

THE THEATRE OF HATRED AND RUSSIA AS A THEATRE-LOVER

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Another great earthquake in Japan has made us recall all of the previous ones that have occurred, including the disastrous earthquake of 1923, which devastated Tokyo. That great Kanto earthquake was characterised by one unusual aspect: it was used by the government as an instrument to conduct a crushing hatred campaign against the Japanese Communist Party. It was one of the first experiments of modern times that managed to instigate mass hatred against the backdrop of a global disaster. As we can see, our world is not a bit impervious to calamities. It is therefore important to assess the chances of hatred, fear and power in those places where communication can easily consolidate their potential.

1.

Fear and hatred of the masses towards the 'elites' have affected political agendas everywhere. Historically speaking, the so-called 'nobility' has never been loved by the masses. But today we can observe the refusal of societies to accept policies that are imposed on them purportedly 'in their own best interests'. The most

dramatic instance in this regard is the **second uprising of the masses** in the Middle East.

The old establishment has realised that it is being charged with committing more than just leadership mania and the mismanagement of the economy. Hosni Mubarak has already been accused of 'organising bombings' of Egyptian resorts, and no one is squeamish about forged evidence (such evidence is derived from the same source as the calls to take to street – namely, from the Internet).

The policy of suspicion is part of a global criminalisation of policy and mass ideologies. The wars between rightist populists and Barack Obama have already been initiated in state courts. At that time, the bar of hatred was made red-hot by Jader Lee Loughner, the man who shot Gabriel Giffords, a rather disliked Democrat Congresswoman. The February crowds that captured the Senate in Wisconsin showed how an outbreak of aggression from below could block the process of recovery from conflict. An example in this regard from Europe is the waterfall of denials of multiculturalism, which are coming from top ranking officials. Here the initiative is in the hands of the establishment, but the latter – from Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy to James Cameron and the Secretary General of the European Council – is forced to retreat, being challenged by inter-communal aggression and hostility. The official funeral of multiculturalism is a radical act of reconsideration in terms of Europeanism. Society is dividing into parallel worlds, and their separation is acknowledged. No one knows how far this reconsideration will actually bring us.

2.

What worries Moscow in regards to these distant affairs? It is namely its own past experience. It is Russia's personal experience with its twentieth century calamities, when fear and hatred managed to invade the sphere

of politics. It is the policy of fear and provocation, which has a choking effect with latent social hostility. Retreating in the face of mass aggressive squalls Russia's authorities, which have more than once lost all of their reference points. **But when the state collapsed, this devastating hatred had still not been exhausted**, and citizens were left alone with a more mobile and less liberal power, which they had re-equipped with their very own hands.

The process of hatred bursting into the political sphere happens to be free flowing. It diverts from one target to another until it finally focuses on an acceptable mythological figure: it was the 'bourgeois' in 1917, the 'kulak' in 1930 and the 'oligarch' in 2003. When the target is ready, just about anyone can end up being considered a 'bourgeois'. Social attributes are once again melted down and poured to set in order to fill in the repressive matrix.

To date, the Russian Armed Forces are officially celebrating the day when the Old Russian Army was dismissed. At the same time, the Russian police, after having been abolished nearly 100 years ago, was once again reinstated just last week. Both of these cases involving a 'reset', so to speak, were followed with such squalls of deadly hatred, which would today be classified as genocide.

3.

Sometimes the generation of hatred-bearing troops emerges under 'protective' and even 'conservative' banners. Since it is associated with no real enemy, hatred and fear also **do not associate themselves with any particular nation**. We have a real life example of such a 'populist' in the person of Muammar Gaddafi. His logic is transparent: since his people have turned away from him, *the people's leader*, he is constructing a new nation for himself – with the help of faithful tribes, mercenaries and scrap armaments. The same logic can be observed in the polemic attacks

launched by youth policy adherent Boris Yakemenko, who has levelled the Russian government with similar military-terrorist tactics to those of Gaddafi. Here the State of Russia seems to be getting out of sight in a way, which would seem to be paradoxical for a conservative. The nihilist-fundamentalist tends to 'guard' the status quo at the cost of subverting constitutional institutes and traditional moral foundations. In its disastrous mind, state power appears to be as lonely as a stalker. It trudges on through the ruins of the state, shooting back at a society that is full of werewolves and monsters. 'Protective' nihilism of this kind is well known in relation to the history of Russian populism.

4.

