

# Russian Soft Power in France: Assessing Moscow's Cultural and Business Paradiplomacy

January 8, 2018

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*This paper is the first of a series of publications on Russia's influence in France. France constitutes the most prominent example of Russia's soft power in Western Europe, due not only to the long-lasting positive bilateral relations but also to the presence of an important Russian emigration since the 1920s that can act as a relay of influence. This project is supported by a grant from the Foundation Open Society Institute in cooperation with OSIFE of the Open Society Foundations.*

The French-Russian relationship is based on a long-standing tradition of cultural exchanges. In the 19th century, France was already one of the preferred destinations for Russian political exiles, and subsequently received several of the major waves of Russian emigration in the interwar period. Under the presidency of de Gaulle, it positioned itself as a European power relatively favorable to the Soviet Union. France's strong Communist tradition also encouraged a certain ideological proximity, and Russian was widely taught at secondary school level until the collapse of the USSR. The bilateral relationship is more complex today, characterized by close-knit economic and cultural interrelationships but also by political difficulties over the main international issues, the most important of which are Ukraine and Syria. Since the support shown by Russia to the European extreme right and the—now waning—honeymoon between the *Front National* (National Front) and some Kremlin circles, debate in France on the "Russian presence" and "Russia's networks of influence" has escalated, sometimes reaching extreme forms of paranoia founded on gross exaggeration, groundless supposition, and the reproduction of American arguments concerning the rumored Russian hand in electing Donald Trump.

The objective of this paper is to analyze, dispassionately and without apportioning blame, the Russian presence in France. All the major powers exert many forms of soft power in countries they consider to be critical internationally, of which France is quite naturally one. Rather than considering Russia to be a case apart, it would be worthwhile to compare Russian activities in France with the means used by the United States, China, Saudi Arabia, or Qatar. Russian soft

power may take several forms, and this paper concentrates on one: cultural soft power. It does not consider activities organized officially by the Russian state or by the Russian Embassy in France, though these have considerable importance: for instance, Russia was the guest of honor at the *Salon du Livre* (Book Fair) in 2010 and will be again in 2018, and the *Dialogue du Trianon* was launched last year by Presidents Macron and Putin to foster exchanges between French and Russian civil society. Instead, the paper maps the make-up of Russian soft power in France by looking at networks that are not directly state-produced: diaspora organizations, those linked to business, the major Orthodox foundations, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the think tanks and media realms.

### **Diaspora Organizations: Influential but Complex Intermediaries**

Unlike the emigration of other diasporas, Russian emigration to France was not a single unified movement. Instead, it was fragmented for both historical and political reasons, which had the effect of creating several "waves" of emigration. The first came in the wake of the October Revolution and the ensuing civil war: between 1.5 and 2 million Russians were forced into exile, and about one-quarter of them emigrated to France, mostly to three areas: the Paris region, the south of France, and the large industrial and mining areas in the north and east.<sup>1</sup> The second wave of emigration lasted from 1950 to 1990, peaking between 1960 and 1980, during which time over one million Soviet citizens left the USSR. Their circumstances varied: they might have been political dissidents, members of ethnic minorities authorized to emigrate (Jews and Germans, for instance), Soviet citizens who refused to return after a spell abroad or who crossed the frontier illegally, etc.<sup>2</sup> The third, post-Soviet wave occurred in the 1990s: dissidents opposed to the Putin regime and Chechens fleeing violence left for political reasons, while the middle classes and oligarchs preparing for exile became economic emigrants.<sup>3</sup> In 2010, France had around 50,000 Russia-born people on its territory.

The emigrant community is strongly divided by conflicting memories and loyalties, both internal (personal and institutional rivalries run high) and re-kindled by the actions of the Russian authorities toward their "compatriots" (*sootchestvenniki*).<sup>4</sup> Starting in the 1990s, and more systematically during the first decade of the 21st century, Russia began building a number of "bridges" to the Russian diaspora worldwide, in the hope of re-integrating them symbolically into the mother country. This policy toward its compatriots has been implemented by several institutions, including the Department of Work with Compatriots at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (created in 2005); the Moscow City House of Compatriots (the city's former mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, was at the forefront of the fight for the Russian diasporas); the World Council of Compatriots, which brings together all the Russian compatriot organizations worldwide (in existence since 1991, it was awarded a more official status in 2001); the *Russkii Mir* (Russian World) Foundation, launched in 2007; and the State Agency for Foreign Cooperation, *Rossotrudnichestvo*. The towns of Moscow and St. Petersburg have their own departments of foreign relations and maintain direct links with some diasporas. The Russian policy toward compatriots is structured primarily to reach Russians in the post-Soviet republics, which are the states most subject to massive migrant flows back to Russia. Secondarily, it is directed toward the more remote diasporas in Europe, Israel, and North America, with the aim of converting them into economic, political, and cultural mediators between Russia and the rest of the world.<sup>5</sup> The desired objective is to consolidate both Russians and all those who identify, in

one way or another, with Russia into a unified community that is capable of overcoming political divisions and reviving the homeland.

It would be a mistake to think that the Russian authorities' strategies toward the Russian diasporas are all crowned with success: attempts to "organize" diaspora communities are difficult to manage. In the case of France, Moscow has had to deal with several forms of resistance, which we can group under three broad headings.

Firstly, Moscow cannot co-opt ethnic minorities that consider themselves to be victims of the Soviet regime or of Putin's Russia. The Chechen diasporas, for instance, remain largely dissociated from the Russian diasporas, and groups with Baltic or Ukrainian identity reject vehemently all reconciliation initiatives coming from Russia. The case of Russian-speaking Jewish diasporas is more complex: some segments remain critical of Russia, while others, close to the European Jewish Congress and the Conference of European Rabbis, are supported by Russian oligarchs, and act as tools for Russian para-diplomacy with some of the Jewish communities in France.

Secondly, the political hardening of the Putin regime has helped to structure opposition movements even within the diasporas, in particular among those who emigrated recently. Several organizations critical of the regime have emerged, notably during the anti-Putin demonstrations in the winter of 2011–2012, and have gradually incorporated NGO networks that defend human rights. The most prominent examples are *Russie-Libertés* (Russia-Freedom) and the UERF (*Union des Électeurs Russes en France*—Union of Russian Electors in France), followed by groups more to the extreme political left such as the GRRR and Politzki, which demand the freeing of Russian political prisoners, mainly anti-fascist militants and members of the banned National Bolshevik Party (NBP).<sup>6</sup>

Thirdly, Moscow's attempt to rehabilitate to its advantage the descendants of the White émigrés has proved more complicated than expected. Some groups have rallied behind Putin's Russia for the sake of the country's historical continuity; others have declined to do so. Those most loyal to the Romanov monarchy, for instance, are opposed, calling for the restitution of their assets and the removal of Lenin's embalmed body from the Mausoleum in Red Square. The hardliners also include several long-standing organizations close to the Orthodox Church, such as Russian Students' Christian Action (*Action Chrétienne des Étudiants Russes*—ACER), which during the Soviet period helped underground believers and parishes, and since the collapse of the USSR has focused on humanitarian and social aid to the most disadvantaged in Russia, via Orthodox charitable organizations in particular.<sup>7</sup> Similarly resistant are former members of the White Army, notably the General Union of Russian Combatants (RONS), and the long-standing networks of both YMCA-Press, which delivered banned literature to dissidents, and the bookshop in Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, the Mecca for so-called "White" emigration.

