
THE RUSSIAN WORLD, POST- TRUTH AND ITS IMPACT WITHIN EUROPE

Jahnabi Borgohain

Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies
School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract: Within the paradigm of EU and European communities, as a protector of traditional and conservative norms and beliefs, Russia plays a significant role in protecting these values and portrays themselves as a true believer of orthodox Christianity. The Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian government have worked hard to revive orthodox properties in various European countries. After Brexit and the victory of Donald trump, globalization is seen as a retreat and articulates Russia's civilizational autonomy against the west. This has added fuel to the ongoing debate on globalization and the preconceive notion of a single liberal political system. Reacting to the ideological beliefs of the Russian government, the OSCE has said that general prohibition on vague ideas is incompatible with international standards. The connection between Russian world and the post truth domain is that most of them are seen exploring Moscow's manipulation of the western world. It is also connected to the ongoing debate about order and security.

Keywords: Orthodox, Brexit, EU.

Introduction: Since 2000s, Russia became an active player in global platform, with its own sphere of influence in countries that are part of the European Union's and NATO. For EU, these countries form a 'shared neighbourhood' with Russia, but for Russia they are mere small countries. Russia tries to spread its influence through culture, language, and various social and political connections. Non-state actors, particularly NGOs, also helped in the promotion of Russia as a nation capable of competing with countries in the west.

The influence of the Russian Orthodox Church is increasingly evident beyond the realm of domestic policies. It has played a significant key role in both formulating and advancing Russian interests abroad. The Moscow Patriarchate, like the Russian government, is actively concerned about its developments outside Russia and its implications these developments may have on the home front. This is not only limited to the neighboring countries like Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, etc but also to other European nations where Russian Orthodox Christians have made their inhabitants. Most of the ROC's effort in handling things abroad is managed by department of external church relations (DECR). They maintain the Church's relations with Local as well as other non-Orthodox Churches (Bourdeaux, 66-70).

In the year 2000, the National Security Concept (NSC) of Russia has given more emphasis on various threats that Russia has received internally that creates tension between the center and various regions (Anderson, 2007: 194) and externally, by the expansion of other religion and culture by other states in to Russian territory(Anderson, 2007) . In order to tackle this situation, it has lead to the formation of various government policies, protecting the rights and well being of its citizens from the negative influence of various external religious groups and organizations (Naletova, 2003). The main objective of NSC is to restore the influence of orthodox beliefs to a much larger extent as compared to other traditional faiths and beliefs. (Yuri, 2007). although many foreign religious groups have existed in Russia for decades, the NSG have always framed them as spreading negative vibes against the majority of Russian orthodox Christianity. Missionaries as well as other non- orthodox organizations which were serving in Russia for many decades have also been titled as a threat to "the integrity of national consciousness and cultural identity," because of some of the proven factual evidence that they have been working against the Russian people and the Russian orthodox church.

According to Putin, the modernization of Russia must be based on the faith that has been bestowed by the Orthodox Church (Smolensk, Kaliningrad, 2001: 158). The Russian Orthodox Church has created awareness among the citizens, the spirit of patriotic love in its country's history and moral values (Kaliningrad, 2001: 159). The Russian Orthodox Church has also taken interest in extending its support outside of Russia for spiritual revival and a matter of influence to all the Russians living abroad. In 2009, Putin has stated that the collaboration of the ROC with other churches has always been defensive in relation to the national and spiritual identity of the Russians thus protecting the Russian Diaspora from non- orthodox religions and

secularism. According to Medvedev, ROC's interaction with those settled abroad has resulted in many benefits such as projecting Russian power externally and repressing to those who are likely to promote threat within the Russian territory. Security dimension of Russia in relation to soft power is totally different from western soft power in the sense that it has a rigid framework of Kremlin themes that develop its own tool to counter any threat from western counterparts.

The protests in Ukraine in 2013 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 has shown that Russian has actively played as a healthy competition with the west who instigated negative vibes of Russia with countries like Ukraine and other countries of European integration . Ukrainian euro maiden protest has shown the direct involvement of United States in supporting those protests against Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church has also secured the rights and dignity of the Russian Diaspora as well as property that might have been lost during the communist period. The ROC has united with the state in promoting a greater Russia through the spread of Russian Orthodox Christianity. The paper mainly focuses on three aspect of Russianism. Firstly, the expanding popularity of Russian influence with the effort of Orthodox Church with the Diasporas communities in various parts of Europe, secondly, the recovery of much historic and antic Russian property dated during the tsar and communist Russia and thirdly, the popularity of the Russian government and its influence across the world. These three criteria has created tensions in various parts of the European countries and in 2000, administration under Putin has taken full responsibility in protecting the national security by preserving the cultural heritage and historical traditions of the Russian people. According to Yuri Zarakhovich Putin's main aim was to take over the church as a vital force in shaping foreign policy.