Mass revolts in Russia, even in those cases when they have been unarmed, have always been supplemented by the idea to build the state from the ground up after expelling a certain part of society from within it. The disappearance of the old elites and the emergence of new ones in Russia questions the very existence of society – throwing it back to the Utopian zero point, to Ground Zero. For some people, Ground Zero is the year 1991 while, for others, it is the year 2000 – the year that Putin was elected as President. There are even those who consider Ground Zero to be 1917 (the Bolshevik revolution appears to be a neo-populist 'comprehensive theory' – it is the ultimate resort in terms of directing complaints about Russia's ruined reality).

Russian neo-populism has been looking for a target for its social aggression ever since it first appeared in the twenty-first century. Hatred is giving it sanction to unrestricted nihilism in relation to institutions, values and social groups. **But this utopia is of a different kind – it is a stolen utopia.** In a raft of 'the Russias we have lost', political history is ultimately transformed into a series of robberies so to speak. And since it is impossible to recover and compensate for what has already been stolen, 'the people' feel they have no choice but to 'take revenge'.

The presumption of 'bosses' (that is to say 'them'), robbing 'people' (that is to say 'us') of their opportunities,

sterilises history for any experiments other than ones of a criminal and conspiratorial nature. The exposure of future conspiracies effectively replaces political discussion. The place and authority of sociologists and anthropologists in Russian society are now shared by criminal investigators, policemen, chanson and criminal TV series. Social science is deprived of the right to vote, and there is no one to discuss political experience here (except for the internal environment of government authorities themselves, which typically use such discussions to strengthen their strategic monopoly).

5.

Modern communications are not subject to censorship, which was proven by recent attempts on the part of the dethroned rulers of Tunisia and Egypt to 'switch off' the Internet. The new power of social networks lies in the energy they have in terms of group emotional mobilisation. The Internet in its present form cuts off all internal filters of trust, thus facilitating future plays on trust. It is true however, that today, it often annoys governments with its blatant transparency. However, online transparency is no more credible than an online personal identity. Transparency is easy to cook, filling it with false targets and imaginary artefacts. The Internet has set its user free of 'the chimera called reputation'. You are free to be disgusting on the Internet without being subject to a moral evaluation. **Everyone is free to be anyone they wish.** By keeping your hands off the ones who are too dangerous (for example, protected copyright holders, owners of banking and military networks), anyone can do here whatever he or she wishes to do. So this is the way that new jungles are emerging, where hatred is encouraged and fed until it becomes some kind of popular mass game. It is inevitable that, in the context of such a game, some moderators should inevitably emerge.

Gusts of latent hatred, setting personal opinion to zero, ramble over global networks. But we all know how often hatred brings about a virus of power of a less traditional and a more dangerous form. The Russian experience requires that we be on guard here.

6.

Hatred is one of the frontrunners in terms of becoming the future driver of global policy. In the course of the recent global economic crisis, societies acquired new grounds for their eternal distrust towards elites. But elites are not the ultimate target, and they are insufficient to generate such hatred. *Contempt for the elites used to be a form of their recognition.* Hatred can actually go much further than the old targets.

Hatred can come off its source easily and has no need to recall it. This stimulates political unconsciousness, which facilitates a movement towards 'all-encompassing' power. The basic challenge is *the tandem 'hatred – power' – power, which creates objects of hatred and then manages them.* The driver of mass revolts is filled with hatred, fear and envy. Envy suggests targets for hatred and fear. Fear 'justifies' envy and aggression, feeding them to the energy of will to power.

7.

Notions of power, hatred and fear will soon make modern communications come full circle. Policies of a more sophisticated type are now succeeding the era of 'stagnant autocracies'. Power built on innovative platforms, equipped with advanced social, financial and network approaches, has become technically feasible. Such power will be even more devious than the eccentric titans of the type advanced by Saddam or Gaddafi. Being narratively adventurous, power will offer timely and fascinating plots with reasonable social roles. Playing with targets and scenarios for the bored masses with mimetic plasticity, it will also lead them to new plots. The objects of hatred will eventually become singular and more and more difficult to elude.

But this power won't live long without a master either. It is bound to be privatised by someone. Such an all-mighty Lord was sensed – with both disgust and grief – by Michel Foucault in the perspective of biopower. But, naturally, he could not foresee a radical disaster in that domination patterns would eventually break through to emerge at the global level, beyond the horizon of a national *raison d'état* to the unrestricted manipulation of imaginary and real bodes. Mass revolts in the name of freedom are often named after the new sovereigns. ■