



# RESEARCH PAPER

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### Research Paper

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## Editorial

The first issue of our Research Paper was dedicated in its entirety to the important issue of defense reform in the Russian Federation, thanks to the contributions of three Russian fellows, who conducted their research at the NATO Defense College until recently. Their work enabled us to get a better understanding of the problems our partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and in the NATO-Russia Council are coping with.

As real partnership involves understanding, not only of your partner's problems, but also of his personality, we are proud to have a follow-up on the subject of Russia in this second issue of our Paper. Lionel Ponsard, one of our researchers at the College, has analyzed the role and the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church on Russian society and Russian present day politics. Entitled "The Russian Orthodox Church: an interlocutor in the NATO-Russia relationship", his essay assesses the resurrection of the Church as an "interlocuteur indispensable" for Russian politicians over the past decade, the reestablishment of its symbiotic relationship with the Kremlin, and the influence it exerts over the minds and hearts of the Russian population in general. The analysis leads to some interesting conclusions, that enhance our understanding of our Russian partners, and which we should keep in mind when we are working on our joint architectures.

Still at NATO's rim, but to quite a different area is where the Chief of the Research Branch, Rear Admiral (ret.) Jean Dufourcq, takes us with his contribution to this second issue. The Mediterranean Dialogue, initiated at the 1994 Madrid Summit as a result of NATO's reorientation on its strategic interests after the Cold War, reflected a re-emerging recognition of the importance of the Mediterranean region for the countries of the Alliance. However, NATO's good neighbor policies, based on common security interests with its partners on the Southern flank, were not devised for dealing with problems originating in the adjacent area of the Middle East, and bore little relevance to their possible solutions.

After a brief historical analysis of the evolution of the strategic importance of the wider Mediterranean theatre, the author arrives at the conclusion that the European perspective, which is mainly North/South in essence, and the American conceptual framework, which is principally East/West oriented, are not contradictory. He further argues, that as the center of gravity in the Mediterranean has moved further Eastward and the complexity of the problems besetting the region has substantially increased, it is necessary to find a differentiated strategic approach to the various discernible sub-regions in the wider Mediterranean area. To devise sensible policies to this effect is a challenge for Europeans, Americans and the people in the region alike.

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*NB: Les opinions exprimées dans cette publication sont celles des auteurs et ne peuvent être attribuées au Collège de Défense de l'OTAN ou à l'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord.*

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# L'intelligence de la Méditerranée

Jean DUFOURCQ<sup>1</sup>

La Méditerranée et la place qu'elle tient dans les réflexions stratégiques sont à l'ordre du jour de nos travaux, que ce soit ceux qui préparent le sommet de l'Alliance à Istanbul en juin prochain ou ceux que mène l'Union européenne dans le cadre de Barcelone. C'est aussi sous la rubrique méditerranéenne que l'on aborde souvent la nouvelle question du Moyen-Orient, élargi ou non aux confins de la Perse voire de l'Asie du Sud.

## L'approche des problèmes stratégiques qui interfèrent en Méditerranée reste pourtant toujours aussi difficile.

La forte présence militaire américaine, l'embryon de PESC constitué par le processus de Barcelone contribuent, à l'ouest du bassin surtout, à lier les enjeux méditerranéens aux dossiers plus complexes des relations transatlantiques ou de la construction européenne; à l'Est, ce sont plutôt soit la délicate intégration régionale d'Israël, soit les problèmes pétroliers qui rythment une dynamique stratégique polarisée depuis le 11 septembre par la lutte contre le terrorisme. Partout des problèmes de voisinage stratégique se posent et, pour les résoudre, on fait appel à des structures multilatérales aux contours souvent flous et aux finalités concurrentielles ou contradictoires.

– Pendant les temps de la Guerre froide, la Méditerranée, écartelée entre des perspectives stratégiques antagonistes, a été une zone de conflits latents, un espace opérationnel sensible. La matérialisation de deux blocs fracturait l'espace méditerranéen, en faisant une zone de contacts militaires à hauts risques, accompagnés de pressions idéologiques souvent fortes. L'alignement des riverains sur les blocs était suscité -et parfois même requis- par la nécessité de se compter, de déborder -ou de confiner- le bloc antagoniste sur le flanc sud de l'Europe. A ces tensions s'ajoutait l'insertion souvent belliqueuse de l'Etat d'Israël dans le Proche-Orient arabe. La lutte pour la liberté de manœuvre militaire a été constante en Méditerranée tout au long

de cette période, tenant le bassin méditerranéen éloigné de sa vocation traditionnelle de zone d'échange et de rencontre des civilisations.

