wie sich der Alltag verändert.

Zunächst lassen Rückblicke in die Geschichte der Ukraine die Verwurzelung der aggressiven russischen Argumentation in historischen Narrativen und nicht selten auch Irrtümern erkennen. Eines der zentralen Themen ist hier die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Phänomen des „russkij mir“ („russische Welt“) und seinem Einfluss auf das kulturelle Feld und das Weltbild sowohl des russischen Aggressors als auch der Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainer selbst. Die Doktrin des „russkij mir“ lehnt grundsätzlich jede Ausprägung ukrainischer Eigenständigkeit als Nation ab und rechtfertigt den russischen Krieg gegen das ukrainische Volk. Besonders gefährlich ist dieses Konzept auf der Ebene des religiösen Diskurses sowie bei der Verbreitung historischer Fälschungen und bei Versuchen Russlands, bedeutende Persönlichkeiten der ukrainischen Geschichte sich selbst „anzueignen“.

Dann zeigen vielfältige Erscheinungen und Neuerungen in der ukrainischen Kunst der Vorkriegs- und der Kriegsjahre, wie engagiert und kreativ die ukrainischen Reaktionen auf den Angriffskrieg ausgefallen sind. Seit der Revolution der Würde 2013–2014 hat sich die Ausrichtung der ukrainischen Kunst in eine politische Richtung verändert. Heute wird die Kunst zum Mittel der Dokumentation, der Verhandlungen und häufig auch des Widerstands in Bezug auf die Identität in der modernen Ukraine.

Der permanente und ungebrochene Widerstand der Ukrainer zeigt sich dabei nicht nur in der bildenden Kunst, sondern ebenso in zahlreichen Neuerungen im Bereich der ukrainischen Sprache und ihrer Verwendung und letztlich generell in den ukrainischen Medien. Im Mediendiskurs (u.a. auch im Gebiet Luhans'k und teilweise Donec'k) kommt es fortlaufend zu grafischen und orthografischen Innovationen. Eine deutliche semiotische Umkodierung von Buchstaben des lateinischen Alphabets ist zu erkennen – nach dem Kriegsbeginn verlagerte sich deren Bedeutung von der sprachlichen Ebene hin zur Symbolik russischer Aggression. Die ukrainische Sprache wird zur Sprache des Widerstands, der Identität und der zukünftigen Rekonstruktion ukrai-

nischer Kultur. Auch die zeitgenössische Folklore verändert sich: In ihren Sujets spiegelt sich das Heldentum ukrainischer Soldatinnen und Soldaten und Zivilistinnen und Zivilisten wider, die ihr Heimatland gegen den russischen Feind verteidigen.

All diese Veränderungen sind jedoch mit dem Blut einfacher Ukrainerinnen und Ukrainer getränkt, von dem Leiden der Frauen, Männer und Kinder geprägt – und doch durchdrungen von der Hoffnung auf Gerechtigkeit und ein friedliches Leben in einem eigenen Staat, mit eigener Sprache, mit eigenem Glauben, mit eigener Kultur und eigenen Traditionen.

Für die Idee dieses Buchprojekts, die Gesamtkonzeption, seine thematische Struktur und Auswahl der Beiträge, insbesondere aber für die akribische Arbeit beim Erstellen des vorliegenden Bandes gebühren *Dr. Olena Novikova vom Institut für Slavische Philologie der LMU München* und *Prof. Dr. Marija Petruškevyč, Leiterin des Departments für Philosophie und Kulturmanagement an der Nationalen Universität Ostroher Akademie der Ukraine* größter Dank. Für die technische Realisierung danken wir *Frau Olena Bader*, für die Redigierung des Englischen *Herrn Edward Scofield* und *Herrn Stanislav Monachov*. Vielen Dank auch an *Frau Raada Koffman* für das Design des Umschlags sowie an den Verlag *Buchschmiede, Dataform Media GmbH Wien* und das *Referat Elektronisches Publizieren der Universitätsbibliothek der LMU München* für die Aufnahme in ihre Reihe. Nicht zuletzt sind wir dem *Generalkonsul der Ukraine in München Herrn Jurij Nykytjuk* für seine freundliche Unterstützung unseres Buchprojekts zu großem Dank verpflichtet. Vor allem aber danken wir herzlich allen unseren Autorinnen und Autoren für ihre Beteiligung an dem Projekt und ihre Beiträge.