There is always a saying that "when we are away from home, we remember our home a lot and become nostalgic". By the above connotation, it means that Russian Diaspora societies draws faith towards orthodoxy and various Russian faith and beliefs when they live in foreign countries. There creates an important connection between motherland and the people who are living far away from their native land. Reunification of the Putin government with Diaspora communities across the world in 2007-08 and protecting Russian emigrants , has strengthen and expanded the influence of ROC and its administration within and outside the country . Monasteries and various remains of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia not only unite its people together but also people from other nations, who have a strong believe in orthodox Christianity of the Moscow Patriarchate, specifically the natives of the post soviet independent states and some parts of Europe. In order to live up to the mark of its citizens within and outside Russia, the Russian federation and the Russian Orthodox Church should work in harmony together for the rights and liberties and spiritual needs of Russian citizens.

Joint conference in April 2001 took place between the Russian orthodox community and the Russian federation in respect of ROC built under the guidance of orthodox community and the RFM. Most of the churches which were built in eastern and western parts of Europe in countries such as Paris, Denmark, Austria, Netherland etc. Before the period of communist regime were basically for sustaining the religious life and unifications of many Russian people who were living abroad (Kaliningrad, 2001). According to some scholars, all these properties were abandoned by the states during the soviet period but on the other side it narrates a totally different story and a bit complicated (Kaliningrad, 2001: 159). After the October revolution in 1920s, most of the church property in Europe is linked to the Russian Diaspora and during the time of patriarch tikhon, a decree was passed in 1922 in order to liquidity these property under the soviet government of Brezhnev and khrushhev era (hackle, 2006). On the other hand, most of the Russian parishes and remains during that time came under the control of Constantinople in 1931 and in order to restore those properties, the government had to insist that they merely do not belong to the Russian orthodox church but to the state itself as it was the state who had build these structures and later abandoned them in a manner that could be termed as criminal. Many cases were holed up in relation to the status of the church properties in Europe. These properties were tied up to the issue of spiritual security, in order to connect them with Russia and these spiritual securities were totally promoted through the Russian compatriots abroad.

Unity of the people is very necessary in order to promote a feeling of nationalism that would connect them with their homeland. The relationship between the ROC and the Russian Diaspora is somewhat paternalistic in nature. However, in the beginning of the 21st century, it is the secularism which inevitably affects the mission of the Orthodox Church (Aleksey, 2001). The traditional believers of orthodox and catholic communities were mostly affected by the so called military secularism and it is a challenge for them to guard their Diaspora communities in an increasingly secularizing Europe. What thinker hilarion has pointed out is that there is a

thin between these communities in matter of understanding the concept of secularism. There is an intense discrepancy between orthodox Christian communities that attempt to preserve the sacred Tradition of the undivided Church, and with those, like many communities of reform that have continued to revise the same Tradition in conformity with secular standards (Smolensk, 2002). One such reform community were Protestant Christianity who has aligned themselves with the concept of living a secular standard of life and they became a threat and challenge to the mainstream traditional Christian values and practice.

Union of ROCOR, the churches under the control of Constantipole and the diocese of Europe under Moscow took place in April 2003 under the supervision of the Russian Orthodox Church And was issued by patriarch Aleksey. The meeting was organized in order to solve the situation that happened due to the influx of many Russian communities to various parts of Europe and central Asia during the period of glasnost and perestroika. Initially these Russian people sticked to their country's tradition, culture and beliefs and used their native language according to their orthodox tradition. This has created pastoral problem in various churches in Europe. However these issues became more problematic when these Russian emigrants complained to the Russian Orthodox Church back home regarding the negligence and the lack of the church community of pastoral care towards them. This has led to political involvement on such religious matters concerning the identity of the Russian society. But the other side of the story is that the diocese of Sourozh, which is under the control of ROC and the Constantinople considered the orthodox churches as a place for community of people regardless of their nationality and not from the Russian perspective of preserving only the Russian national identity(Dennen, 2007). They develop their own orthodox traditions in their respective countries and these churches always mingle with the countries in which they find themselves. However the expansion of Russian orthodox churches into other countries territories created a problem of canonical territory. But with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and identifying Russians with that of orthodox Christianity, these territories took a complete different setback. These territories no longer limit itself to the Russian empire or the soviet union but to the very identity of the Russians and the ROC makes the claim any Russians living in any part of the world are part of its jurisdiction (Naletova, 2002).