- Depuis l'effondrement de l'espace soviétique, la Méditerranée recouvre peu à peu sa vraie nature stratégique, mélange d'unité et de complexité, imposée par une forme de compartimentage géographique qui induit une multitude d'actions et de réactions sans cohérence apparente. La fracture observée aux temps de la guerre froide paraît se prolonger, mais sous d'autres formes. S'il n'existe plus de menace militaire directe en Méditerranée, des risques d'instabilité multiples demeurent qui expliquent le maintien sur le théâtre d'importantes forces, riveraines ou non. Malgré le caractère désormais dramatique de la relation israélo-palestinienne, malgré les séquelles de la dernière campagne irakienne, malgré la dimension désormais stratégique du terrorisme, un lent apaisement des tensions se manifeste.
- C'est ainsi que la perception croissante d'une centralité complexe mais féconde de la Méditerranée croît désormais dans les Etats européens qui concentrent leur attention sur le flanc sud du continent. Certains pays scandinaves dressent un parallèle avec la mer baltique qui se neutralise en se restructurant; certains pays continentaux adoptent une posture de prévention à l'égard d'une zone troublée proche, à la stabilisation de laquelle ils veulent contribuer; d'autres, comme les Etats latins de l'Union européenne, rénovent leur approche stratégique de la Méditerranée et développent une vision plus coopérative de la sécurité dans un effort de dialogue avec les riverains du Sud. L'Alliance atlantique, en ouvrant un dialogue aux voisins méditerranéens, participe activement à cette renaissance stratégique.
- Mais plus généralement, l'intérêt stratégique soutenu pour ce théâtre s'explique par le fait que la Méditerranée reste l'une des principales voies occidentales

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de passage vers les puits de pétrole et de gaz de la péninsule arabique et des approches caucasiennes. Cette donnée géo-économique imprime un sens particulier et souvent caché à la donnée géostratégique d'évidence que constitue cet arc d'instabilité arabo-islamique dopé par le terrorisme, dont la perception déclenche dans le champ stratégique occidental incertitudes et mesures de précaution. En établissant des intérêts communs entre des pays traversés par des mêmes oléoducs par exemple, elle a pourtant une valeur stabilisatrice. C'est dans cette perspective que la Méditerranée est restée, après la guerre froide, la zone de stationnement principale des forces aéro-maritimes américaines en Europe. Idéalement placé sur la route du Proche et du Moyen-Orient, permettant toutes les manœuvres stratégiques entre les théâtres atlantique et indien, le couloir méditerranéen relève désormais clairement, comme l'Etat d'Israël, des intérêts de sécurité permanents des Etats-Unis.

Aujourd'hui les visions américaine, principalement Ouest/Est, et européenne, principalement Nord/Sud, qui interfèrent en Méditerranée ne sont pas antinomiques.<sup>2</sup> Elles peuvent même se compléter pour participer à la stabilisation de ce théâtre toujours fracturé, qui tarde à retrouver une dynamique de paix et de coopération. Dans ce contexte, la cohésion et la pacification de l'espace stratégique justifient les efforts conjugués des Européens et des Américains. C'est une des fonctions majeures de l'Alliance atlantique que de veiller à la coordination stratégique des actions des Nord-américains et des Ouest-européens là où ils ont des intérêts et des valeurs communes et des responsabilités partagées. Pourtant on constate souvent des difficultés voire des quiproquos lorsque l'on évoque la Méditerranée: les premiers la voient de l'extérieur d'abord, sous l'angle géostratégique d'un couloir stratégique ouvrant l'accès à la péninsule arabique alors que les seconds la considèrent surtout sous l'angle intérieur d'une aire socio-culturelle de contacts millénaires avec le Sud. De quelle Méditerranée parlons-nous? De quoi s'agit-il?

### Typologie du théâtre méditerranéen.

Pour tracer les grandes lignes d'une stratégie pour la Méditerranée, il convient d'examiner son champ d'application et donc d'aborder une "Méditerranée élargie" pour conjuguer unité et complexité, lier les logiques stratégiques qui interfèrent dans cette zone et définir des priorités d'action.