THE EVOLUTION AND FOUNDATIONS OF THE “RUSSIAN WORLD” DOCTRINE AND THE PLACE OF THE FIGURE OF VOLODYMYR THE GREAT IN THE POLITICAL MANIPULATIONS OF ITS ADHERENTS

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(Ukraine)

The chapter is dedicated to identifying the basic principles, key areas and tools for the implementation of the “Russian world” doctrine by the modern Russian political leadership. Its evolution during the 2000s and 2010s was characterised by an appeal to the past, clericalisation, the use of brutal force and destructive political manipulation. The “Russian world” doctrine completely denies any manifestation of the identity of the Ukrainians as a nation, justifies the genocidal war of the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian people, as it considers the Ukrainian territory, especially Kyiv, the origins of Russia as an empire. Pseudo-religious manipulations within this doctrine play a key role, which has been demonstrated by the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church since the late 2000s. The figure of Volodymyr the Great and Volodymyr’s Christianization play a key role in the political and pseudo-religious manipulations of the leaders and adherents of the “Russian world” doctrine, as they appear as “common sources of the unity of the Russian people”.

Keywords: Volodymyr the Great, Volodymyr’s Christianization, doctrine of the “Russian world”, Ukraine, Russia, Russian Orthodox Church, Kyiv.

ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ І ЗАСАДИ ДОКТРИНИ “РУССКОГО МІРА” ТА МІСЦЕ ПОСТАТІ ВОЛОДИМИРА ВЕЛИКОГО У ПОЛІТИЧНИХ МАНІПУЛЯЦІЯХ ЇЇ АДЕПТІВ

Дмитро Гордієнко

Олександр Єремєєв

Розділ присвячено виявленню базових засад, ключових напрямків та інструментів реалізації доктрини “русского міра” сучасним російським політичним керівництвом. Її еволюція протягом 2000-х–2010-х рр. характеризується зверненням до минулого, клерикалізацією, застосуванням жорсткої сили та руйнівних політичних маніпуляцій. Доктрина “русского міра” цілковито заперечує будь-які вияви самобутності українців як нації, виправдовує геноцидну війну РФ проти українського народу, адже розглядає терени України, особливо Київ, витоками Росії як імперії. Псевдорелігійні маніпуляції в межах цієї доктрини відіграють ключову роль, про що свідчить діяльність Російської православної церкви з кінця 2000-х рр. Постать Володимира Великого та Володимирове Хрещення відіграють ключову роль у політичних та псевдорелігійних маніпуляціях провідників та адептів доктрини “русского міра”, адже вони постають у ролі “спільних витоків єдності російського народу”.

Ключові слова: Володимир Великий, Володимирове Хрещення, доктрина “русского міра”, Україна, Росія, Російська православна церква, Київ.

Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian political elites have viewed the newly independent states, especially Ukraine, as an exclusive sphere of its influence, whose foreign policy had to be shaped only in a pro-Russian way and in line with Russia's foreign policy. As early as 26.08.1991, two days after the reinstatement of Ukraine's independence, the press secretary of the Russian President Pavel Voščanov publicly stated that Russia, as the successor to the USSR, had the right to revise its borders with all the breakaway republics (Katrychenko 2023). In August 1992 the then chairman of the Russian parliamentary committee

on international and foreign economic relations Jevgenij Ambartsumov demanded that the entire geopolitical space of the former USSR must be recognized as Russia's "sphere of vital interests", similar to the status of Latin American countries under the American Monroe Doctrine (Laruelle 2020, 9). It is noteworthy that this position of Russia was validated by some of the European countries, particularly in Germany. For example, in December 2008, after Russia's aggression against Georgia back in August that year, when it became clear that Ukraine would be the next victim of Russian aggression, the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier publicly opposed the accelerated accession of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO, citing Russia's interest in Ukraine, which was allegedly half Russian, according to his position (Ščerbak 2023, 54–55). Such a lenient position of the Western countries allowed Russia to freely commit acts of armed aggression against neighboring states (e.g. Moldova and Georgia) in the first half of the 1990s.