Many others associated with Russian emigration to France have, however, supported the Russian authorities' rapprochement policy, and a number of major families—the Sheremetevs, Tolstoys, Troubetskoï's, Obolenskys, and Jevakhoffs—are obtaining some form of symbolic recompense by playing the "support Russia" card. Prince Pierre Sheremetev, for instance, directs the Russian Musical Society (*Société Musicale Russe*)/Conservatoire Rachmaninoff. Typical of the charm

offensive waged against them by the Kremlin was a grand cruise organized in 2010 that departed from the Mediterranean for the Black Sea, thus taking the opposite path to the exile, a metaphor for the symbolic return of the émigrés to the mother country.<sup>8</sup> The co-option of a section of the former Russian aristocracy was confirmed during the Ukrainian crisis: in Paris, Prince Dmitri Shakhovskoi and his wife launched the "Russian Bridge" (*Russkii most*), an appeal for solidarity with Russia that garnered the support of more than 100 descendants of the Russian aristocracy—Tolstoys, Pushkins, Sheremetevs, etc.<sup>9</sup>

Although they have met more resistance than expected, the Russian authorities have largely succeeded in unifying Russian diasporas in France. Today, the Coordination Council for the Forum of Russians in France (*Koordinatsionnyi sovet rossiiskikh sootchestvennikov Frantsii*)<sup>10</sup> (launched as such by the Russian authorities in 2011: it had existed since the 1970s under other names)<sup>11</sup> brings together almost 300 groups: diaspora associations in the strictest sense, cultural groups of Russian speakers or of those promoting Russian language and culture, professional and business associations, twinning partnerships between towns and regions, etc.<sup>12</sup> Council members are elected each year by these associations, and although representatives of White emigration (the "nobility") dominated in the early years, they have progressively been joined by figures representing other waves of emigration.<sup>13</sup>

### **Spearhead Associations Linked to the Business World**

The association most actively promoting Franco-Russian links is the Franco-Russian Dialogue (*Dialogue franco-russe*), created in 2004 and directed by Alexandre Troubetskoï.<sup>14</sup> The association has important contacts in the French political and business worlds via its co-president, the former *Républicain* deputy (congressman) Thierry Mariani, vice president of the Parliamentary Group for Franco-Russian Friendship, and its vice president Bernard Lozé, a pioneer of alternative management for hedge funds in emerging countries who is also a former director of Yukos. Lozé's two companies—Lozé et Associés, which specializes in financial investment, and Alternative Leaders, a fund management and distribution company based in Luxembourg—operate in Russia via a subsidiary, Kaltchuga Capital Management, which has worked with Gazprombank. The Dialogue's members and partners are the leading French businesses in the CAC 40 (the benchmark French stock market index), including Total, Alstom, Bouygues, Airbus, Safran, Sanofi, Renault, Engie, etc. The objective of the association is to develop the economic, political, and cultural links between the two countries, and over the last few years, it has become the main forum for all those calling for stronger French-Russian links.

The Dialogue's success can probably be attributed to the fact that the association is at the intersection of different aspects of Russian soft power. As the grandson of Prince Nikolai Troubetskoï, Alexandre Troubetskoï is well established in the world of White emigration. He also has his own support network: he is, for instance, an active member of the movement for the Local Orthodox Russian Tradition in Western Europe (*Orthodoxie Locale de Tradition Russe en Europe Occidentale*), which advocates reconciliation between churches subject to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow, churches subject to Constantinople, and the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia (ROCOR). He chairs the Imperial Guard Association, which commemorates the Tsarist military past. He also has close ties to some networks used by the Kremlin to exert influence, and acts as the bridgehead for prominent Orthodox businessmen

Vladimir Yakunin and Konstantin Malofeev, as well as for their foundations (see below).

Lastly, he is well established in Russia-based French business circles, and has been since the Soviet era. Troubetskoï began his career in the shipyards of Nantes, working on French-Soviet projects related to the fishing industry, then worked for the French company Entrepose in a number of Arab countries allied to the USSR (such as Iraq and Syria) before being recruited by Thomson. There, Troubetskoï was responsible for selling communication equipment for Soviet aviation commissioned by the Ministry of Communications in Moscow, as well as computer systems for the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia (ITAR-TASS), the Academy of Sciences, and Gazprom. Troubetskoï says he became active in Russian emigration circles due to the influence of Vladimir Gurytchev, who was then working for Mosenergo, Moscow's electricity production company, and that this later helped him win contracts with RAO UES, the Russian state corporation responsible for electricity production. Through Gurytchev, Troubetskoï was also introduced to Aleksandr Avdeev, who worked at the Soviet Embassy in Paris in the 1980s and later became Russian ambassador in Paris (between 2002 and 2008), then minister of culture.<sup>15</sup>

The Dialogue thus appears to cross several spheres of interest, and due to its relative informality, it has more latitude than, for instance, the very official Franco-Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which includes the directors of major French and Russian businesses. Although the Chamber focuses on issues related to economics and bilateral trade, it has been directed since 2007 by Pavel Chinsky, a historian of Stalinism and vice-president of the Russian Chess Federation, who militates against sanctions on Russia.

In 2012, the Chamber of Commerce created a Franco-Russian Observatory. Its aim was to generate expertise on Russia to meet the needs of French entrepreneurs and decision-makers while simultaneously giving Russians a better knowledge of France and the French outlook. The Observatory is a jointly-financed academic platform that produces an annual publication covering a broad range of Russian and French topics, as well as ad hoc reports. Directed by Arnaud Dubien, an economic and security intelligence specialist who is a member of the Valdai Discussion Club, the Observatory provides a platform that is sympathetic toward Russia, but has no concrete political agenda.<sup>16</sup>

Another, less formal example is the Pushkin Circle, positioned between the *Droite Populaire* (Popular Right, the most rightist section of the *Républicains* party) and the *Front National*, which offers monthly lectures on subjects linking France and Russia. It is sponsored by Thierry Mariani, Henri de Grossouvre, director for public entities at Veolia, a French transnational company with activities in water and waste management service, Xavier Moreau, a consultant in strategy close to the *Front National*, and Alexandre Stefanescu-Latsa, who manages a human resources agency in Moscow and blogs regularly on "Eurasian," pro-Russian, and anti-Islamic topics.<sup>17</sup> It is also worth mentioning the Russian Association for Mutual Aid between Businesses (AREP), a French-Russian business network directed by Michel Lebedeff, former director of Total in Russia.