How do Russian World Policies Operate?

In the global world, influence of Russian society outside Russia can be seen through many fields such as culture, media, politics etc. they influence through various campaigning methods in civil society across the whole of Europe and try to assert the priorities of Russia's foreign policies. All these key elements that supports Russia in the exercise of powerful influence works together wholly and not independently from each other.

Among all these key elements, the media plays an important role in foreign policy of Russia and decision making process. It is an important element of Russia in spreading its sphere of influence internally as well as externally in various parts of Europe and some parts of Asia and its sub continents. Most prominent Russian Medias are Russia today, sputnik and Russian internet organizations. They don't live any opportunity unturn in focusing at various political and social campaigns of Russia with information, most of which are half- truths or they don't even existed. They even share sensitive and incorrect information about prominent peoples' background and their daily lives which in some way affect country's foreign policy and decision making process. The Russian media helps the Kremlin in exerting powerful influence through indirect ownership of various media organization such as rambler co, Gazprom media etc. they are experts in intermixing various opinions in order to confuse the information space and resonate with foreign television and online target audiences. Some incidents such as the refugee problem in many European countries are highlighted in such a way that has spreaded anxiety and discontentment among various people. These broadcast has lead Europe to take refugee problems more seriously.

The Russian media tries to exert influence through sponsorship program and with a wide variation of languages. In 2000, many sponsored media were launched and they are also active in various social media in recent times such as Facebook, YouTube etc. so that they could promote themselves to the world. These social media also give them the opportunity to promote fake and false news which would leads to distrust of the government and lack credibility. Russia's government – controlled Medias such as Gazprom media was successful in exerting influence on most of Europe's Russian speaking masses that could most widely be found in the Caucasian region, Baltic States and in the central Asian countries also. The other nation that has much higher influence in Europe is Germany and Russia has a tough competition with this nation. During the time of election and political campaigning in both the nation, both try to show negative viewpoint and information against one another and also present false news that sparks demonstrations in matter of security. During 2017

election time, Russia today portrays Angela Markle government negatively and also displayed negative information about experts and diplomats in native local languages.

On the cultural front, Russia tries to influence the Russian community through various cultural institutions and through think tanks, academia and through the Russian Orthodox Church. Agencies which are controlled and uncontrolled by the Moscow government such as Russkiv Mir (Russian world) promote the culture of Russia globally that includes ethnic Russians speakers and their families. Another way through which the Russian industry tries to spread its influence across the European nation is through the mode of business organizations in the form of energy companies and other form of organizations. Political influence in Europe is mostly supported by parties and political organization that have got financial funding from the Kremlin and have a very close relationship with Moscow. These relationships legitimize the Kremlin's policy agenda and its Eurocentric vision. They have maintained a cordial relationship with most of the political parties from German by using widespread cultural elements and also tried to create various loopholes in the British legal systems so that they can manipulate them in order to receive financial funds made to the political parties of the British political system.

Reactions in Europe: Russia's influence in European hemisphere has affected them in many ways. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) focused on individual protection in promoting any unfiltered information which is against the government. These vague ideas, including 'false news' are not allowed to be published that would affect the political and social development of the whole of Europe. These problems were taken more seriously by some of the prominent international organisations such as NATO who has been taking every notice to false news spreaded by its Russian counterparts. German media popularly known as die zeit has made it a point in revealing any fake news produce by Russia. In February 2017, cyber destabilization has lead to tension in matter of security in France as well as in some parts of Czech Republic in the year 2016. Even in countries like Finland and United Kingdom, some of the top level decisions get affected due to security issue

Russia and Post Truth: After Donald trump got elected, the discourses of the Russian world is continuously been scrutinized and there seems to be a connection between them and the post truth era. Most of the scholars are of the opinion that the Kremlin has been playing a manipulative game in influencing the western world. They have received many supports politically as well as socially after the post truth era. In the post-truth era, each voice whether it's true or false matters. Arbitrary meanings in political and social discourses are constructed semantically in post truth world. Policies in Russia get quiet adjusted with the post truth environment such as manipulating the European nations through the influence of Russian orthodox system and through various languages via Russian media. One such post truth scenario is the refugee crisis that has affected almost all the member nation of EU. Most of the security process and scrutinization that takes place in Europe is due to various Russia's manipulative campaign and countries like Germany and France are more prone to such false information and propaganda.

The Russian government knew that in a democracy, opinion of the people is given much priority than anything else. Positive activities have been evolved that could support the political system of the Russian government and social media became a platform that connects them with the rest of the world.

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