However, Russia also needed a clearer doctrinal justification for its aggressive foreign policy. This justification was later formed as the political doctrine of the "Russian world", which, in turn, is the ideological core of "ruscism", a modern political concept, which includes some features of historical Fascism and Nazism (Hyryč 2023, 40; Ohryzko 2023, 21; Poljans'kyj 2023, 97–113; Gallaher 2022, 487–488 etc.). For example, the total primacy of the state over the individual, the denial of the right of entire peoples to their own authenticity or even physical existence. However, unlike Fascism and Nazism, the "Russian world" doctrine in its current form does not offer any positive vision of the future, focusing exclusively on the Russian imperial past, the concept of "land acquisition" without explaining the benefits and necessity of this territorial expansion. It appeals to Russia's "great past", the desire to revive the empire in modern conditions without regard to the adequacy of this goal in the modern world. At the same time, it does not contain any positive program of the future for the peoples of the empire in the areas of culture, economy, etc.

The "Russian world" is a concept and political doctrine that denotes the sphere of Russia's military, political, and cultural influence, both within its borders and beyond. The foundations of the modern doctrine of the "Russian world" appear to be a modernized version of Sergej

Uvarov's 19th century formula (formerly "Autocracy – Orthodoxy – Nationality"), transformed into:

1. Orthodoxy, exclusively in its Moscow tradition;
2. the Russian language and Russian culture;
3. common historical memory (Druzenko 2009, 10–12).

The Ukrainian political scientist and international expert Hryhorij Perepelycja characterizes the "Russian world" doctrine as an ideological attempt by Russia to counteract the influence of European countries in the "New Eastern Europe" (post-Soviet countries whose societies identify themselves mainly as European) – Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus. According to the researcher, its emergence was a sign of the Russian leadership's return to the great-power model of development, as well as failure of this state to organically fit into the Western cultural, political, and economic model (Perepelycja 2011). According to the Russian political and ideological leadership, the following features should dominate the political life of countries belonging to the "Russian world":

- Russian should be the second official language;
- the elites of the countries participating in the "Russian world" should belong to the Russian cultural context rather than to the national one;
- the "Russian world", which includes Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Kazakhstan, is united around the Russian Orthodoxy, the Russian language, cultural identity, as well as a common historical memory and a common vision of the future (Perepelycja 2011).

The leading trends of the "Russian world" doctrine include:

- economic dependence of neighboring countries (primarily on Russian hydrocarbons) as a means of political pressure on their elites;
- participation in multilateral intergovernmental organizations under the auspices of the Russian Federation, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Organization of the Collective

Security Agreement (OCSA), Customs Union and later the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU);

- sponsorship of international non-governmental organizations whose leadership is clearly biased towards Moscow's political leadership (this includes the ROC-MP and its affiliated NGOs);
- support and promotion of the Russian language, culture and media as a tool for preservation of the "Russian historical heritage" and the post-colonial situation of the "near border" countries;
- the program of repatriation of "compatriots" from "near and far abroad", which in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation has acquired the features of forced relocation of Ukrainians from the occupied territories of Ukraine (primarily children) deep into Russia;
- citizenship policy and passportization: granting the right to obtain a Russian passport to all former residents of the USSR, recognizing the possibility of dual citizenship (even if the legislation of another country prohibits it);
- direct armed aggression (from the formation of the unrecognized PMR in 1992 to the full-scale invasion into Ukraine by Russian troops in 2022) (Druzenko 2009, 10–12).

As follows from the above, today's "Russian world" doctrine involves a combination of both "soft" and classical "hard" power, which only increases its danger both for Russia's neighboring countries and for the whole world. It is important to note that since the late 2000s, after the revolutionary events in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004), the Russian leadership has realized the ineffectiveness of implementing the "Russian world" by "soft power" projection. (Kudors 2010, 2–4). Since then, the factor of forceful pressure has been growing in importance.