Le concept de Méditerranée élargie permet de rendre compte du déplacement vers l'Est, au fil des années, du

centre de gravité stratégique de la Méditerranée. La partie orientale du bassin influence, de façon décisive aujourd'hui, l'ensemble des comportements stratégiques des riverains du bassin méditerranéen; en plus de l'importance traditionnelle de ses deux passages maritimes vers l'Est, Suez et Bosphore, le bassin oriental est marqué par la question israélo-palestinienne et par les enjeux du pétrole et du gaz du Golfe persique et du Caucase. L'influence de ces paramètres sur la stabilité en Méditerranée est telle, qu'il faut désormais dépasser les limites géographiques habituelles du bassin méditerranéen pour l'aborder au plan global. On peut en effet distinguer les cinq zones suivantes (cf carte ci-après):

- Méditerranée atlantique (MedAt): cette zone regroupe les États qui, tout en étant ouverts sur l'Océan atlantique, ont l'ambition d'être des acteurs en Méditerranée: *Mauritanie, Maroc, Espagne, Portugal, mais aussi Royaume-Uni et leurs îles (Canaries, Açores, Gibraltar) sur la route transatlantique vers la Floride.* Il s'agit des antiques marches océaniques du bassin que baigne l'Atlantique. Les problèmes que pose le devenir du Sahara occidental comme ceux qui touchent aux trafics internationaux trans-sahéliques et à la pêche sont sources de tensions dans cette zone. Cet espace constitue également le maillon qui permet la transition stratégique avec la zone contiguë d'Afrique noire qui se structure au travers de la CDEAO.
- Méditerranée occidentale (MedOc) : cette zone constitue un des "cœurs" antiques de la Méditerranée: *Maroc, Algérie, Tunisie, Espagne, France, Italie, Malte, Libye.* La tradition de contact et de coopération y est ancienne et importante. Les "Présides" espagnoles sur la côte africaine, l'enclave de Gibraltar, l'irréductibilisme traditionnel et sa dimension extrémiste islamique en Algérie et le conflit sahraoui entretiennent un climat de fragilité rémanente dans la zone. Cette zone qui tarde à se structurer stratégiquement au Sud est aussi une de celles qui possèdent les clés de son développement autonome.
- Méditerranée orientale (MedOr): c'était devenu depuis dix ans le nouveau "cœur" de la Méditerranée: *Balkans, Albanie, Grèce, Turquie, Chypre, Egypte.* La dislocation progressive de la Fédération yougoslave, la tension larvée résiduelle entre la Grèce et la Turquie (mer Egée et Chypre) ont déclenché des crises à répétition, mobilisé la communauté internationale et imposé en Bosnie, au Kosovo, en Macédoine des actions multinationales. Aucune n'est encore vraiment résolue mais toutes semblent en voie de résorption. Ecartelée,

<sup>2</sup> "The Mediterranean Paradox", *US Naval Proceedings*, April 1994.

l'Egypte se rattache stratégiquement à cette zone mais joue un rôle de stabilisateur du Proche-Orient depuis Camp David, de gardien de la Mer rouge et de contre-poids à l'Arabie Saoudite.