## **The Yakunin and Malofeev Networks in France**

Orthodox charity foundations run by businessmen and oligarchs close to the Kremlin such as Vladimir Yakunin and Konstantin Malofeev constitute another central element of Russian presence in France. They have their own agenda but share many joint patterns of influence with the other actors of Russia's soft power. Of the two men, Vladimir Yakunin<sup>18</sup> was undoubtedly closer to Putin. The two men have known each other since the early 1990s, when both were members of the International Center for Business Cooperation, a KGB-controlled organization based in St. Petersburg that was in charge of exports to the West. Along with Putin's two banker friends, Yuri Kovalchuk and Gennady Timchenko, they invested in the famous Ozero cooperative.<sup>19</sup> Yakunin was a member of the Management Board of Transkreditbank, controlled by the Kovalchuk brothers, which financed the business activities of the Baltic ports, thus enabling Yakunin to invest in the road and rail transport sectors. In 2000, when Putin came to power, Yakunin was appointed deputy transport minister, then in 2003 became head of the national rail company, RZhD (*Rossiiskie zheleznnye dorogi*), one of the most powerful companies in Russia behind the major mining, oil, and gas corporations. His career took an unexpected turn in August 2015 when he was dismissed from his post as head of RZhD.

"Orthodox Chekist," a phrase that references both his past at the KGB and his Orthodox beliefs. He positioned himself as an advocate for political orthodoxy very early, with the launch, in 2002, of the "Dialogue of Civilizations," an annual forum in Rhodes attended by many religious leaders. It was one of the first expressions of Russian soft power, a precursor to many other uses of the theme of "civilizations" by the Russian state and to closer links with UN organizations, in particular UNESCO.<sup>20</sup>

Yakunin and his wife direct the Foundation of St. Andrew the First-Called (or Andrei Protocletos), one of the major Russian Orthodox foundations, created in 1992. It was given an endowment in 2013, evidence of its financial stability. It finances a great many projects: the restoration of churches and monasteries; the return of Orthodox relics to Russian soil; cultural exchange programs with Orthodox churches within the Patriarchate of Jerusalem; the celebration of the reconciliation between the Patriarchate and ROCOR; a campaign to promote so-called "traditional" family values aimed at the public and especially at young people; the inauguration of monuments to Russian history in Europe; and various patriotic programs with younger people to keep alight the national and historical flame.<sup>21</sup> The Foundation receives regular aid from the state and thus plays a central role in Russia's public diplomacy.

Between 2000 and 2014, Vladimir Kozhin was Putin's property manager, responsible for managing the Presidential Administration's real-estate assets; he has since become the Russian president's advisor on military and technical cooperation. He is also one of the "St. Petersburg clan," earning his stripes in the KGB during perestroika before becoming involved, alongside Putin, in business communities specializing in export. He was a major contributor to the Russian state's success in reclaiming Tsarist- and Soviet-owned properties abroad. He was also in charge of rebranding the historic sites of the Kremlin and St. Petersburg for major international summits, and has supervised mega-events such as the Olympic Games in Sochi. He played a major role in the construction of a new Russian Orthodox Center in Paris (see below).

Konstantin Malofeev<sup>22</sup> is the second major Orthodox businessman close to the Kremlin. A lawyer by training, he began his career with the major investment fund Renaissance Capital

before founding Marshall Capital Partners, an investment fund specializing in the telecommunications sector, in 2005. Malofeev is close to Igor Shchyogolev, the minister of communications between 2008 and 2012; he is even godfather to Shchyogolev's two children. Shchyogolev was a correspondent for the TASS News Agency in Paris between 1993 and 1997. When he returned to Russia, his career blossomed; he became, in quick succession, press officer for the Kremlin, press secretary for Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, director of the Press Center for the Presidential Administration, and finally (between 2001 and 2008) director of protocol for the Presidential Administration. With Shchyogolev's support, Malofeev's fund was able to profit from the restructuring of the Russian telecommunications market, and acquired a 10 percent stake in the state-owned enterprise Rostelecom.<sup>23</sup> In 2014, Malofeev also became a minority shareholder in Sistema, a major holding company controlled by the oligarch Vladimir Yevtushenko. Together, Malofeev and Shchyogolev have lobbied for a "clean internet" that would combat more effectively the dissemination of both pornography and violence over the web—a topic dear to the Church's heart and very fashionable since the Kremlin's "moral turn" in 2012.<sup>24</sup>

Malofeev has significant official support from the Kremlin. He is close to Sergei Ivanov, a former head of the Presidential Administration, dismissed in 2016, whose son worked for Gazprombank and represented Marshall Capital during the acquisition of Rostelecom shares. He also shares the ideological approach of Yelena Mizulina, Duma deputy and head of the Duma's Committee for Family, Women, and Children, the driver behind all the conservative legislation voted in since 2012. But it is his personal relationship with Father Tikhon, frontrunner in the politicization of Orthodoxy and well-known as supposed Putin's "confessor," that seems to guarantee Malofeev the benevolent protection of the head of state.<sup>25</sup>

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Malofeev has positioned himself as a fervent supporter of the Church. He claims to be a convinced monarchist and was a close ally of the reactionary and anti-Semitic Metropolitan Yoann Snychev (1927-1995). With funds raised by Marshall Capital, Malofeev created the St. Basil the Great Charitable Foundation, which today manages an annual budget of US\$40 million and oversees 30 programs ranging from church renovation to anti-abortion campaigns and from support for former prisoners to aid for single mothers.<sup>26</sup> Both Igor Shchyogolev and the well-known film director Nikita Mikhalkov sit on the Foundation's Committee. Malofeev appears to have played a key role in the 2014 Ukrainian crisis by financing pro-Russian forces in the Crimea and secessionist insurgents from Donbass.<sup>27</sup>

If we look more closely at these two Foundations, the very international character of their management committees is evident, a clear indication of their role as a "bridge" to European countries, especially France. Apart from Vladimir Yakunin and his wife, Nataliya, the Management Committee of the Foundation of St. Andrew the First-Called has just one other Russian citizen, Mikhail Yakushev, who held a high post in the Ministry of Communication between 2004 and 2006 and specializes in "internet governance." All the other Committee members are European citizens, the majority of them French. Among them is Archbishop Michel (Donskoff), a White Russian born in Paris, who held the post of archbishop of Geneva and Western Europe until 2017. During his time as archbishop, he served as a communication channel between the Patriarchate and the Orthodox parishes that have refused canonical reintegration. Another member of the Committee, René Frischknetcht, is first vice president of

the Dresdner Bank, which is domiciled for tax purposes in Switzerland. The SS's bank during the Third Reich, it acquired the nickname of "Occupation Bank," as it financed the German occupation of Poland. More recently, the Dresdner Bank has developed close links with Putin; it opened a subsidiary in St. Petersburg in 1991, probably via KGB networks. Bernard Lozé likewise sits on the Committee. Lastly, the Committee includes Alexis Grigorieff, founder of the real-estate company Ageo, a company that is domiciled in Paris's 16th arrondissement but has no employees on its books, indicating its fictitious status or activities located in a tax haven.