Also, the proponents of the "Russian world" doctrine see Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Kazakhstan as a "demographic reservoir" to counteract the demographic pressure of China and Turkic peoples. So, Russia's subjugation of the countries of the "Russian world" is aimed not only at political subjugation, but also at exploiting their resources, which is a typical neocolonial approach. The state sovereignty of the subordinate countries, according to the doctrine of the "Russian world"

of the early 2010s, is not to be necessarily formally eliminated (which is fraught with international sanctions against Russia), but is actually to be downgraded through its discrediting in the minds of citizens, which thereby transform into a pro-Russian-oriented society. Thus, according to the “Russian world” doctrine, Ukrainians are seen as carriers of the “malorussian worldview”, united by the Russian language, mental and cultural orientation to the metropolis (whether in the form of the USSR or in an attempt to restore tsarist Russia), and dismissive of their native language and national and cultural values (Perepelycja 2011). According to the Ukrainian historian Ihor Hyryč, “From a historical perspective, ruscism is the total censorship of everything that does not fit into the Russian canon of nation and statehood. It implies banning the very terms «Ukrainian» and «Ukraine»” (Hyryč 2023, 56).

The “Russian world” doctrine has its roots and actually replaced the doctrines of: bol’ševik “world revolution”, Slavophilism, “Holy Rus’”, “fraternal peoples”, and, in fact, their original source, the “Moscow – Rome III” doctrine. Thus, on the one hand, it is a Russian-centered concept, and on the other hand, it is anti-European and anti-Western. According to the point of view of its ideologues, the “Russian world” reaches as far as the Russian language and the Russian Orthodox Church. Hence, the Russian “special operation”, which is, in fact, the full-scale Russian invasion to Ukraine on February 24, 2022, is, in particular, a “religious war” unleashed by the crazy fanatics in the Kremlin. The goal of this war can be compared to Hitler’s program of “the final solution of the Jewish issue”, that is, depriving Jews of their right to life, to exist as a nation, as a religious community” (Ščerbak 2023, 145). It is symbolic that one of the ideologists and spokespersons of the “Russian world” and the most ardent apologist for Russian aggression against Ukraine, Aleksander Dugin, became famous for participating in Moscow parties in honor of the Nazi SS with shouts of “Sieg Heil!” (Ščerbak 2023, 214).

The expression “Russian world” first appeared in the last third of the nineteenth century as the title of a Slavophile anti-Western newspaper published in the Russian Empire in 1871–1880. However, at that time, obviously, this concept did not become widespread. It began to be actively used by Russian imperial ideologues shortly after the collapse of the USSR in order to find ways to restore the empire. For the first in mod-

ern times, the concept of “Russian world” was publicly used (initially as “The World of Russia”) by the Russian publicists Petr Ščedrovickij and Jefim Ostrovskij in their article “The Eagle Spreads Its Wings”, published on December 15, 1997, in the newspapers “Expert” and “Financial News”. At the time, this concept was understood as “the peaceful restoration of Russian identity, the restoration of its connection with the past and the diasporas” (Laruelle 2020, 4). So, initially, this concept implied the introduction of Russian influence through the “soft power” means rather than through the means of the armed aggression. At that time, it also did not emphasize nostalgia for the “great past” and the need to return to it, but rather the preservation and strengthening of Russian identity in the modern globalized world. But at the same time, it implicitly contained the idea of restoring the empire and Russian imperial identity after the collapse of the USSR, even if it was in the form of cultural cooperation. The authors defined the “Russian people” as a multinational community united not only by origin, but by a “common destiny”. In other words, it was about extending Russian identity beyond Russian citizens.

In 1999, P. Ščedrovickij and Je. Ostrovskij in their article “Russia: A Country That Does Not Exist” for the first time in modern history used the phrase “Russian world”, which they defined as a network of small and large communities that think and speak Russian. They imagined this phenomenon as cross-border, emphasizing that only a part of the “Russian world” lives within the Russian Federation. Establishing ties between Russia and “compatriots” outside its borders was seen as an important component of the country’s integration into the global world (Laruelle 2020, 5). This vision actually justified Russia’s disrespect for the existing legal borders, especially those of the former Soviet Union countries, where there was a significant number of citizens who were in the focus of attention of the founders of the “Russian world” doctrine. Also, for the first time, the Russian language was emphasized as a leading factor in belonging to this transborder imaginary community. At the same time, this community, as Ostap Kryvdyk notes, extends to the entire Russian-speaking population of the world “from Ukraine and Moldova to Berlin and New York’s Brighton Beach” (Kryvdyk 2023, 11). It is important to note that it was the Russian language, regardless of

the political position of its speaker, that became a significant manipulative argument for the Russian dictator Putin to conduct aggressive military actions against Ukraine, both in 2014 and in 2022, at the stage of a full-scale genocidal war.