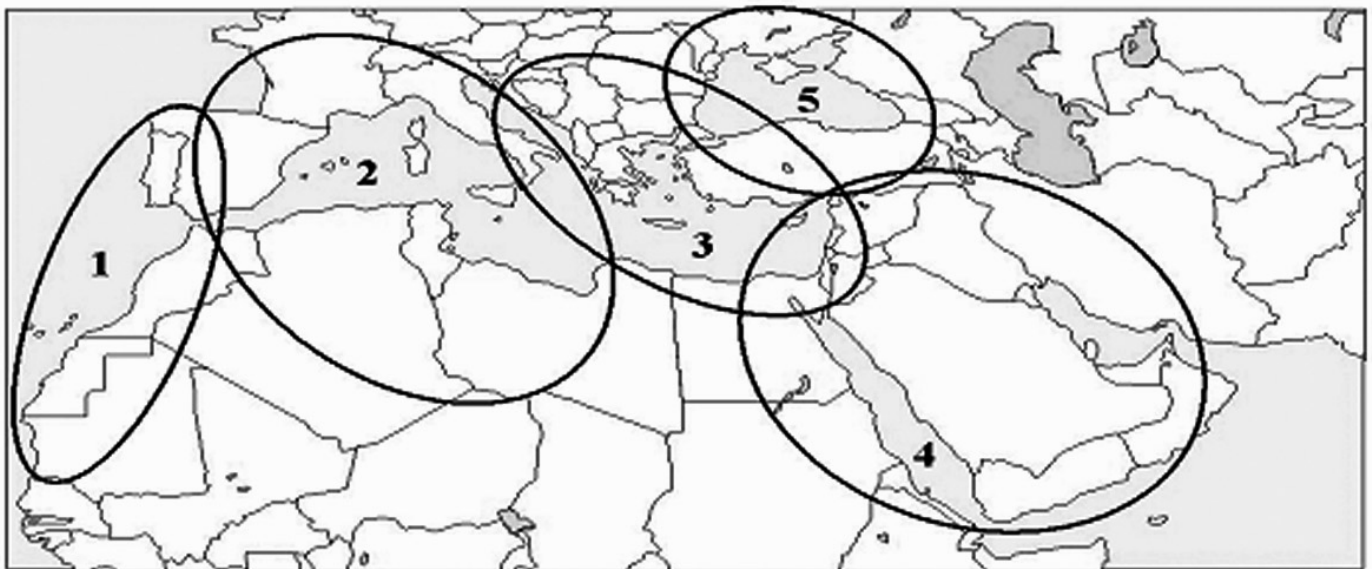
- Méditerranée arabe (MedAr): *Le Proche-Orient, la Mer Rouge et le Golfe persique* s'affirment aujourd'hui comme la zone stratégique sous tension décisive; trois lourdes guerres s'y sont déroulées depuis quinze ans (Iran/Irak, guerre du Golfe et campagne irakienne), une forte activité militaire continue de marquer la région, une coalition extérieure tient l'Irak. L'importance des ressources énergétiques, celle des débouchés commerciaux expliquent l'attention portée à cette zone dont la stabilité conditionne celle de la partie orientale du bassin méditerranéen. L'impossible application des accords d'Oslo entre Israël et l'autorité palestinienne, celle problématique de la feuille de route, la "mise au pas puis en ordre" de l'Irak, le surarmement des Etats du Golfe et les soubresauts de la normalisation du régime iranien sont autant de facteurs d'incertitude de cette zone clé qui mobilise l'attention de la communauté internationale.
- Méditerranée caucasienne (MedCau): la zone de la *Mer noire* s'affirme comme une zone de transition stratégique marquée par l'importance des questions de transport des matières énergétiques; Russie, Ukraine, Turquie s'y mesurent et tentent d'asseoir leur influence. Le problème de la Crimée est moins aigu, celui récurrent du devenir de la nation kurde s'est atténué depuis la chute de la dictature irakienne mais au Nord les tensions du Sud-Caucase tendent à se cristalliser.

- Méditerranée asiatique (MedAs): on peut être tenté d'ajouter aux espaces déjà distingués une autre zone contiguë, celle qui lie les deux précédentes Méditerranées à l'espace géopolitique de l'Asie du Sud via l'Afghanistan et le Pakistan. Les solidarités stratégiques de l'Arabie saoudite et les réseaux fondamentalistes qui structurent le terrorisme dans la péninsule arabe y invitent. C'est ce qu'exprime le nouveau concept de Grand Moyen-Orient qui n'a plus rien de méditerranéen au plan de la géographie mais prend tout son sens au plan stratégique.

En terminant ce rapide tour d'horizon analytique, on voit que chacun des compartiments ainsi distingués possède une logique propre qui influe sur le devenir de la Méditerranée; chacun d'entre eux constitue un espace où s'affiche l'intérêt marqué d'un ou plusieurs pays, riverain ou non.

C'est en développant un cadre aussi précis et différencié que celui esquissé ci-dessus que l'on peut sans doute imaginer les évolutions du Dialogue méditerranéen de l'Alliance qui exigera peut-être une transformation en un partenariat dans une zone donnée, un approfondissement de bon voisinage ici, un élargissement d'intérêt stratégique là, une duplication utile ailleurs.