The picture is more or less the same for Malofeev's St. Basil the Great Charitable Foundation.<sup>28</sup> Alongside Mikhalkov, Shchyogolev, and Tikhon, the founding Committee includes two key figures, Serge de Pahlen and Zurab Chavchavadzé. Count Serge de Pahlen is the son of a White Russian émigré of the same name, Serge S. von der Pahlen (1915–1991), who enlisted with the Wehrmacht to serve on the Eastern Front in the Russian Liberation Army before being repatriated to Paris. The son, Serge de Pahlen, married Margherita Agnelli, the daughter of Gianni Agnelli, the founder of Fiat. Until 2004, he held an important position at Fiat as vice-president for the Group's international operations, particularly in the former Soviet Union, then set out on his own, creating Edifin Services, a financial company based in Geneva that specializes in internet banking. He is also on the management committee of Eastern Property Holdings, which works in real estate in Russia, Cyprus, and the Cayman Islands. In addition, he directs the well-known *Éditions des Syrtes*, which publishes regularly on Russia; is one of the founders of the movement for the Local Orthodox Russian Tradition in Western Europe; and co-directs the Union of Descendants of Russian Combatants at Gallipoli, an association of descendants of the White Army which collaborated with Nazi Germany during the war.

Zurab Chavchavadzé is a vice president of Marshall Capital, vice-director of the St. Basil Foundation, and director of a secondary school of the same name financed by the Foundation. In a 2014 interview to the monarchist portal Russian National Line, he stressed his personal links with the main protagonists in the Donbass uprising.<sup>29</sup> His father was born in Paris to an aristocratic family from Georgia that had fought alongside the White Army, but decided to return to the Soviet Union in 1948. He was deported to a camp, and Chavchavadzé and his mother were exiled to Kazakhstan. After being rehabilitated at the end of the 1950s, the family settled in Georgia. In 1990, Zurab Chavchavadzé became one of the organizers of the Russian Aristocratic Council, later leaving to found the Supreme Monarchic Council (*Vysshii monarkhicheskii sovet*). His social life revolves entirely around aristocratic emigrant communities. His daughter has married the son of Prince Shakhovskoi, who started the petition of members of the White aristocracy who supported Russia.<sup>30</sup> He has known Tikhon since the beginning of the 1990s and, due to his role in monarchist circles, has become a key part of Malofeev's strategy regarding émigré communities in Europe.

His many entrées into communities in Western Europe have put Malofeev at the forefront in Russia's soft-power policy among the Russian diaspora, European aristocratic circles, and the extreme right. In June 2014, for instance, he financed a so-called "secret" meeting in Vienna to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Metternich's Holy Alliance, with the aim of re-creating a pan-European conservative and pro-Russian movement. To the meeting, Malofeev sent the New Right philosopher Aleksandr Dugin, as well as the late painter Ilya Glazunov, known for his huge nationalist and anti-Semitic canvases. Other invitees included Aymeric Chauprade, then a

close adviser to Marine Le Pen; Marion Le Pen-Maréchal; Prince Sixtus Henry of Bourbon-Parma, who represented the small Spanish fascist extreme-right Carlist movement; Heinz-Christian Strache, leader of the Austrian extreme-right FPÖ party; Strache's equally radical ally, Johann Herzog; and all the Bulgarian and Croatian leaders from the extreme right.<sup>31</sup> Zurab Chavchavadzé was also present. A few months later, in August, Malofeev hit the headlines when he met Philippe de Villiers to discuss the launch of a project to create historic parks in Crimea and in Moscow similar to those in the French Vendée.<sup>32</sup> His acquaintances may appear disparate, but they are all linked to the extreme right groups that supported Moscow during the Ukrainian crisis.

Alexandre Troubetskoï is closely enmeshed in Yakunin's and Malofeev's networks; Yakunin even co-chairs the French-Russian Dialogue association. Troubetskoï was a member of the Management Board of SvyazInvest between 2011 and 2013, when Igor Shchyogolev was minister,<sup>33</sup> and he met Father Tikhon in 2005 while attending the reburial ceremony for General Anton Denikin (1872–1947) and the reactionary philosopher Ivan Ilyin (1883–1954). Tikhon invited Troubetskoï to Russia in 2009, at which time he was introduced to Malofeev. The two men quickly became friends, such that Troubetskoï became an intermediary for the oligarch's interests in Paris. His link to Tikhon also meant that he was asked to carry out the initial negotiations with the local authorities at Boulogne-Billancourt for the planned Orthodox cathedral on the Île Seguin, before the Quai Branly site was finally chosen.

## **The Russian Orthodox Church**

France is rich in Orthodox churches. Apart from the well-known St. Alexander Nevski cathedral and St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris, there are several parishes in the Paris region (Boulogne, Clamart, Meudon, Chaville, and Saint-Cloud), as well as in Savoy, on the Côte d'Azur, in the Basque region, etc. Since Putin came to power, Russia has sought to terminate the Soviet-era opposition between Russia and the White émigrés. One of the key components of this political and religious strategy was the canonical reconciliation between the Moscow Patriarchate and the ROCOR. Achieved in 2007, it has nevertheless caused a number of schisms within French Orthodox communities, some of which refuse to join the Moscow Patriarchate and accuse it of failing to make honorable amends for its past collusion with the Soviet secret services. The conflict is not simply about religion, but also about money: the Russian state, and especially the Department of Economic Affairs in the Presidential Administration, wishes to regain control of Russian real estate abroad.

Orthodox churches in France are divided toward Russia's reconciliation policy. ROCOR's Diocese of Geneva and Western Europe, which includes parishes in Lyon and Meudon, and the Diocese of Chersonèse, which includes the church in Ugine and the Cathedral of the *Trois-Saints-Docteurs* in Paris, have declared their allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate. The Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is head of the St. Alexander Nevski Cathedral and the church in Grenoble, remains independent of Moscow, because it is under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In addition, the St. Alexander Nevski Cathedral, classed as a historical monument in 1981 by then-mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac, remains the inalienable property of members of its parish. A small faction within ROCOR has rejected the canonical act and has seceded, such as the ROCOR—Acting Supreme Authority for the Church, supervising a

parish in Lyon. Two others, the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile and the True Russian Orthodox Church—Lazarite Synod, developed from the Church of the Catacombs movement during the Soviet period, are not part of ROCOR, and thus consider themselves to be independent.