The founders of the modern “Russian world” doctrine (Petr Ščedrovickij, Gleb Pavlovskij, and Sergej Černyšev) paid great attention to the tools for implementing this doctrine, in particular, political technologies and information manipulation. They considered the importance of using market technologies and creating brands to implement the ideas of the “Russian world” in the modern globalized relationships as a PR project, and, at the same time, a messianic and imperial project (Laruelle 2020, 6). In this regard, their leading lobbyist in the corridors of power was Vladislav Surkov, who served as Deputy Chief of Staff to the President of the Russian Federation, Assistant to the President, and Deputy Prime Minister in 1999–2020. It was V. Surkov who played a leading role in the first period of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014–2022 as one of the curators of the unrecognized “Luhans’k” and “Donec’k” “people’s republics” (so-called “L/DPR”).

A significant role in the evolution of ideas of the “Russian world” doctrine towards its appeal to the past, clericalization, use of the “hard” power and the justification of Russia’s further ideological and armed aggression against Ukraine was played by the socio-political association “Congress of Russian Communities”, CRC (“Kongress russkich obščin”), which existed in 1993–2003 and was restored in 2011. The ideological foundations of the CRC were based on the principles of Aleksandr Solženitsyn’s work “The Russian Issue at the End of the Twentieth Century” (1994). According to it, Russia was to be revived on the basis of a “Eastern Slavic unity” – as a single and indivisible state, including Ukraine, Belarus, Transnistria and Northern Kazakhstan, for which Russia should actively implement a policy of “protecting compatriots”, including the presence and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church – Moscow patriarchy (ROC-MP) in these countries. Politicians who are active supporters of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, such as Dmitrij Rogozin, Sergej Glazev, Sergej Baburin, and Natalija Naročnickaja, actively participated in the work of the CRC (Laruelle 2020, 6–7). In fact, the CRC’s ideology rejected the concept of Russians, Ukraini-

ans and Belarusians as “fraternal Slavic peoples” that was widespread during the Soviet period and affirmed the idea of a “single Russian people”, which completely denies any form of Ukrainian identity and is constantly promoted by the Russian dictator and Russian propaganda today. Obviously, it was the vision of the “Russian world” by the leaders of the Congress of Russian Communities that contributed to the transformation of Uvarov’s formula “Autocracy – Orthodoxy – Nationality” into the newest version “Russian language – Moscow Orthodoxy – Russian historical memory”. This vision also substantiated Russia’s military, ideological, subversion and intelligence pressure on countries that were seen as part of the “Russian world”, primarily Ukraine. This pressure was aimed at “protection of Russian compatriots” in the neighbouring states, imposing the Russian language as the second state language in these countries, Moscow Orthodoxy as opposed to autochthonous Orthodox traditions (especially, Ukrainian Orthodoxy), and the neglect of their own identity as opposed to the imperial and pro-Russian one. At the same time, this version of the “Russian world” retained such features of the original version by Petr Ščedrovickij and Gleb Pavlovskij as the recognition of the need to use modern information and market technologies, political manipulation in order to implement the “Russian world” doctrine. It was the CRC’s vision of the “Russian world” that was actively adopted by the Putin regime.

With the growing influence of the secret services (former soviet KGB) on the political leadership of the Russian Federation in the second half of the 1990s, and especially after their representative Vladimir Putin came to full power in 1999–2000, the concept of the “Russian world” has become the newest component of Russia’s imperial geopolitical doctrine, which is openly adopted by its authorities. It is under Putin, a man prone to violent methods in realizing his aspirations and fully focused on the imperial past, that has completely turned the doctrine of the “Russian world” neo-totalitarian, directed to the past, based primarily on violent methods of implementation. Since then, its main goal has been not to establish scientific or cultural communications between Russian-speaking individuals inside and outside the Russian Federation, but to revive the Russian empire within the countries and lands that were once conquered by Moscow and St. Petersburg, both peacefully