C'est aux Américains, aux Européens et aux pays concernés d'en tracer les grandes lignes au mieux de leurs intérêts communs et de leurs responsabilités partagées dans une étroite concertation. C'est à cette difficile tâche qu'il faut s'atteler avec imagination, détermination et patience. Nous ne pouvons faire l'impasse sur la complexité méditerranéenne.





# The Russian Orthodox Church: An Interlocutor in the NATO-Russia relationship?

Lionel Ponsard<sup>1</sup>

*Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church both provide a background and a framework for understanding many of the issues pertaining to the Russian mindset. With regard to NATO-Russia relations, it is important to assess whether or not Orthodoxy can hamper relations with countries of mainly western Christian faith. It should also be considered to what extent Orthodoxy, as a dominant element of Russian culture, influences the shaping of Russian domestic and foreign policies. All this information could be instrumental in increasing cooperation between Russia and the countries of the North Atlantic Alliance.*

Russia's historical faith is Orthodoxy and is deeply embedded in the Russian soul.<sup>2</sup> Aside from being the claimed religion of 60% of Russia's population, Orthodoxy also embodies a Russian sense of nation, history, and identity, even when the individual is not devout.<sup>3</sup> Many Russians say that they are not believers, but they do know what the true faith is. In the new Russia, the Church stepped in to solidify the ideological definitions of 'Russia' and degrees of 'Russian-ness'. In August 2000, the 'Social Conception of the Russian Orthodox Church'<sup>4</sup> placed Orthodoxy at the top of this hierarchy, and western ideals, especially American, at the bottom.<sup>5</sup>

As the main religion in Russia, Orthodoxy not only stands as a component of Russianness; it has also become, throughout their long and tortuous history, the primary reference used by the Russian people to define themselves.<sup>6</sup> It is thus imperative for our understanding of Russia to pay due attention to Orthodoxy.

– Firstly, this analysis will attempt to determine some fundamental Orthodox components with special emphasis on

the impact of Orthodoxy on the Russian approach to foreign countries, more particularly the West. Our goal will be to assess whether Orthodoxy's place in Russian society is so important that it has to be taken into account when building relations with Russia. We will also try to evaluate whether Orthodoxy has a favorable/unfavourable influence on Russia's interaction with the West.

– Secondly, we will focus on the Russian Orthodox Church as an institution, and its position in the Russian State system. Our objective there will be to determine whether the State/Church relationship in Russia is of a secular nature or if the Church should still be regarded as a state actor. Again, the answer to that question will have an impact on what degree of importance should be given to Orthodoxy when considering relations with Russia.

From the ninth to the sixteenth century, pagan Russia was, little by little, transformed into Holy Russia. Russian piety acquired a distinctly Slavic quality, and the Russian faith became characteristically national in substance. As religion was nationalized, the Russian Church also became national in form. The central characteristic of Orthodoxy was – and continues to be – its vigorous adherence to the traditions of the past.<sup>7</sup> It was precisely this characteristic that helped the Church to survive the Mongol yoke,<sup>8</sup> to endure the reign of Peter the Great, and to live through seventy years of the Soviet government's stubborn atheism. As a unifying force against invaders, the only long-lasting cultural reference, and sometimes the only institution of reference, Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church soon went beyond their pure religious status. All this goes a long way to explain why the Russians find it so difficult to accept any novelty or

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<sup>2</sup> See Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> See Laurence Beauvisage, *La croix et la faucille. La religion à l'épreuve du postsoviétisme* (Paris: Editions Bayard, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> 'Russian Orthodox Church' designates here the official Russian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate as recognized today by the government of the Russian Federation.

<sup>5</sup> See the official web site of the Russian Orthodox Church: <http://www.russian-orthodox-church.org.ru>

<sup>6</sup> Robert C. Tucker, *Political Culture and Leadership in Soviet Russia* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), pp. 116-117.

<sup>7</sup> See S. B. Filatov and D. E. Furma, "Religiia i politika v massovom soznanii" [Religion and Politics in Popular Consciousness], *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, vol. 7, pp.3-15.

<sup>8</sup> See S. W. Baron, *Modern Nationalism and Religion* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1947), p. 167.



change, be it a new world order, the supremacy of the United States, or a new world status for their country. Instead of striving to adjust to an ever-changing international environment, the Russians will tend to focus all their efforts on the re-establishment of the reality that would reflect their inalterable values.