Apart from ecclesiastical loyalties, there has been a fierce battle to win back places of worship. After years of legal proceedings in French courts, the Orthodox Cathedral in Nice was recognized as the property of the Russian Federation in 2013, but those who worship there currently fall under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and refuse to change their allegiance.<sup>34</sup> The reverse was true of the church in Biarritz: in 2004, the parish priest wanted to rejoin the Patriarchate of Moscow, but the community, supported by the Diocese, appealed, and its adherence to the Patriarchate of Constantinople has been recognized by the French authorities. The church has also been classified as a historic monument in order to avoid ownership disputes.

In the last few years, the effort to build a new Orthodox cathedral in the center of Paris has demonstrated the extent to which Orthodoxy has been made an instrument of Russian soft power in France. The project was mooted for half the first decade of the 21st century, but crystallized after 2008 during discussions between Nicolas Sarkozy and Vladimir Putin. The precious plot of land on the Quai Branly, bordering the Seine, was coveted by Russia, as well as by other powers, such as Saudi Arabia and China; after intense lobbying, it was finally assigned to Moscow.<sup>35</sup> The three-part development—cathedral, school, and cultural center—cost 150 million euros, was financed entirely by Russia, and was inaugurated in the autumn of 2016, at the height of the French-Russian crisis over Syria, in the presence of Patriarch Kirill but not of Vladimir Putin.<sup>36</sup> The cathedral is seen by Moscow as a symbolic victory on several levels: geopolitical, as a physical manifestation of the power Russia has regained in the very heart of Western Europe; historical, as confirmation that reunification with the "White" past has been achieved and henceforth the capital of Russian emigration now hosts a symbol of the new Russia; and ecclesiastical, embodying the hope that the Moscow Patriarchate, rather than that of Constantinople, will gradually become the major uniting force behind the world's Orthodox churches.

It is also worth noting that some Catholic circles are playing a growing role as intermediaries for Russia. This rapprochement is partly the result of internal factors—the line of divide between reformers and conservatives within the Catholic Church, the emergence of a more visible political Catholicism since the formation of the anti-gay movement *La Manif pour Tous*, and the public affirmation of their faith by political figures such as François Fillon. It also relies on a form of geopolitics of religions: the closer agreement between the Vatican and Russia on many international issues, Orthodox officials' visit to Pope Francis, and the joint defense of Eastern Christians, particularly in Syria. Like Russia, France has long positioned itself as a protector of Eastern Christians, and prominent French figures of Lebanese or Armenian origin acted as go-betweens for both France and Russia in Syria. Associations such as *SOS Chrétiens d'Orient*, originally close to the far right, have for instance become central to promoting Russia's position in the Middle East.

Several converts to Orthodoxy have likewise taken on this role of intermediary, among them

Jean-François Colosimo, director of the Catholic publishing house *Éditions du Cerf*, and Christophe Levalois, formerly of the French New Right movement GRECE, who has become deacon of an Orthodox church in Paris. Among those who promote Russia in France, a key position is held by the publishing house *L'Age d'homme*; its late director, Vladimir Dimitrijevic (of Serbian extraction) for many years published *La Lumière du Thabor*, the only journal in French to use the old Julian calendar. Religious links between France and Russia are thus deeper than observers usually notice.

### **The Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC)**

Among the institutions directly representing Russia's interests in France should also be included the Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC). Created in 2007, it was one of the soft-power initiatives launched by Moscow after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, when the Presidential Administration realized that it needed to invest in creating a Russian "brand" and promoting its own image. This strategy was carried out by creating an array of institutions: the Valdai Club; another Institute for Democracy and Cooperation, based in New York, which closed in 2015;<sup>37</sup> the Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund; and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC).

These institutions all demonstrate different aspects of Russia's public diplomacy. The Valdai Club and the Russian International Affairs Council form academic partnerships with foreign researchers, while the Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund focuses more on supporting researchers from the post-Soviet republics and involving them in Moscow's agenda. For their part, the two IDCs target(ed) a wider public in their host countries, France and the United States, including business communities and political circles, and are/were more clearly marked by the particular interests of their directors (Nataliya Narochnitskaya in France and Andranik Migranyan in the United States). The financing for the IDC in Paris is not made public, but it would be reasonable to assume that it comes directly from Russian state organizations, such as the *Russkii Mir* Foundation, and from private donations aligned with the official agenda. Unlike the diaspora organizations, which are autonomous, the IDC clearly engages in political lobbying and appears to have been initiated and sponsored by former Russia's ambassador to NATO and now deputy prime minister, Dmitri Rogozin.

The Russian authorities have succeeded in obtaining consultative status for the IDC in Paris with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Institute states that its purpose is to "organize conferences and discussions on matters of contemporary interest and on the historical and cultural context in which they occur. The subjects it tackles include the role of history in contemporary politics; the relationship between the sovereignty of states and human rights; East-West relations; and the role of NGOs and civil society in democracies. The IDC has a particular interest, too, in the great moments of history, especially WWI and WWII."<sup>38</sup> The IDC serves as a platform for the Russian authorities to speak to the elites and the educated French public. The think tank's guests include high-ranking figures such as Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov, or Yelena Mizulina, mentioned above; well-known experts and members of Russian think tanks, such as Mikhail Remizov, president of the Institute of National Strategy in Moscow; and figures from the Orthodox Church. On the French side, it has received several political figures, mainly those close to *Les Républicains* (see the article by Jean-Yves

Camus to be published in spring 2018 as part of this series); representatives from the Catholic world, ecclesiastical or lay; some businessmen with interests in Russia; and university academics. Well-known French participants in the IDC's activities include H  l  ne Carr  re d'Encausse, the historian of Russia member of the *Acad  mie fran  aise*; Jacques Sapir, economist and director of research at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS); and Fr  d  ric Pons, editor-in-chief of *Valeurs actuelles*.

The IDC president, Nataliya Narochnitskaya, is a political figure and essayist well known in Russia, especially during the 1990s. A researcher at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations and an Orthodox publicist, Narochnitskaya systematically upholds the claims of the Moscow Patriarchate, affirms the existence of a specific Orthodox civilization based on the predominance of ethnic Russians and characterized primarily by its anti-Western stance, and has become known for her pan-Slavic discourse in favor of Yugoslavia and her unfaltering support for the two wars in Chechnya. She was a member of the Duma between 2003 and 2007, representing the conservative and nationalist party Rodina; served as chairman of the Committee for the Study of the Practice and Implementation of Human Rights and Civil Liberties; and was a member of the Commission for "Countering Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests." She has also worked with UN organizations and with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. She gives the IDC an unequivocally Christian slant.<sup>39</sup> Narochnitskaya's second-in-command is John Laughland, a British journalist who has also had a modest academic career, teaching in a number of university institutions. His is another face of the IDC, better integrated into English- and German-speaking communities that are close to far-right ideas.