(through “soft power”) and violently. Since then, both statesmen and ideologues of the “Russian world” have been actively using the concept of “compatriots abroad”, which was actively emphasized by the CRC, to undermine the sovereignty of the countries of the former Soviet republics where the Russian language is widely spoken. On May 24, 1999, the State Duma of the Russian Federation adopted Law No. 99-FZ “On the State Policy of the Russian Federation in relation to Compatriots Abroad”. Article 1 of this law defines the concept of compatriots as “persons born in the same state, residing or having resided in the same state and possessing signs of common language, history, cultural heritage, traditions and customs, as well as descendants of the said persons in a direct descending line”, while this “same state” includes “the Russian state, the Russian republic, the RSFSR and the USSR” (Zakon ‘Law’ RF. № 99-FZ). Therefore, according to this law, citizens of modern Ukraine are also considered “compatriots” who should be included in the sphere of influence of modern Russia, because Ukraine in its current recognized borders was part of the USSR. Thus, at the legislative level, since 1999, the idea of the “Russian world” has become an important element of Putin’s neo-imperial policy, and Ukraine has also been indirectly proclaimed its object.

Putin first officially used the term “Russian world” shortly after his accession to power in his speech at the World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad in 2001, noting that this phenomenon “extends far beyond the geographical borders of Russia and even far beyond the Russian ethnicity” (Laruelle 2020, 6). At the end of 2006, on the eve of the opening of the Year of the Russian Language, in his speech in St. Petersburg, Putin singled out the language factor as the basic one in the doctrine of the “Russian world”. “The Russian world can and should unite everyone who cares about the Russian word and Russian culture, wherever they live, in Russia or abroad. Use this phrase «Russian world» more often” (Syčjova 2007). In 2007, according to Russian President’s decree there was created the eponymous “Russian world Foundation”, which had a budget of \$15 million and 43 grant programs in Ukraine aimed at spreading the Russian language and researching the “common past” and spreading the Russian vision of Ukraine’s history in Ukrainian historical scholarship (Ščerbak 2023, 112).

In addition, the doctrine of the “Russian world” has also found its way into academia. In Russia, Ol’ga Batanova’s thesis research is also devoted to this topic, considering the phenomenon of the “Russian world” to be a supranational, civilizational reality that encompasses all Russian-speaking people in the world (Batanova 2009, 163). This idea was actively embraced by the Russian dictator. As the British author Timothy Garton-Ash has noted, Putin has completely monopolized the right to be a spokesperson for the “Russian world” ideology, which in his version is reduced to the formula: “if you speak Russian, you belong to Russia” (Garipov 2015). The ukrainian writer, scholar, diplomat and public figure Jurij Ščerbak makes a similar point: Russian has become “the spiritual weapon of the hegemonic nation, its soft (and sometimes very hard) weapon” (Ščerbak 2023, 16).

The religious factor, namely the Russian Orthodox factor, has also significantly increased its role in the policy of promoting the “Russian world” doctrine with the establishment of the Putin regime in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church has long played a significant role in the territorial expansion of Muscovy and the Russian Empire, ideologically justifying and sanctifying its government’s policies, especially in assimilating and keeping non-Russian peoples, especially Ukrainians, in line. Examples of this include bans on book publishing in the tradition of the Kyiv Metropolis in the early eighteenth century, the political anathema imposed on Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1708), and so on. The parishes and dioceses of the Russian Church (in fact, the “spiritual department” of the Russian Empire) were actively used in intelligence activities abroad (Mycyk 2009, 186–189). In Soviet times, with Joseph Stalin’s restoration in 1943 of the Moscow Patriarchate, which was totally dependent on the Bol’ševik totalitarian regime and its secret services, granting the title of “Moscow and All Russia” to its head (a strong claim to the Kyivan heritage), and the constitution of the centralized religious organization “Russian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate” (ROC-MP), the use of the church factor for political, propaganda, and intelligence purposes reached a new level. The ROC-MP survived as a single system after the collapse of the USSR, and in the first half of the 1990s it assumed the function of exercising Russian socio-cultural and political influence on all countries outside the Russian Federation, where it had a serious net-