When Communism collapsed, many people in both Russia and the West thought that Russia would immediately adopt democratic values. Freedom and liberty had been prime aspirations of the Russian Orthodox Church during the Soviet era. Freedom of religion was welcomed, along with the ideals of a democratic society in Russia. However, liberalization was a mixed blessing. Although the Church celebrated its restored freedom, it had to play in the tides of a free society and in the midst of globalization.<sup>9</sup> In other words, this new freedom of religion also meant all opposition could reign freely in society. Thus, while tolerance was preached, the Church was more concerned with the amount of freedom to be granted to 'other' religions.

In 1993, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation passed a new law aimed at changing particular aspects of the 1990 law on 'Freedom of Conscience and Religious Belief', finally granting the privileges of government support to Russia's traditional religions. Furthermore, in 1997, a new legislation on 'Freedom of Conscience and Religion', consolidating and legitimizing the Russian Orthodox Church itself, was adopted. In this way, the Patriarch Alexis II confirmed the Orthodox Church's place in Russia and disempowered home-grown competitors. This law is another example of the xenophobia that, together with an irremovable attachment to the past, to traditions, and a pronounced anti-western feeling, characterizes the Orthodox religion. The Russian Orthodox Church is actually not democratically oriented and has no tradition of democratic thinking to which to refer. The attitudes of the Russian Orthodox Church are thus essentially totalitarian.

The fact that these religious values, and to a greater extent the Orthodox Church itself, have benefited from legal and political recognition since the early nineties is also illustrative of a unique relationship between the Church and the State. In principle, the Russian Orthodox Church has never been truly free or separate from the State in Russia. Today, while enjoying religious freedom, its governmental ties and even partnership with the state make it closer to the status of a semi-governmental institution. According to the western accepted concept of secularity, the Church is considered as a non-state actor in international relations. Such a title is thus a false assumption in Russia for two reasons.

- Firstly, the ambiguous state of democracy in Russia today complicates the definition of what is/what is not part of the state.
- Secondly, the pre-Soviet tradition of joint Church-State leadership as well as the Soviet infiltration of the Church both make the Church much more a state actor than a non-state actor.

Since the end of the Soviet era, the Church has been looking for a return to the symphonic relationship that served Church and State so well throughout Russian history. By restoring such a partnership, the Church can not only expect the State's protection against religious rivals, but also a privileged position in the country. The Church's increasing presence in public life was emphasized by the attention given to its official statements during the failed coup of August 1991 and by its role of mediator during the armed conflict between President Yeltsin and the Russian Parliament in September-October 1993. By the mid-1990s, no politician could afford to ignore the Church and this generated scepticism over the appearance of political leaders at church services.

The Church also finds in the Duma the most reliable collaborator in publishing shared agendas into legislative action. As a lobby, the Church was successful in bringing its will into federal legislation in 1997.<sup>10</sup> As an external affairs lobby, the Church works through the promotion of ideas and values, particularly in the media. Leaders of the Church, such as Patriarch Alexis II and Metropolitan Kirill, actively meet with government officials, communicate Church interests and even draft legislation. The undisclosed connections between the Church and the government are an important, yet enigmatic source of influence for the Church.

The crucial feature of this relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the State is surely one of opportunistic assistance, in which both parties can use one another to act outside their respective organizational limits. In terms of influence, the Church uses the State to override its own problems, and the State uses the Church to fight anti-Russian nationalism. The State also benefits from the capacity of the Church to assert Russian national interests when normal diplomatic channels are inefficient due to international political tensions. The Russian Orthodox Church thus benefits in many ways from the final removal of Communism. It has enjoyed new freedoms and prerogatives. From the standpoint of the Church, it seems, there is nothing wrong with the Church-State symbiosis as long as the Church is in the driving seat. In the Russian Church-State culture, it becomes clear that the religious-political system is a unified

<sup>9</sup> See Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. supra.



web in which elements in the religious sphere and those in the political sphere interact and tend to be mutually reinforcing. As a consequence, Orthodoxy radically determines Russian political culture, rooted in the same historical experience of autocracy and paternal conception of State authority.

