

THE STYLE OF THE EPOCH OUGHT TO BE JUNKED

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The reports, poured as a stream by the Russian expert community onto Russian society, have one obvious thing in common – they do not have an addressee. The reports address some abstract power that has long since been abstract, as evidenced by the last three years of democratic growth and the rise of several mutually balanced centers of force. This means that one can no longer write to some vague impersonal force.

The Russian expert community has in fact turned into a kind of market, where there is bread, pork, and bird streets, but also an expert row where they sell letters by wholesale, retail, and in bulk. Various expert institutions also arrive as sellers who offer their 'fresh brains' for sale.

It should also be stated that in the great majority of the reports the **real authors and the brands that the reports are published by are not the**

same. For example, if the Russian Orthodox Church published its report concerning the future of the country, we could expect this report to include many 'Glazievs,' but no churchmen. More often than not, a brand is one thing, and the real authors are something completely different. This fact comes to mind both in the report by the Centre for Strategic Research Foundation, and in the report by the Institute of Contemporary Development.

Why do the authors agree to this? There is only one answer, and that is money. Money is the main point of consensus since experts do not see eye to eye on the majority of issues. The reports are as different as goods on a counter; there can be smaller goods at a lower price, or bigger ones at a higher price. All these tags, such as liberal or conservative, serve to give the products some colour, some marketable appearance. To discuss the advantages of the goods is up to the buyer who is ready to pay his money for the product; but since an ordinary person rarely has enough money for such products, he is rarely interested in their consumer appeal.

It is only natural that the stream of the reports surged right before the elections. All the political forces at the very least have to show some election platform to the public. During the regional elections, one sees the triumph of political technologies, when the meaning of what is really happening recedes into the background and gives way either to accusations, or to reports about various achievements. But for the federal elections such things do not work at all. And this is something that is felt by those who stand on the other side of the counter in expert row as well.

But both the public and the direct consumer of the goods created by the expert minds act as dummies. For instance, when

Federal Law #94-FZ was being discussed at the Higher School of Economics, it occurred neither to the organizers, nor to the participants of the discussion, who had nurtured representatives of various responsibilities, to invite to this lecture those people who in fact had voted for the law. **Here is the main art of the Russian expertocracy.** It is not going to address parties to gain the support of the voters and establish a democratic, competitive, and elective model of power. No, **it addresses the bosses of the executive power only, who will then apply pressure, who have only to say just one word, and all the rest will voluntary obey.** In fact, it is this expertocratic model which is the main threat and main challenge for democracy, as all attempts to appeal directly to the top authority who avoids voters is part of that very political style and era which should have been done away with a long time ago.

It would be a mistake to assume that such behaviour of expertocracy is the outcome of merely the past three to five years. The Russian expertocracy has been working this way since the early 1990s. Some eggheads wrote some projects for some bosses, then the bosses squeezed the projects through one or another institution. And then they were really surprised to find out that something that had looked beautiful on paper did not work in practice. It was between 1991 and 1993 when the elite got a steady idea that the public was not ready for democracy and that it should lead it to happiness without further asking what they wanted. It was then that the expertocratic windmill started working and thus has it been working ever since. The only force capable of breaking this system is the parties. It is the development of the multi-party system that poses the greatest challenge to the existing model. ■

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