The debates organized by the IDC focus on a number of central themes:

1. Russia's status in the international order, particularly its key role as a major power on nuclear issues and in major international crises, such as those in Iran, North Korea, Syria (since 2011), and Turkey (since 2015). This theme also extends to the denunciation of Islamism and the perceived need for a new multipolarity to reduce what Russia considers to be the U.S. and NATO capacity to do harm.

2. Double standards in international affairs—for instance, Western recognition of Kosovo's independence but refusal to recognize entities that have seceded from the states of the former USSR. The IDC regularly organizes debates on the status of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and more recently Montenegro, as well as on Abkhazia, North Ossetia, and Transnistria—and, of course, on Crimea and Donbass from 2014—with the goal of defending the Russian position. The IDC also participates in polemics with the Baltic countries, Ukraine, and Poland around commemorating and interpreting the Second World War and defends the Russian position in the "fight against fascism."<sup>40</sup>

3. The alliance between Catholics and Orthodox believers on so-called "conservative" values and the Christian identity of Europe. This topic has gained importance since the Syrian crisis, because it has allowed the IDC to become involved in defending Eastern Christians and act as a mouthpiece for well-known Christians from Syria, Lebanon, and Armenia, as well as for all those in the Catholic and Mediterranean world (such as the Order of Malta) who share a

commitment to defending Eastern Christians above all else. This direction has enabled the IDC and the Russian authorities to gain new support among French conservative Catholic communities.

4. The "decadence" of the international scene, a theme debated mainly by denouncing the liberal world order, which it sees as the domination of the international liberal establishment over the right to national sovereignty. This theme appears to be John Laughland's area of predilection, rather than Narochnitskaya's, and is particularly evident in the partnerships organized by the IDC with its Italian colleagues, including Dario Citati of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Geopolitics and Auxiliary Sciences in Rome, who is a crusader against "new world Bolshevism."<sup>41</sup>

These four major themes demonstrate that the IDC, like every other institution for public diplomacy, has some freedom to tailor the topics it wishes to discuss to the interests of its representatives. Although the first two areas form part of the Russian state's standard arsenal and reflect the position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the third line of approach, used to a lesser extent in Russian diplomacy, is bolstered by Narochnitskaya's personal religious convictions. The fourth line is much more controversial and is not explicitly promoted by Russian diplomacy. It forms part of the "gray area" authorized by Moscow that allows public diplomacy institutions such as the IDC to develop contacts with the European far-right fringes. All in all, the IDC has had mixed results, and cannot be counted successful in the sense of being thought of as an established French think tank.

### **The Russian Media in France**

The issue of the Russian media's influence in Europe and the United States has become a hot topic, creating a toxic and self-referential media bubble based on a lot of assumptions and relatively little evidence. If there is a Russian media presence in France, this does not mean that it influences the opinions of the French public or is capable of changing its perceptions.

Russian media's first strategy is to form partnerships with respected French media. The best-known, but by no means only, example is *Le Figaro*, which, like many European daily newspapers, long included *La Russie d'Aujourd'hui* (Russia Beyond the Headlines), a monthly supplement published in partnership with the Russian government's daily paper, *Rossiiskaia gazeta*. (This has now ceased to appear.) The weekly *Valeurs actuelles*, which is politically and socially conservative but economically liberal, is currently one of the greatest successes of the right-wing press; it has likewise had a Russian supplement since 2017. Pascal Gauchon's quarterly *Conflits*, which specializes in geopolitics, also takes an unequivocally pro-Russian line.

The second strategy is to ally with the alternative press. There are countless micro-media, essentially internet sites, that are either managed from Russia on .fr platforms or created in partnership with far-right micro-groups. However, their influence remains minimal and they reach only those members of the French electorate who are already skeptical of the mainstream media (see the article by Nicolas Lebourg to be published in Spring 2018 as part of this series). In addition, many are short-term operations and quickly disappear, as was the case of ProRussiaTV.

The third strategy is to launch media products specifically tailored to the particular national context. Examples are the two principal Russian media outlets, RT and Sputnik, whose French platforms launched in 2014 and early 2015, respectively. They have always been criticized for their biased view of French affairs, on which they present only minority viewpoints,<sup>42</sup> and for their role as mouthpieces for the Russian authorities. Having failed to penetrate the conventional media platforms, both of them have invested in alternative areas, mainly social networks. As such, RT has become one of the French leaders on Periscope, a live-video application, with over 85,000 followers.<sup>43</sup> It also boasts 78,000 Twitter followers, while Sputnik has over 46,000. Their websites are also very well optimized for search engines, such that they almost always appear at the top of the results page.

A continuous Russian news channel in French, on the model of CNN, the BBC, France 24, Al-Jazeera, or CCTV, has been launched at the end of December 2017, in the middle of vivid polemics. Several figures have indeed been calling for refusing RT the license to broadcast, while others have been arguing that a media cannot be forbidden on the only reason it will be biased. An early agreement with the French audiovisual regulator, the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel* (CSA), was signed in 2015, as the regulator wished to supervise production and ensure that the channel met its obligation to present a wide range of opinions.<sup>44</sup> The new RT channel, with a 20 million euros budget, is managed by Xenia Fedorova, who previously directed RT in France and the Russian video-production agency Ruptly in Berlin. The channel's ethics committee will comprise "friends" of Russia, including Madame Anne Gazeau, former ambassador of France, State Councilor s.e., and officer of the Legion of Honor; Jacques-Marie Bourget, journalist, writer, chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and knight of the Order of Arts and Letters; Jean-Luc Hees, journalist, writer, officer of the Legion of Honor, and knight of the Order of Arts and Letters; and Thierry Mariani, politician, former minister, honorary member of Parliament.

The presence of these Russian media in France prompts two questions. The first is legal: unlike the monthly supplement *La Russie d'Aujourd'hui*, which is a legal and recognized official production of the Russian state, RT and Sputnik claim to be independent media outlets, although they are clearly financed by the Russian administration and should therefore properly be described as state media. The second is that of their actual influence. There is certainly a cascade effect with sites multiplying artificially and creating a self-referential media bubble. Yet apart from confirming the convictions of a share of the public which is already reluctant to follow mainstream media, it is still very hard to measure any impact on broader public opinion. Research into this question shows that consumers tend to use only media that confirm their existing world view; media therefore serve only as echo chambers, with no power to influence others who think differently.

## Conclusions

Russian soft power is able to make headway in France because of the rich historical, cultural, and economic fabric uniting the two countries. In both countries, large segments of the public share values we might define as "sovereignist"—a stance present in France on both the left and the right sides of the political spectrum. This *souverainisme* may be expressed politically (priority of

the nation-state over the European construction), geopolitically (ambiguous attitudes toward multilateral and particularly transatlantic institutions), economically (protectionism versus globalization), and, for groups on the right of the political spectrum, culturally (rejection of immigration, calls for so-called "traditional" values).