### Final Remarks

- This analysis first showed us that Orthodoxy has always stood out as the living force of Russianness. Throughout the successive invasions and occupations of Russia, Orthodoxy kept the Russian people together and became the stimulus for Russian resistance. In these circumstances, Orthodoxy went beyond its pure religious nature; it was also the guardian of Russian traditions and culture. No authoritarian rule, not even Communism, ever managed to deprive the Russian mindset of its Orthodox references. This tight connection between religion and Russianness remains unchanged as of today.
- This study also underlined Orthodoxy's extreme attachment to the past and its consequent reluctance towards modernity. This is what generates an almost systematic resistance to change amongst the Russians. Such a closed attitude can only make Russia's relations with the outside world more difficult. This is aggravated by the fact that Orthodoxy is also marked by an inclination towards anti-western feelings. In the same vein, the association 'western world – modern world' gains no credit in their perspective either.
- The idea that Russia is a sacred space protected by Orthodoxy assumes a superpower mentality as well as xenophobia. According to the theory of 'Moscow, the Third Rome', after escaping the degeneration of Rome and Constantinople, Christianity found its true heaven in Russia. This placed the Russian Orthodox Church within an even more nationalistic context, and pushed the Moscow Patriarchate towards greater reliance on Russia and away from the alleged multi-cultural version of Orthodoxy.
- According to the accepted western concept of secularity, the Church is considered as a 'non-state actor' in international relations. Applying the term non-state actor to the Church in Russia is a false assumption for two reasons. Firstly, the ambiguous state of democracy in Russia today makes it difficult to define what is part of the State and what is not. Secondly, both pre-Soviet traditions of joint Church-State leadership and the Soviet infiltration of the Church make the Church much more a state actor than a non-state actor. In principle, the Russian Orthodox Church has never been truly free or separate from the State. Although it now enjoys religious freedom, its status is closer to that of a semi-governmental institution because of its ties or even partnership with the State.
- We learnt that because this institution represents one of the most – if not the most – important references for Russianness, it still enjoys privileged relations with the Russian state. On no account is it possible to say that Russia is a secular state. Separation of powers between the State and the Church in Russia was never made clear, for the very reason that it is in the interest of the former to be assured of the Church's support, and in the interest of the latter to benefit from the protection of the State. Both are tightly intertwined in the conduct of Russian politics; they proved to be mutually reinforcing, driven by a similar approach. It comes as no surprise that the Church and the State are pursuing the same grand objectives: the imperialistic aspiration of the Russian political system echoes Russian international messianism.
- We also discovered that the Russian Orthodox Church was not a democratic institution. On the contrary, it proves to be somewhat totalitarian in the policies that it conducts and the values that it defends. In this context of an intimate relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian state, one can easily imagine how influential the Church has been in the conduct of politics in Russia.
- Last but not least, we found indications as to how the Russians perceive the West and how western countries – and, in the present case, the Allied member states – should approach their relationship with Russia. No country willing to build up relations with Russia can ignore the Orthodox element. This is all the more impossible as the values that characterize Orthodoxy are very assertive, indeed radical even when it comes to its perception of the West.
- Consequently, nations engaging in relations with Russia must be prepared to deal with the ideas, values, and positions of the Russian Orthodox Church. At present, there is no reason to believe that the Church's role will decrease. For NATO, this means that the actions and the view of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as its influence on the Russian State, should be seriously taken into account when interacting with Russia. One way of doing this would be to include Russian Orthodox representatives within the community of relations between NATO and Russia.



## NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE PUBLICATIONS 2002-2004

### Research Papers

#### No.1, March 2004:

- Igor SHARAVOV, *Influencing Russian Public Opinion in order to improve Russian Military Reform.*
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- Leonid Y. KOSALS, *Criminal Influence/Control over the Russian Military-Industrial Complex in the Context of Global Security.*

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- “Shaping a New Security Agenda for Future Regional Co-Operation in the Mediterranean Region”, 4<sup>th</sup> Med IRS, Rome 2002.
- “Managing Change: Evolution in the Global Arena and Mediterranean Security”, 5<sup>th</sup> Med IRS, Rome 2003.
- “Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Security Issues in the Mediterranean Region”, 1<sup>st</sup> Med Workshop, Rome 2003.
- “Gestion des ressources naturelles et questions de sécurité en Méditerranée”, 6<sup>th</sup> Med IRS, Rome 2004.

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