The Russian cultural presence may be divided into a number of broad areas. The first is that coordinated directly by Russian state bodies and the Russian embassy in France. The second is that of public diplomacy, comprising business associations (such as the French-Russian Dialogue) that guarantee both generous funding and direct access to political and economic decision-makers at the highest level of the state. We might also include the IDC in this category, as it meets the definition of an "official" association in the sense that its funds come from state institutions charged with promulgating Russia's view of the world.

The third area is that of the Russian Orthodox church and the diaspora associations. The Church plays a complex role in Russian para-diplomacy, since it has its own agenda to promote. In some countries, the Church does not hide the fact that it is partly at odds with the Kremlin's decisions. In the case of France, the interests of the Patriarchate and those of the Russian authorities appear to a large extent to coincide, the best example of this being the inauguration of the new Paris cathedral. Also in this third group are the Russian émigré associations; it would be a mistake to see them as entirely subordinate to Moscow, since many keep their distance and advance their own agendas, which are not coordinated with that of the Kremlin. The Russian media, the objectives of which are not clearly defined, comprise a fourth group. Yet another circle, not discussed in this paper but which would merit analysis, is the jet set para-diplomacy, which has particular influence on the Riviera. Several well-known French film stars (Gérard Depardieu being the most famous—and most exaggerated—example, but also Alain Delon, Vincent Cassel, and Monica Belucci) and sports celebrities play a key role in branding Russia in France.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Among the many studies of Russian emigration to France, see Nikita Struve, *Soixante-dix Ans d'Émigration Russe, 1919-1989* (Paris: Fayard, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Claude Chesnais, *L'Émigration Soviétique: Passé, Présent et Avenir—Conférence Internationale sur les Migrations* (Paris: OECD, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> Anne de Tinguy, *La Grande Migration. La Russie et les Russes Depuis l'Ouverture du Rideau de Fer* (Paris: Plon, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> The term "compatriot" (*sootchestvennik*) is used in Russian to describe not only expatriates of the Russian Federation but anyone who might have a link, in one way or another, with Russia. The Law of 1999 defined compatriots as "Russian citizens permanently resident abroad; individuals and their descendants who live abroad and are linked to peoples residing historically in Russia; those making a free choice of a spiritual, cultural, and legal link to Russia; those whose ancestors lived in the Federation's territory, including former Soviet citizens living in states that were part of the Federation...; and those who have emigrated from the Russian state, the Russian Republic, the RSFSR, the Soviet Union, or the Russian Federation and are citizens of another state, or stateless."

<sup>5</sup>See Marlene Laruelle, "The 'Russian World': Russia's Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination," *Center for Global Interests Papers* (May 2015).

<sup>6</sup>See the thesis by Olga Bronnikova, "Compatriotes et Expatriotes: le Renouveau de la Politique dans l'Émigration Russe. L'Émergence et la Structuration de la Communauté Politique Russe en France (2000-2013)" (PhD diss., INALCO, 2014), in particular Chapter 4, "La formation des groupes militants."

<sup>7</sup>See the site "ACER-Russie," <http://www.acer-russie.com>.

<sup>8</sup>Anna Nemtsova, "Retour dans une Patrie Méconnaissable," *Le Figaro*, September 14, 2010, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/publiredactionnel/2010/09/14/06006-20100914ARTWWW00431-retour-dans-une-patrie-meconnaissable.php>.

<sup>9</sup>Gregory Feifer, "Putin's White Guard: Why Russia's Former Nobility Is Supporting the Kremlin," *Foreign Affairs*, March 23, 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2015-03-23/putins-white-guard>.

<sup>10</sup>Launched as such by the Russian authorities in 2011, it had existed since the 1970s under other names. See the site, "Koordinatsionnyi Sovet Possiskikh Sootchestvennikov vo Frantsii/ Conseil de coordination du forum des Russes en France," <http://www.conseil-russes-france.org/>. It is worth noting the difference between the French and Russian titles. The Russian title is "Coordination Council for Compatriots of Russia in France," but the founders probably preferred to avoid the term "compatriot," which has a different meaning in French, and have replaced the term "of Russia" (*rossiiskii*), which implies ethnic diversity, with "Russian," which better reflects the nature of the Forum's participants.

<sup>11</sup>See the site <http://www.conseil-russes-france.org/>.

<sup>12</sup>See a list of the main associations at "Associations," <http://infos-russes.com/associations/>.

<sup>13</sup>See Olga Bronnikova's analysis of this topic, as well as her comparison between the Forum of Russians in France and the Council of Russian Compatriots in the United Kingdom. Bronnikova, "Compatriotes et Expatriotes."

<sup>14</sup>The association focuses on promoting political and cultural relations between the two countries, but also their economic relationship; it serves as a platform for dialogue between French and Russian entrepreneurs. See the association's site, "Dialogue Franco-Russe," <http://dialoguefrancorusse.com/fr/>.

<sup>15</sup>The fullest biography of Alexander Troubetskoï is in Russian. See "Troubetskoï Aleksandr Aleksandrovich," *Mezhdunarodnyi Ob"edinennyi Biograficheskii Tsentr*, <http://www.biograph.ru/index.php/whoiswho/17/1268-Troubetskoïaa>.

<sup>16</sup>The author of this paper has published with the Observatory on several occasions.

<sup>17</sup>See "Cercle Pouchkine/Krug Pushkin," <https://www.cerclepouchkine.com/>.

<sup>18</sup>Vladimir Yakunin comes from an army background (his father was a pilot in the USSR Border Troops) and has worked over the years in different technical jobs at the Council of Ministers and then in the Soviet Diplomatic Mission to the United Nations Organization, posts traditionally reserved for members of the secret services or those close to them. In 1991, he became head of an "International Centre for Business Cooperation" of which Vladimir Putin was already a member. In 1997, he was offered a job in the Federal Administration for the North-West Region, Putin's fiefdom, and entered the Ministry of Transport in 2000. From there, he undertook the "conquest" of the national rail company, Russian Railways, which he left only in 2015.

<sup>19</sup>Gennady Timchenko was made a knight of the French Legion of Honor (*Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur*) in the autumn of 2013 for his aid to Total with new energy projects in Russia, particularly in the Arctic. Since he was associated with shadowy aspects of

Putin's regime, this honor provoked considerable criticism of the influence major French companies could exert, and embarrassed French political institutions. Timchenko, who is under U.S. sanctions, was forced to sell his majority stake in the petroleum trading company Gunvor in 2014.

<sup>20</sup> See Laruelle, "The 'Russian World'."

<sup>21</sup> See the site, "Endowment for St. Andrew the First-Called Foundation," <http://www.st-andrew-foundation.org/fr/>.

<sup>22</sup> Konstantin Malofeev was born in 1974. He graduated with a degree in law from Moscow State University and immediately, in the second half of the 1990s, found work at Renaissance Capital. In 2007, his investment fund, Marshall Capital, was brought before the British Supreme Court. Malofeev was finally cleared in 2013, although the company was criticized for its financial practices. In 2012, Malofeev attempted to enter politics by being elected as a local representative for a small district in the Smolensk region, but has not subsequently tried to progress to the level of national politics. After the Ukrainian crisis, he was put under sanctions by the European Union.

<sup>23</sup> Courtney Weaver, "Konstantin Malofeev, Marshall Capital Partners," *Financial Times*, September 8, 2013, <https://www.ft.com/content/569e533e-051c-11e3-9e71-00144feab7de>.

<sup>24</sup> Anastasiia Golitsyna, Margarita Liutova, and Elizaveta Ser'gina, "Poiavilsia novyi pretendent na vedenie reestra vrednykh saitov," *Vedomosti*, February 1, 2013, [http://www.vedomosti.ru/technology/articles/2013/02/01/zachistit\\_runet](http://www.vedomosti.ru/technology/articles/2013/02/01/zachistit_runet).

<sup>25</sup> See Charles Clover, *Black Wind, White Snow: The Rise of Russia's New Nationalism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

<sup>26</sup> See the site "Fond Sviatitelia Vasiliia Velikogo," <http://www.ruscharity.ru/>.

<sup>27</sup> "Interv'iu – Konstantin Malofeev, osnovatel' 'Marshal kapitala'," *Vedomosti*, November 13, 2014, <http://www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/articles/2014/11/13/v-sankcionnye-spiski-vklyuchali-posovokupnosti-zaslug>.

<sup>28</sup> See the information available at "Stocks," Bloomberg Market, <https://www.bloomberg.com/research/stocks/people/person.asp?personId=23938600&privcapId=20342731>.

<sup>29</sup> Zurab M. Chavchavadzé, "Slovo Novorossi laskaet mne slukh," July 8, 2014, [http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2014/08/8/slovo\\_novorossiya\\_laskaet\\_mne\\_sluh/](http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2014/08/8/slovo_novorossiya_laskaet_mne_sluh/).

<sup>30</sup> See his biography and interview (in Russian), "Kniaz' Zurab M. Chavchavadzé: 'Khristianin obiazan byt' optimistom!," *Foma*, November 2012, <https://foma.ru/knyaz-zurab-mixajlovich-chavchavadze-xristianin-obyazan-byit-optimistom.html>, and the interview "Zurab M. Chavchavadzé: 'Esli russkoe obshchestvo votserkovitsia, Rossiia vnov' obretet svoi istoricheskii put,'" *Pravoslavie.ru*, July 24, 2017, <http://pravoslavie.ru/105253.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Odehnal von Bernhard, "Gipfeltreffen mit Putins fünfter Kolonne," *Tages Anzeiger*, June 3, 2014, <http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/ausland/europa/Gipfeltreffen-mit-Putins-fuenfter-Kolonne/story/30542701>. More details are available in Anton Shekhovtsov, *Russia and the Western Far Right: Tango Noir* (London: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>32</sup> "French Businessman Defends Plans to Build Crimea Theme Park," *France 24*, August 16, 2014, <http://www.france24.com/en/20140816-french-businessman-villiers-theme-park-crimea-sanctions>.

<sup>33</sup> "Un Prince Russe Couronné Roi des Télécommunications?," *Sputnik*, August 11, 2011, <https://fr.sputniknews.com/presse/201108111022257611-un-prince-russe-couronne-roi-des-telecommunications-revue-de-presse/>.

<sup>34</sup> François-Xavier Maigre, "A Nice, la Bataille de la Cathédrale Divise les Orthodoxes," *La Croix*, September 15, 2011, [https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Actualite/A-Nice-la-bataille-de-la-cathedrale-divise-les-orthodoxes- NP\\_-2011-09-15-711620](https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Actualite/A-Nice-la-bataille-de-la-cathedrale-divise-les-orthodoxes- NP_-2011-09-15-711620).

<sup>35</sup> More details are available in Nicolas Hénin, *La France Russe: Enquête sur les Réseaux de Poutine* (Paris: Fayard, 2016).

<sup>36</sup> "L'Incroyable Histoire de la Cathédrale Orthodoxe en Plein Paris," *Vanity Fair*, July 2014, <http://www.vanityfair.fr/actualites/france/articles/lincroyable-histoire-de-la-cathedrale-orthodoxe-en-plein-paris/14657>.

<sup>37</sup> Rosie Gray, "Pro-Putin Think Tank Based in New York Shuts Down," *Buzzfeed*, June 30, 2015, [https://www.buzzfeed.com/rosiegray/pro-putin-think-tank-based-in-new-york-shuts-down?utm\\_term=.bav0MBG4V#.swavqyXor](https://www.buzzfeed.com/rosiegray/pro-putin-think-tank-based-in-new-york-shuts-down?utm_term=.bav0MBG4V#.swavqyXor).

<sup>38</sup> See the site, "Institut de la Démocratie et de la Coopération," <http://www.idc-europe.org/fr/Institut-de-la-Democratie-et-de-la-Cooperation>.

<sup>39</sup> See her personal site <http://narotchnitskaya.com/>.

<sup>40</sup> Narotchnitskaya also directs the Stoletie Foundation, which works on a number of commemorative projects: "Stoletie: Informationsno-analiticheskoe izdanie fonda istoricheskoi perspektivy," <http://www.stoletie.ru/>.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, "Le Retour du Politique et des Peuples Souverains contre le Néo-Bolchevisme Mondialiste," IDC, December 15, 2016, <http://www.idc-europe.org/fr/Le-retour-du-politique-et-des-peuples-souverains-contre-le-neo-bolchevisme-globaliste>.

<sup>42</sup> The channel has hired Philippe Verdier, "Monsieur Météo" (the Weatherman), who criticized the "myth" of climate change. See "Philippe Verdier Revient sur Russia Today...et Il A Toujours une Grosse Dent contre la COP21," *Télérama.fr*, November 30, 2015, <http://www.telerama.fr/medias/philippe-verdier-revient-sur-russia-today-et-il-a-toujours-une-grosse-dent-contre-la-cop21,134855.php>.

<sup>43</sup> Théo Caubel, Philippine David, and Corentin Dionet, "RT France, Sputnik: Dix Choses à Savoir sur les Médias Russes en France," *L'Obs-Rue89*, May 30, 2017, <https://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/rue89/rue89-sur-les-reseaux/20170102.RUE6087/rt-france-sputnik-dix-choses-a-savoir-sur-les-medias-russes-en-france.html>.

<sup>44</sup> Alexis Delcambre and Alexandre Piquard, "SputnikNews et RT, Instruments d'Influence de la Russie en France," *Le Monde*, March 16, 2017, [http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2017/03/16/sputniknews-et-rt-instruments-d-influence-de-la-russie-en-france\\_5095246\\_3210.html#dug6urFG2p0GMgCM.99](http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2017/03/16/sputniknews-et-rt-instruments-d-influence-de-la-russie-en-france_5095246_3210.html#dug6urFG2p0GMgCM.99)

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